

CREATING A WORLD WITHOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS: THE ROLE OF THE ARTS

#VAWGARTSCONF



FRI 25 - SAT 26 NOV 2022

Hosted by the Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast

COORDINATED BY DR HILARY MCCOLLUM AND
THE SEAMUS HEANEY CENTRE AT QUEEN'S



THE SEAMUS HEANEY
CENTRE

8.45am
The Studio

REGISTRATION with tea and coffee

9.15am
The Cube

WELCOME with conference organiser, Dr Hilary McCollum

9.25-10.25am
The Cube

KEYNOTE ONE: WINNIE M. LI

Creative Activism, Creating Change: Writing, Community & Survivorhood



Author, activist and Belfast rape survivor, Winnie M. Li (*Dark Chapter* 2017, *Complicit* 2022), in conversation with crime fiction writer and PhD candidate Sharon Dempsey (Queen's University, Belfast).

10.25-11.30am
The Cube

PANEL ONE: NEW NARRATIVES

The Novel Strikes Back: A New Page on Resisting Misogynist Violence - Dr Chi Sum Garfield Lau, Asst. Prof, Hong Kong Metropolitan University (ONLINE)

Cho Nam-Joo's debut novel, *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*, and the subsequent film adaptation, which portray the subjugation of Korean women, through the life of the protagonist, who experiences sexist attacks and harassment.

Contemporary Adaptations of Rape Stories - Florentina Gümüş, PhD candidate, and Dr Yeliz Biber Vangölü, Assoc. Prof, Ataturk University (ONLINE)

Drawing on adaptations of Medea, Laurencia, and the life of Artemisia Gentileschi, this essay discusses why and how stories about rape are adapted for contemporary readers/audiences and to what extent they reinforce or challenge the victimisation of women.

Transgressed Reality: Toward a New Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of Ahlam Mosteghanemi's Chaos of the Senses - Yasaman Taheri, MA, University of Tehran (ONLINE)

In her novel *Chaos of the Senses*, Ahlam Mosteghanemi uses political consciousness to create a unique narrative space to reimagine reality and subvert the new forms of colonialism and the disparagement of women.

11.30-11.45am

BREAK

11.45-1.15pm
The Cube

PANEL TWO: MINORITISED WOMEN & GIRLS

Imagining an End to Violence Against Indigenous Women: Intersections of Indigenous Feminisms and Futurisms in YA Speculative Fiction - Dr. Kasey Jones-Matrona, University of Oklahoma

Speculative young adult (YA) texts which pave the way for a new wave of Indigenous feminist futurisms, creating worlds that move beyond mere survival and seek to reinstate matrilineal/matriarchal Indigenous-centric worlds.

New Millennium Narratives of Sexual Violence against US Ethnic Women: A "We Too" Literary Movement in the Making - Dr. Laura Roldán-Sevillano, Lecturer at University of Zaragoza (ONLINE)

The fictional response to increasing sexual aggressions against US women of colour by both white and racialised perpetrators in Louise Erdrich's *The Round House* (2012) and Roxane Gay's *An Untamed State* (2014).

Violence against Women and Girls as a Recurring Theme in Lesbian Historical Fiction - Dr. Hilary McCollum, Queen's University Belfast

Drawing on a range of texts to explore how violence against lesbians is made visible in lesbian historical fiction. What do such portrayals tell us about violence against lesbians in the past and present?

The Poetics of Girlhood Trauma in Alice Tawhai's short stories: Between Alice in Wonderland and the Lake Alice Psychiatric Institute - Marine Berthiot, PhD candidate in Aotearoa/New Zealand Literature at University of Edinburgh

This paper examines short stories and artworks produced by Alice Tawhai (Tainui, Ngāpuhi) on the theme of Alice in Wonderland. Uprooting the Victorian heroine, she investigates the impact psychiatric institutes have on girls' development in Aotearoa.

1.15-2.15pm
The Studio

LUNCH

2.15-3.45pm
The Cube

PANEL THREE: CONTEXTUAL VIOLENCE

From Birgu to Belfast - author & activist, Réaltán Ní Leannáin (ONLINE)

In *Cití na gCártaí/Kitty of the Cards*, Réaltán Ní Leannáin creatively explores hidden or ignored violence against Irish women from the Easter Rising to Independence to Civil War. She will talk about the process of researching and writing the novel.

Becoming Unbecoming: Depicting misogyny and sexual violence through visual metaphor - Dr Louisa Parker (AKA Una), Artist & Writer, Oxford Centre for Criminology (ONLINE)

Becoming Unbecoming (2015) is Una's personal account of sexual violence and victimisation, set against the backdrop of the hunt the Yorkshire ripper. Dr Parker will discuss her process in researching, writing and drawing this work and the importance of being Una.

The Female Body as the Medium for Reimagining the Nation - Dr. Keisha Allan, Asst. Prof, Black and Latino Studies, Baruch College, New York (ONLINE)

Nalo Hopkinson's use of speculative fiction to create alternate history by focusing on the survival strategies of the female leaders of the maroons. Foregrounds the black female subject's survival strategies rather than her oppression as sexual victim.

Hatred, Violence, and Humanity: The Surrender of a Young Girl in Ashokamitran's The Eighteenth Parallel (1977) - Dr Nazia Akhtar, International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad

About the representation of violence against girls and women during the partition of India and Pakistan in Ashokamitran's novella *The Eighteenth Parallel* (originally written in Tamil). Considers the text's depiction of the burden of humanity falling on India's girls.

3.45-4.00pm

BREAK

4.00-5.00pm
The Cube

KEYNOTE TWO: PROF. ROBIN E. FIELD (ONLINE)

Literary Activism and Community Building in the Rape Novel

Robin E. Field is Professor of English at King's College, Pennsylvania, and author of *Writing the Survivor: The Rape Novel in Late Twentieth-Century American Fiction*. Dr Hilary McCollum (Queen's University Belfast) will chair questions and discussion.



9.15am
The Studio

REGISTRATION with tea and coffee

9.30am
The Cube

WELCOME with conference organiser, Dr Hilary McCollum

9.40-10.40am
The Cube

KEYNOTE THREE: NATASHA CUDDINGTON & RUTH CARR

Her Other Language: Beyond Omission, Erasure & Redaction - Northern Irish Women Writers Address Domestic Violence and Abuse



A conversation with Ruth Carr and Natasha Cuddington, co-editors of *Her Other Language* (Arlen House, 2020), an anthology of poems, stories and play extracts by women. It was conceived as a project to raise the ongoing issue of domestic violence and abuse while also giving visibility to women's writing. They will be in conversation with Dr Tara McEvoy, Ciaran Carson Writing & the City Fellow at Seamus Heaney Centre.

10.40-10.55am

BREAK

10.55-12.25pm
The Cube

PANEL FOUR: CHANGING THE LENS

Over My Dead Body - Sharon Dempsey, writer and creative writing PhD candidate at Queen's University Belfast

This paper investigates how representations of the female body in crime fiction can provide socio-political insights. It argues that in reading crime fiction through the lens of the female victim, we can examine the trauma of violence against women.

Catharsis, survival, and resistance: The horror genre as an ally to women - Amy Beddows, PhD candidate at Child & Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University (ONLINE)

Horror has been much maligned for its sexist depictions of women and violence. However, the potential for catharsis and meaning making, through powerful templates of resistance, survival, and hope, makes the genre an unappreciated ally for women and survivors.

Using madness as methodology to deconstruct victimizing narratives and find new ways of staging them - Stella Godmet, PhD candidate in Performing Arts (Drama) at Canterbury Christ Church University

Drawing on a performance piece being developed for the presenter's thesis, this paper will explore the possibility of using Gale's 'madness as methodology' to challenge the traditional victimizing constructs of female narratives.

PANEL FOUR CONTINUED...

Educating the reader through Marian Keyes' This Charming Man - Maria Butler, IRC Government of Ireland Scholar, University College Cork

Although chick lit is often dismissed as fluff, *This Charming Man* demonstrates how it can be used as a trojan horse to educate mass market readers about social issues like intimate partner abuse.

12.25-1.25pm
The Studio

LUNCH

Delegates should indicate which afternoon session they will attend. Please note the Performance & Workshop takes place in the Boardroom and numbers are strictly limited.

1.25-2.30pm
Boardroom

PERFORMANCE & WORKSHOP

Dramatising Domestic Abuse Workshop with Catherine Ferrin, Domestic Abuse Educator & Activist

Performance of a one-woman show about domestic abuse followed by a workshop using drama to explore and influence attitudinal change regarding violence against women and girls.

1.25-2.30pm
The Cube

PANEL FIVE: RE-READING THE PAST

Clarissa's sisters: violence against women in women's writing, c.1680-1820 - Prof. Moyra Haslett, Queen's University Belfast

The period c.1680-1820 witnessed a huge increase in numbers of professional women writers. This paper will survey the ways in which violence against women was represented in their work and how the teaching of this material has changed since its rediscovery in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Reading Experiences of Survivors and the Victorian Novel - Ellen Stockstill, Asst. Prof. of English, Penn State Harrisburg (ONLINE)

This paper explores whether the marriage plots of nineteenth-century novels expose readers to more realistic survivor narratives than many contemporary texts. What kinds of literature best invite survivors into a safe space for engagement and even healing?

PANEL FIVE CONTINUED...

A Case of Violence Against Women as an Aftermath of Exercising Her Sexual Agency: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Herland - Payel Ray, PhD candidate in gender and sexuality studies, West Bengal, India (ONLINE)

Sexual agency in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's utopic novel *Herland* (1915). The Herlandian women exercise choice over everything, until patriarchy penetrates this all-women land. Can a woman be free without sexual agency and the choice to reproduce?

2.30-2.40pm

BREAK2.40-4.10pm
The Cube**PANEL SIX: VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA - WOMEN'S RESISTANCE AND VERSIONS OF JUSTICE**

Discussion led by PhD students from the Violence Against Women and Girls Research Network - (ONLINE)

Ankita Mishra, Dept. of Psychology, University of Sheffield,
Melody House, University of Strathclyde,
Zoë Asser, Queen Mary University,
Amy Beddows, CWASU, London Met University

The panel will focus on recent films and TV shows created by victim-survivors - or with their significant input - which eschew dominant notions of trauma or justice. It will discuss media products such as the 2018 film *The Meeting*, Jennifer Fox's *The Tale*, Michaela Coel's 2019 *I May Destroy You* and the Netflix mini-series *Unbelievable*, in terms of the messages they challenge and the contribution they can make towards new understandings of violence, trauma, and justice, whilst amplifying the voices of victims and survivors and their narratives of resistance.

4.10-4.30pm
The Cube**CONCLUDING REMARKS with Dr Hilary McCollum**



WINNIE M. LI

Activist & author

Winnie M. Li is a Harvard graduate and George Mitchell Scholar, Winnie worked as a film producer in London before her life was disrupted by a violent stranger rape in Belfast in 2008. Her debut novel, *Dark Chapter* is a fictional retelling of that event from victim and perpetrator perspectives. Translated into ten languages, it won The Guardian's Not The Booker Prize and was nominated for an Edgar Award. She is currently adapting it for the screen. Her second novel, *Complicit* was published in summer 2022 and selected by The New York Times for their 'Group Text' monthly book club. Winnie is also Co-Founder of the Clear Lines Festival, the UK's first-ever festival addressing sexual assault and consent through the arts and discussion. Her ongoing PhD research at the London School of Economics explores media engagement by rape survivors as a form of activism. Winnie facilitates creative writing workshops for survivors of sexual violence and abuse, and has given over 200 public talks, appearing on the BBC, Sky News, Channel 4, The Guardian, The Mail on Sunday, The Times, The Irish Times, and TEDx London. She holds an honorary doctorate of law from the National University of Ireland in recognition of her writing and activism.



SHARON DEMPSEY

Author & PhD candidate at Queen's University, Belfast

Sharon Dempsey is a Northern Ireland-based writer. Her new novel *The Midnight Killing* (Avon Harper Collins) was published in 2022. She is undertaking a creative-critical PhD at Queen's University, Belfast, exploring representations of the female victim in Northern Irish Crime Fiction. The novels explored in her corpus represent contemporary Northern Ireland, often negotiating trauma from the recent past and operate within the subgenres of the police procedural and the domestic noir. The PhD creative component takes the form of a novel, in the sub-genre of the domestic noir. It is called *After the Party* and is in part inspired and informed by the highly publicised account of the Belfast Rape trial of 2018, which involved four Ulster rugby players. Sharon has published five novels and three non-fiction books and has many short stories published in anthologies, literary journals magazines and broadcast on radio.



PROF. ROBIN E. FIELD

Professor of English at King's College, Pennsylvania

Robin E. Field earned her PhD from the University of Virginia and her BA from Cornell University. She teaches contemporary women's literature, multiethnic American literature, and writing courses. Her book *Writing the Survivor: The Rape Novel in Late Twentieth-Century American Fiction* was published by Clemson University Press in 2020. She is co-editor of three edited collections: *#MeToo and Modernism* (forthcoming 2023), *Critical Perspectives on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Feminism and Diaspora* (2022), and *Transforming Diaspora: Communities Beyond National Boundaries* (2011). She has published essays on Jhumpa Lahiri, Sandra Cisneros, Alice Walker, Jana Monji, Ayad Akhtar, Lynne Sharon Schwartz, and other contemporary writers. She is Managing Editor of the journal *South Asian Review* and Associate Editor of the journal *Zeal: A Journal for the Liberal Arts*.



DR HILARY MCCOLLUM

Publishing Fellow at the Seamus Heaney Centre 2022

Hilary McCollum is a writer of prose and drama, she completed her PhD on (re)creating the lesbian past through historical fiction last year. She is a writer and creative activist. Her first novel, *Golddigger* won the 2016 Golden Crown Literary Society prize for historical fiction. Her memoir of sexual abuse against the backdrop of the 'Troubles', *Funny Peculiar* was published in 2008 under the pseudonym, Constance McCullagh. Her fiction and plays often explore issues related to violence against women and girls.



RUTH CARR

Poet, editor & educator

Ruth Carr was born in Belfast. She has worked as a tutor in adult community education for more than forty years. In 1985, she edited *The Female Line*, a ground-breaking anthology of Northern Irish women writers and edited the contemporary fiction section for *The Field Day IV / V* (New York University Press, 2002). She also co-edited the *Honest Ulsterman* for nearly fifteen years. She has published three poetry collections, *There is a House* and *The Airing Cupboard* (Summer Palace Press, 1999 & 2008) and *Feather and Bone* (Arlen House, 2018) and is working on a fourth.

NATASHA CUDDINGTON

Author & editor

Natasha Cuddington was born in Saskatchewan, Canada. A writing facilitator across contexts, her translations, poetry, essays and reviews have appeared variously. In 2017, she was announced as the recipient of the Ireland Chair of Poetry Bursary. Her debut poetry collection, *Each of us (our chronic alphabets)* was published by Arlen House (2018). An assistant editor of *Cyphers*, she co-hosts the occasional event series *Of Mouth* with Ruth Carr. Together they have co-edited *Donegal is Red Door*, a posthumous poetry collection by Ann Zell (*Of Mouth*, 2016) and *Her Other Language: Northern Irish Women Writers Address Domestic Violence and Abuse* (Arlen House, 2020).



DR TARA MCEVOY

Ciaran Carson Writing & the City Fellow at the Seamus Heaney Centre 2022

Tara McEvoy completed her PhD on the Northern Irish poetry of the 1960s and 1970s at Queen's University Belfast. Research completed during her PhD won the English Postgraduate Essay Prize (2020). She is a Leverhulme Trust-funded Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of English at Trinity College Dublin, where her research focuses on the modern Irish literary anthology. She is a co-founder and editor of *The Tangerine*, and her writing has appeared in publications including the Times Literary Supplement, Vogue, Poetry London, Frieze, the Guardian, Observer, Australian Book Review, Wire, Stinging Fly, and 3:AM. Essays are forthcoming in *Winter Papers* and the European Review of Books.



THE SEAMUS HEANEY CENTRE AT QUEEN'S

School of Arts, English & Languages, Queen's University, Belfast

Since 2003 the Seamus Heaney Centre at Queen's has been home to some of the UK and Ireland's foremost poets, novelists, scriptwriters and critics. Building on a literary heritage at Queen's that stretches back to the 1960s 'Belfast Group', the Centre is dedicated to excellence and innovation in creative writing and criticism. From their Poetry Summer School to the MA and PhD programmes in poetry, fiction and script, their postgraduate courses lead the way in creative writing teaching and practice. They host events throughout the year, and regularly showcase new writing by staff and students through readings, broadcasting and publishing projects.

LOCAL SUGGESTIONS

Food, drinks, culture

There are excellent independent bookshops nearby including Books Paper Scissors (Stranmillis Rd), and our booksales partners, No Alibis Bookstore.



Booksellers and Publishers

No Alibis Bookstore, 83 Botanic Avenue - noalibis.com

- left out of the venue, turn left down Lower Crescent to Botanic Ave, turn right and walk 2mins. No Alibis will be on your right.

There are many cultural venues within walking distance of the Crescent Arts Centre, including Accidental Theatre (Bradbury Pl), the Empire Music Hall (Botanic Ave), and the Lyric Theatre (Ridgeway St). We regularly collaborate with the Queen's Film Theatre and the Ulster Museum.



Northern Ireland's finest independent cinema

Queen's Film Theatre, 20 University Square - queensfilmtheatre.com

- left out of the venue, walk 5mins to University Square, turn left along the Square. QFT will be on your left.



Home to some of our best art, natural science and history collections

The Ulster Museum & Botanic Gardens - ulstermuseum.org

- left out of the venue, walk 10mins past the University, through the gates of the Botanical Gardens on the left.



Fri 25 Nov at 8.00pm

Words in the Air: theatre in translation

Brian Friel Theatre, 20 University Square

- seamusheaneycentre.com/events

Botanic Avenue is full of cafes and affordable diners including Madame Pho, Town Square, Maggie May's, Tribal Burger, French Village and Umi Falafel. The city centre's Cathedral Quarter, renowned for its bars and restaurants, is a 20min walk away. The Woodworkers Bar is our unofficial 'post-show-pints' destination. They also serve food until late.



The Woodworkers, 20-22 Bradbury Place - woodworkersbelfast.com

- right out of the venue, walk 5mins towards the city centre, Woodworkers will be on your right.

CONFERENCE READING LIST

- Akhtar, Nazia, *Bibi's Room: Hyderabad Women and Twentieth-Century Urdu Prose* (Orient BlackSwan, 2022)
- Ashokamitran, *The Eighteenth Parallel* (Sangam Books Ltd, 1993)
- Burns, Anna, *Milkman* (Faber, 2018)
- Carr, Ruth, and Cuddington, Natasha, (eds.) *Her Other Language, Northern Irish Women Address Domestic Violence and Abuse* (Arlen House, 2020)
- Davies, Stevie, *Impassioned Clay* (The Women's Press, 2000)
- Dempsey, Sharon, *The Midnight Killing* (Avon, 2022)
- *Who Took Eden Mulligan?* (Avon, 2021)
- *Little Bird* (Bloodhound Books, 2017)
- Erdrich, Louise, *The Round House* (Harper Collins, 2021)
- Field, Robin E, *Writing the Survivor: The Rape Novel in Late Twentieth-Century American Fiction* (Clemson University Press, 2020)
- Field, Robin E and Jordan, Jerrica, *#MeToo and Modernism* (Liverpool University Press, 2022)
- Gay, Roxane, *An Untamed State* (Black Cat, 2014)
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, *Herland* (The Women's Press, 1979)
- Holland, Mary K and Hewitt, Heather (eds.), *#MeToo and Literary Studies: Reading, Writing, and Teaching about Sexual Violence and Rape Culture* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2021)
- Hopkinson, Nalo, *Midnight Robber* (Warner Books, 2000)
- Keyes, Marian, *This Charming Man* (Penguin, 2008)
- Li, Winnie M. *Dark Chapter* (Legend Press, 2017)
- *Complicit* (Orion, 2022)
- MacDonald, Ann-Marie, *Fall on Your Knees* (Vintage, 1997)
- McCollum, Hilary, *Golddigger* (Bella Books, 2015)
- McCullagh, Constance, *Funny Peculiar: A True Story of How Even Sexual Abuse Could Not Crush a Child's Love of Life* (Brandon Books, 2008)
- McLean, Donna, *Small Town Girl: Love, Lies and the Undercover Police* (Hodder&Stoughton, 2022)
- Molloy, Frances, *Women are The Scourge of The Earth* (White Row Press Ltd, 1998)
- Mosteghanemi, Ahlam, *Chaos of the Senses* (The American University in Cairo Press, 2007)
- Nam-Joo, Cho, *Kim Jiyong, Born 1982*, trans. by Jamie Chang (Scribner, 2020)
- Ní Leannáin, Réaltán, *Cití na gCártaí* (Cois Life, 2019)
- Okparanta, Chinelo, *Under the Udala Trees* (Houghton Mifflin, 2015)
- Singh, Amritjit, Field, Robin E. and Najmi, Samina (eds.) *Critical Perspectives on Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Feminism and Diaspora* (Lexington Books, 2022)
- Una, *Becoming, Unbecoming* (Myriad Editions, 2015)
- Walker, Alice, *The Color Purple* (The Women's Press, 1983)
- Zell, Ann, *Donegal is a Red Door* (Of Mouth, 2016)



THE SEAMUS HEANEY
CENTRE