

The Gehool of English presents... THE ENGLISH SHOWCASE 2023

The English Showcase is a relaxed and informal introduction to the world of academia for our students. Every year, we invite our final year Undergraduate and Masters students to share the work they're proudest of.

SENATE CHAMBER, TRENT BUILDING





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Welcome!

The English Showcase celebrates the research produced by final year Undergraduate and Masters students in the School of English at the University of Nottingham. Students from all disciplines in the School are invited to present any aspect of their work, ranging from dissertations to essays and creative writing.

We have built on the success of previous events and this year are pleased to host a full day conference both online and in person to showcase the brilliant work of our students, of whom we are very proud.

The variety of work here showcases a fabulous range of disciplines and working practices and will be an inspiring, informative and enjoyable event to celebrate our students and their hard work during this academic year.

In this booklet you will find a full running order of the day, including presentation titles and abstracts, as well as more information about the School of English.

Our students have put a lot of work into their presentations, and we are delighted to be able to present you with some of the very best work that our Undergraduate and Masters students in the School of English have produced.

We hope you enjoy the day!

The Organising Committee: Dr Christina Lee, Dr Pawel Szudarski, Charlotte Crane, Dominic Bark & Emily Charlesworth

Programme

10:00-10:30	ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION (WITH COFFEE & PASTRIES)			
10:30 – 10:45	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION WITH PROFESSOR MÁIRE NÍ FHLATHÚIN, HEAD OF SCHOOL, FOLLOWED BY DR PAWEŁ SZUDARSKI, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PGT.			
10:45 - 11:30	PANEL ONE (CHAIR: DUNCAN ARMITAGE)			
	LAURA SCAIFE – 'HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE USE MADNESS AND GENDER TO REINFORCE OR CHALLENGE THE POWER DYNAMICS OF KING LEAR?'			
	CAROLIEN WIELOCKX – 'ASYLUM NURSES IN FINGERSMITH: NEO-VICTORIAN INTERSECTIONS OF CLASS AND GENDER'			
	NICOLE WHITTON – 'USING THE POETIC FORM TO CONVEY THE EXPERIENCE OF AGE- RELATED DISEASE'			
11:30 -12.30	30 PANEL TWO (CHAIR: MOLLY WATSON)			
	EMLYN JENKINS – '"WHY IS JESUS IN MY HEATHEN TEXT?" OR HOW THE WIDER NEO-PAGAN COMMUNITY MISUNDERSTANDS EDDIC POETRY'			
	MARIE GEORGHIOU – 'ANCIENT SCRIPTS, MODERN VISIONS: THE RUNES OF GOD OF WAR'			
	LOUISE ROBERTS – 'THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HM 136 AND CAXTON'S "CRONYCLES OF ENGLOND"			
	BEN MARSHALL – 'LANDSCAPE AND NAMING: MEDIEVAL TOPONYMIC SURNAMES IN TWO MIDLANDS REGIONS'			
12:30 -13:30	LUNCH			

13:30-14:30	PANEL THREE (CHAIR: MICHELE RONCARATI)					
	WENRUI LI – 'SHERLOCK HOLMES' CHARACTERISTICS AND THE SCIENCE OF DEDUCTION'					
	GILLIAN WALTERS – "TOO LATE FOR LOVE, TOO LATE FOR JOY": PUBLISHING, PERIODICALS AND CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S "THE FAIRY PRINCE WHO ARRIVED TOO LATE"					
	MARCUS LAWRENCE – 'THE BRITISH APPROPRIATION OF FLAUBERT: AN IDENTIFICATION WITH FLAUBERT IN ONE'S OWN IMAGE – MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON, WALTER PATER, HENRY JAMES AND ELEANOR MARX-AVELING.'					
14:30 - 15:30	PANEL FOUR (CHAIR: NOURAH ALMULHIM)					
	ANNA SHORT – 'POLITICAL RADICALISM ON THE STAGE: MASCULINITIES AND SELFHOOD IN A CAPITALIST SOCIETY'					
	MOLLY ALLEN – "BUT WHO WAS GERTY?" THE ROLE OF GERTY MACDOWELL IN JAMES JOYCE'S NAUSICAA'					
	ALEXANDRA HOGG – 'MUSINGS ON WHETHER THERE CAN BE SUCH A THING AS "THE LESBIAN GAZE"					
	INDIA EDMUNDS – 'THE STORM CHASER'S SON'					
15:30 – 15:45	COFFEE BREAK					
15:45-16:45	PANEL FIVE (CHAIR: DR CHRISTINA LEE)					
	QIANCHENG LI – 'EXPLICIT ACQUISITION OF COLLOCATIONS UNDER DIFFERENT INPUT CONDITIONS FOR CHINESE EFL LEARNERS: READ ALOUD OR SILENTLY'					
	WENXIANG ZHANG – 'A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF ALLIANZ'S BRAND COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA FROM THE UK TO CHINA'					
	RHIANNON RUMBLE – 'MYCELIUM KISSES: EXAMINING FUNGAL FICTION AS TRANS- CORPOREAL TEXT'					
	LUCILE DESLIGNERES – 'GET LOST OXFORD! A PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY OF THE CITY'					
16:45 – 18:00	CONCLUDING REMARKS FROM DR CHRISTINA LEE AND WINE RECEPTION					

Speaker: Laura Scaife (Panel One)

Paper title: How does Shakespeare use madness and gender to reinforce or challenge the power dynamics of King Lear?

Abstract: In King Lear, Shakespeare explores how one man's folly is the catalyst for tragedy. Lear demands unconditional love and obedience from his children leading to their gender transgression and the ultimate tragedy of the play's narrative. At the start of the play, Cordelia is presented as the paradigm of female virtue through her symbolic silence. She rebels against her father's authority when obeying him would cost her virtue, which leads Lear to disown her. Goneril and Regan are also forced to rebel against their father's authority by transgressing gendered expectations due to Lear's unruly behaviour. This is because, while women in the Early Modern period were expected to maintain a home and be good hosts, Lear makes this impossible. His daughters are left with no choice but to throw him out of their homes when he refuses to reduce or control his entourage. Their perceived betrayal leads to the onset of Lear's madness and his eventual death as he realises his folly in not believing Cordelia. Furthermore, Lear's division of the country provides them with excess societal power, leading to them rebelling against their husbands. This leads to tragic consequences when Cordelia transgresses gender expectations in defence of Lear- which ultimately leads to her own death. Therefore Lear's betrayal of his daughters leads to their gender transgression, which ultimately leads to tragedy and the collapse of society.

Speaker: Carolien Wielockx (Panel One)

Paper title: Asylum Nurses in Fingersmith: Neo-Victorian Intersections of Class and Gender

Abstract: This paper discusses the literary representation of asylum nurses in Fingersmith, Sarah Waters' Neo-Victorian queer rewriting of the sensation novel, which looks at 19th century constructions of madness from a 20th century perspective. My view will be that the asylum nurses in the novel are outcasts due to their marginal positions as women in a patriarchal society, with Nurse Bacon's perpetual cruelty being grounded in class envy as well as her unknowable queerness – the term 'queer' being used here in both the original, broader sense of the word, as the narrower one referring to non-heteronormative gender as it is used today. I will argue that it is Victorian women's necessity to be 'skilled in the art of disguise and performance' that prompts the brutality of the nurses. These acts of violence include hitting about the face, punching in the stomach, throwing the women on the floor, shaking them violently, putting needles to scalps as well as using abusive language. Using a mix of frameworks such as historical materialism and feminist theories of Victorian literature, I will illustrate how Waters self-consciously rewrites the hierarchies of both class and gender to account for the disturbing capacity of Fingersmith's women nurses to hurt other women, and that in so doing the novelist queers not only the (love) story of protagonists Maud and Sue, but also that of Nurse Bacon. In addition, I will point at the ways in which my research has opened up ideas for my own creative writing.

Speaker: Nicole Whitton (Panel One)

Paper title: Using the poetic form to convey the experience of age-related disease

Abstract: In this presentation I will explore how the poetic form and poetic devices can be used to convey the experiences of living with age-related disease. I will use three poems I have written to illustrate this exploration: a sonnet about heart disease, a villanelle about menopause, and a free-form poem created using the cut-up method to convey the experience of Alzheimer's. I will discuss how rhyme, meter, enjambment, considerations of form and how the poem will be produced, and readerly expectations of poetic form, can all be used to convey the experiences of age-related disease.

Speaker: Emlyn Jenkins (Panel Two)

Paper title: "Why is Jesus in my Heathen text?" Or how the wider neo-pagan community misunderstands Eddic Poetry

Abstract: Over the last decade media inspired by Old Norse texts ranging from the Eddas to the Sagas has become increasingly more popular among not just the enjoyers of niche genre fiction, but the broader public. Alongside this has come increasing interest in the myths and legends associated with Old Norse deities. Algorithmically driven social media has played a significant role in this, helping to spread ideas of pagan spirituality and religion. However, as a result of this the propagation of poorly understood and translated texts, especially the Prose or Younger Edda. Fuelled by an initial Tik Tok video questioning why Jesus is mentioned in the Prose Edda, a text the poster assumed was solely religious; and on further investigation was read from an early nineteenth century translation. The topic of this presentation seeks to provide an overview of 'Norse' or 'Heathen' centric Neo-Pagan Tik Tok, the sources used as religious texts by the community and how they are interpreted. I will examine what issues frequently arise from these texts as well as how the inaccessibility of academic spaces can contribute to these. I hope to provide directions in which academics and members of religious communities can work together for better understanding of texts in future study.

Speaker: Marie Georghiou (Panel Two)

Paper title: Ancient scripts, modern visions: The runes of God of War

Abstract: Runes exert enduring fascination on the imagination are often found in works of the fantasy genre. Creative choices on how to use them vary widely, from designing complex systems to simply using them for decoration. We will delve into the worlds of recent videogame God of War to explore how we can apply methods of academic runology to enjoy deciphering mysterious inscriptions, and how games make use of knowledge from across historical ages to capture our imaginations.

Speaker: Louise Roberts (Panel Two)

Paper title: The Relationship Between HM 136 and Caxton's 'Cronycles of Englond'

Abstract: In the 15th century, William Caxton, using technology pioneered by Johannes Gutenberg, returned to England from the continent with the printing press in tow. Here Caxton put-to-page the first printed editions of many contemporary texts, among which include Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy, and The Cronycles of Englond. Caxton did not author these texts himself, instead using exemplar manuscripts as a basis for his printed copytext. This leaves the question, however, of which specific manuscripts he used. My research focuses specifically on the exemplar for Caxton's Cronycles, of which there is a wealth of existing research. Scholarly speculation has led to a majority consensus that HM 136 is the most likely exemplar, identified most notably by Daniel Wakelin's and Masako Takagi's research. What is interesting is the manual approach utilised by both Wakelin and Takagi; their publications being a decade old suggesting an access to but reluctance to use digital means of comparison. I hope to provide a definitive account of the similarities between HM 136 and Cronycles by transcribing both and processing them with text comparison software to provide an exact level of similarity between the two. I can then investigate the instances of dissimilarity for cast-off marks (as identified by Wakelin) and text abbreviation/fillers for print justification (as identified by Takagi) to provide a level of justification for dissimilarity. Any further incongruities will be investigated further to understand the deviation in content between the two texts and offer any further intertextual links.

Speaker: Ben Marshall (Panel Two)

Paper title: Landscape and Naming: Medieval Toponymic Surnames in Two Midlands Regions

Abstract: This extract from a larger dissertation on medieval personal names analyses the affect of landscape on toponymic surnames in two topographically contrasting areas of the Midlands. Names from the parishes of Castleton in the Peak District and Shenton, Sibson, and Upton in Leicestershire have been collected from the 1380's Poll Tax record. Toponymic surnames, those which refer to the name of another place, have been analysed from these corpora in order to demonstrate trends of migration in the two regions. Distance between the origin denoted by the surname and the place of recording can be calculated and accumulated for analysis. This study finds that migration denoted by name tends to be far greater in distance in Shenton, Sibson, and Upton than in Castleton, with a strong statistical basis for this conclusion. This may be due to the difference in landscape, with a flatter and fertile landscape being more desirable for migration, and a more accessible and developed surrounding landscape allowing for greater opportunity for movement. Another factor may be the concurrent process of names transforming from personal denotative bynames into hereditary family surnames. Once names cease to be denotative but carry on moving to new places over generations, the perceived migration from their toponymic origin will increase even if this migration is 'step-wise'. It may be that this process of hereditary surname creation began earlier in southern Leicestershire than in the High Peak of Derbyshire.

Speaker: Wenrui Li (Panel Three)

Paper title: Sherlock Holmes's characteristics and the science of deduction

Abstract: Sherlock Holmes is a fictional detective created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He first appeared in "A Study in Scarlet" in 1887 and became an iconic character in the world of literature. Sherlock Holmes is known for his extraordinary intelligence and his ability to solve complex cases through his science of deduction. Sherlock Holmes is a highly intelligent and analytical person. He has a sharp mind and an excellent memory that allows him to recall even the smallest of details. He is a master of observation, and he notices everything in his surroundings. He is also highly rational, and he never lets his emotions cloud his judgment. These characteristics make him an excellent detective, and he is often able to solve cases that others cannot. Sherlock Holmes' science of deduction involves several steps. The first step is observation. Sherlock Holmes observes every detail of a crime scene, no matter how small or insignificant it may seem. He then collects evidence, such as fingerprints, footprints, and other physical evidence, and analyses it. He also interviews witnesses and gathers information from them. Once he has all the information, he begins to draw conclusions. He uses logic and deductive reasoning to connect the pieces of information together and to solve the case.

Speaker: Gillian Walters (Panel Three)

Paper title: 'Too late for love, too late for joy': Publishing, periodicals and Christina Rossetti's 'The Fairy Prince Who Arrived Too Late'

Abstract: In this paper, I explore Christina Rossetti's poem 'The Fairy Prince Who Arrived Too Late' (1863) and consider the important role played by Macmillan's Magazine as an influential publisher of Victorian poetry (3). Despite greater interest in periodicals in recent years, very few critics have focused on literary periodicals aimed at the middle-class readership, such as Macmillan's (3). Periodicals were the main source of printed poetry in the latter part of the nineteenth century and yet periodical poetry, especially women's poetry, has largely been ignored and dismissed as inconsequential (85).

My paper aims to redress this balance; considering both linguistic and material features to critically engage with 'The Fairy Prince'; a periodical poem written by one of the most substantial contributors of poetry in Macmillan's Magazine. I will begin by briefly exploring the significance of the Macmillan brand and their impact upon Rossetti's career, before moving on to analyse the poem while also considering its significance and place within the wider Victorian literary landscape.

References:

Caley Ehnes, Victorian Poetry and the Poetics of the Literary Periodical (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), p. 3.

Linda Peterson, 'Writing for Periodicals', in The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals and Newspapers, ed. by Andrew King, Alexis Easley and John Morton (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 77–88 (p. 85).

Speaker: Marcus Lawrence (Panel Three)

Paper title: The British appropriation of Flaubert: an identification with Flaubert in one's own image - Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Walter Pater, Henry James and Eleanor Marx-Aveling.

Abstract: This dissertation explores the ways in which Flaubert's inimitable stylistic mastery of the French language was translated, adapted and transmuted by Victorian literary figures. These writers include Eleanor Marx, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Walter Pater and Henry James. In the first chapter an examination of morality, situation, gender and imitation is manifested in analysing the works of both Mary Elizabeth Braddon and her novel 'The Doctor's Wife' (inspired by Flaubert's 'Madame Bovary') and Elenor Marx's first translation of 'Madame Bovary'. The second chapter is a detailed analysis of Walter Pater's transmutation of Flaubert's style in his novel 'Marius the Epicurean', in order to emphasise a seriousness to the aesthetic credentials of his work. An additional exploration is of Henry James and his essay in 'The House of Fiction' on Gustave Flaubert, who ultimately interpreted Flaubert's style in order to assert himself as intellectually valuable. The discussion measures the extent to which an author can identify with Flaubert based on their ability, and what their situation allows them, to emulate his inimitable style. Braddon, Pater and James attempt to overcome this impossibility through appropriating Flaubert to adhere to their own agendas. In Braddon's case this allowed her success, as a 'serious writer' as opposed to a sensationalist writer, to be measured relative to her situation and in the case of Pater and James, their situational advantages enabled them both to adapt and transmute Flaubert's style into something of their own. Ultimately findings were that, no matter what the constraint was, or what the purpose of adopting such a style was, the identification with Flaubert's style enhanced the significance of expression.

Speaker: Anna Short (Panel Four)

Paper title: Political Radicalism on the Stage: Masculinities and Selfhood in a Capitalist Society

Abstract: An analysis on how 20th Century playwrights— Lorraine Hansberry and Oscar Wilde— utilise masculine characters to embody class and identity struggles.

The first half discusses the character of Walter from Hansberry's 'A Raisin in the Sun' and how institutional racism, upheld by a capitalist society, leads to a cycle of trauma within a family unit and within an individual. Racism and gender roles are both discussed in relation to how Walter views his own masculinity, and how white men are considered the standard.

The second half of the essay discusses Jack, from Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest', in relation to class and sexuality. His conformity to the societal standard leads him to construct two personalities which Wilde uses as a farcical device for the play.

I explore how this use of farce is actually a critique of social hierarchies and the rules that people are expected to follow— often to their own detriment. This is tied in to Wilde's own experiences as an Irish, gay man.

Speaker: Molly Allen (Panel Four)

Paper title: "But who was Gerty?" The role of Gerty MacDowell in James Joyce's Nausicaa

Abstract: Gerty MacDowell, the central character of the Nausicaa episode of James Joyce's Ulysses (1922), is a brief presence in the book as a whole, and yet she has been of great influence, provoking the initial banning of the novel in several countries and invoking wide discourse on Joyce's understanding of the female psyche. In answering the question posed by the narrator of who this character is, one should consider the many elements of Gerty MacDowell's identity and the roles she is prescribed. This study focuses on three of these categories: the girl-woman, the romantic heroine, and the Holy Virgin - to uncover her greater significance in Ulysses. Gerty is presented primarily in terms of sexuality, with ideas about religion, literature and love that are shown to be fickle and arbitrary. She is often contradictory – she is childlike, yet she is a woman, she is a devout Catholic, yet she engages in sexual activity with a stranger - and so Gerty remains elusive and inaccessible. Ultimately, Gerty MacDowell is an important vessel for Joyce's authorial voice. Through Gerty, he flaunts the success of his own narrative style and his departure from nineteenth-century literary tradition, as well as presenting his criticism of social purity standards and the influence of Catholicism on the framework of Irish culture.

Speaker: Alexandra Hogg (Panel Four)

Paper title: Musings on whether there can be such a thing as "the lesbian gaze"

Abstract: "The lesbian subject cannot exist freely within the / obliterating / devastation / of the male gaze"

This creative critical piece addresses the way in which male desire and authorship is imposed upon lesbian subjectivity. Where can we find ourselves in male artistic expression? Lacking the authority of the dominant male subject and displaced as the feminine object of desire, we turn elsewhere to find ourselves. In the eyes of each other, we become the loving 'I' and the loved 'you'.

Speaker: India Edmunds (Panel Four)

Paper title: The Storm Chaser's Son

Abstract: This work is a piece of flash fiction developed over the course of the Advanced Writing Practice: Fiction module taken in the Autumn semester. It is taken from a wider collection of short stories called Flowers, which focuses on the female experience across a range of age groups. In the Storm Chaser's Son, a young woman recounts her experience as a teenager dating an Oxford University student hailing from Texas, USA. The girl observes how her boyfriend struggles with his father's tragic death and the impact of carrying a legacy versus peer influence on the psyche. His treatment of her changes over time, displayed through the increasing references to turbulent weather, creating the sense of a brewing storm between the couple.

Speaker: Qiancheng Li (Panel Five)

Paper title: The explicit acquisition of collacations under different inputs for Chinese EFL students: Read aloud or silently

Abstract: Collocations is frequently encountered when learning a language, which is important to the high proficiency of a foreign language for the learners. In China, English is taught as a second language in school, and as one of the major subjects in the curriculum system, it is listed as one of the subjects that required to learn in the morning-reading session for students. Normally, students are required to read their material aloud with the whole class or individually, or read silently sometimes. Thus, the study is going to investigate under what kind of input can students acquire the text better by testing their explicit acquisition of collocation in their material to find which way might be the best for students' English learning.

Speaker: Wenxiang Zhang (Panel Five)

Paper title: A comparative analysis of Allianz's brand communication in social media from the UK to China

Abstract: Sina Weibo has 511 million monthly active users in China (Sina Weibo, 2020), and Twitter has 18.4 million users in the UK (Woodward, 2023). To take advantage of such massive usage, nearly every company has its own social media account and is trying their best to integrate social media in their digital strategies. Wijaya (2011) postulated six stages of brand communication: brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand image, brand experience, brand loyalty, and brand spirituality. The present study researched how Allianz achieved its brand communication via social media in the UK and China from a multimodal critical discursive approach. Four posts was selected to analyze in depth the similarities and differences of brand communication strategies of Allianz. It was found that (1) Allianz achieved its brand knowledge and image via twitter in the UK, while achieved brand awareness and image via Sina Weibo in China. (2) Glocal strategies were identified in both Weibo and Twitter.

Speaker: Rhiannon Rumble (Panel Five)

Paper title: Mycelium Kisses: Examining Fungal Fiction as Trans-corporeal Text

Abstract: Through this presentation, I consider what an ecocritical approach can reveal about the unsettling features of 'fungal fiction' and their relation to monstrous Nature.

While there has been recent critical interest in the role of plants across horror (Keetley and Tenga, 2016; Bishop, Higgins and Määttä, 2020, Fitzpatrick 2022), weird, and science fiction – 'Gothicky' texts (Warwick, 2007) – little has been examined around the unique properties of fungi in fiction – spores, mycelium, mushrooms and all. This is especially notable with the proliferation of these mycological texts and their adaptations since the 2010s, most recently the HBO adaptation of Naughty Dog's videogame 'The Last of Us' (2013; 2023). Fungal fiction offers a way to confront anxieties about our inseparable entanglement with the natural world and what it might look like is, or when, one of Earth's most prolific beings fights back.

I'll be examining a scene from the end of episode 2, 'Infected' (2023), so this presentation comes with a spoiler warning. Drawing on Stacey Alaimo's trans-corporeality (2010), Simon Estok's work on 'ecophobia' and slime (2009, 2019, 2020, 2022), and ecoGothic approaches (Hillard 2009, 2019; Smith and Hughes, 2013; Deckard, 2019; Parker and Poland, 2019; Parker 2020), viewing this scene with an ecocritical lens can offer insight into how and why it elicited such a visceral reaction. I will also offer some possibilities for future avenues of investigation for fungal fiction.

Speaker: Lucile Desligneres (Panel Five)

Paper title: Get lost Oxford! A psychogeography of the city

Abstract: Get lost Oxford! is my creative writing project for my MA.

I have been particularly interested in reading literary works in relation with the environment in The Gothic and Literary Geographies modules, in particular the works of Will Self and J.G. Ballard. Psychogeography is a subject I find fascinating, reflecting for example on the power that certain buildings hold and how people create pathways of resistance (Michel de Certeau).

A lot of fiction is set in Oxford, from His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman to Inspector Morse by Collin Dexter. In non-fiction, travel writers have published about Oxford, such as Jan Morris with Oxford (1965). The most recent book is Real Oxford (2022) by the Oxford academic Patrick McGuiness. One could claim these books are a 'gown' version of the city. In Oxford, everything is either 'town' or 'gown' depending on whether you work for the university or not.

I will reflect on both town and gown versions of the city and I am currently examining Oxford through the five senses: silence in colleges' quads, touching walls and trees, seeing the city at sunset.

This presentation will offer an overview of the project. I will then read an extract from my work.

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