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Hosted by the School of English at the University of Nottingham

The English Showcase

**Wednesday 16th
June 2021**

10.45am-4:15pm

Microsoft Teams



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@EnglishShowcase



SchoolofEnglishShowcase

The English Showcase 2021

The English Showcase celebrates the research produced by final year Undergraduates and Master's 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 online 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.

The Organising Committee: Dr Lucie Sutherland, Alex Duncan and Emily Dawkes

Programme

10:45-11:00	WELCOME— PROFESSOR SVENJA ADOLPHS AND DR LUCIE SUTHERLAND
11:00-11:45	PANEL 1: IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE IN FICTION AND POETRY Chair: Professor Jim Moran
	Emma Stirland, Logic of the Flesh: Touch in D.H. Lawrence's <i>The Blind Man</i> and <i>You Touched Me</i>
	Amy Bower, 'I sing to you / from my place with my righteous kin': Judith Wright's Decolonial Poetics
	Lucy Boynes, 'The sick voice inside her': The self and other dichotomy and gothic representations of mental illness in <i>The Haunting of Hill House</i> and <i>Lighter Than My Shadow</i> .
11:45-12:00	BREAK
12:00-12:45	PANEL 2: LINGUISTIC IDENTITY FORMATION Chair: Dr Helen Buckler
	Wirdatul Khasanah, It takes two to tango: But why woman always being blamed in infidelity?
	Xinmei Sun, Sacrificing long hair and the domestic sphere: A corpus-based critical discourse analysis of news reports on female medical workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in China
	Ruth Serlin, 'After all, I'm only human': how veterinarians create a professional identity relating to animal euthanasia
12:45-14:00	LUNCH

14:00-15:00	PANEL 3: ADAPTING FORM, CREATING FICTION Chair: Dr Christina Lee
	Michela Villano, English and Italian Arthurian Medieval Romances from the 13th to the 15th Century: A Comparative Study
	Lilith Lear Hudson, Technological Threats and the Metafictional Mode: Analysing Dystopias in George Orwell's <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (1949) and Lionel Shriver's <i>The Mandibles</i> (2016)
	Joe Paternoster, 'God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!': Marvel's Thanos as a solution to the death of God in an increasingly secular Western world.
	Simeon Cherepov, Out of site, out of mind: escaping from and into the occult in <i>Infinite Jest</i> by David Foster Wallace
15:00-15:15	BREAK
15:15-16:00	PANEL 4: HOW IT'S MADE: CONSTRUCTING LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE Chair: Dr Joe Jackson
	Noor Dabbas, 'Just Google It': A Cross-Corpus Study of Conversion and Cognitive Grammar
	James Stevens, 'For you know only a heap of broken images': how does T.S. Eliot transform his presentation of disillusionment, from manuscript to publication, in <i>The Waste Land</i> ?
	Anna Gant, 'The End is the Beginning': The 'What' and 'Whys' of Fanfiction in the Words of Those Who Are Both Fanficcors and Traditionally Published Writers
16:00-16:15	CLOSING REMARKS

PANEL 1: IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE IN FICTION AND POETRY

Speaker: Emma Stirland, English Language and Literature

Paper title: Logic of the Flesh: Touch in D.H. Lawrence's *The Blind Man* and *You Touched Me*

Abstract: Haptic-oriented analysis is an emerging area of literary studies that focuses on touch and the body as a new way of grasping modernist literature. 'Haptic' encompasses the tactile sense and stresses the significance of touch and our bodily awareness, particularly in the movement of the hands and fingers. In my dissertation, I present the idea of the 'logic of the flesh': the body, in touch, knows what it wants and knows this deeply, with unconscious desire being explored via touch. Touch, therefore, is more than a physical sensation – it is a psychological, emotional and unconscious experience. To be 'in touch' is a mode of consciousness that foregrounds sensual and bodily experience to better understand ourselves, others and the living universe. I also explore the Lawrentian idea of blood-consciousness to undergo a haptic-exploration of two short stories from *England, My England*. This extract is from the 'You Touched Me' chapter, in which I explore touch in the story through Lawrence's phrase, the 'democracy of touch' in Matilda Rockley's unconscious search for wholeness. This research has been greatly influenced by Abbie Garrington's *Haptic Modernism* which suggests that touch and haptic experience were central in the twentieth century. D.H. Lawrence is at the centre of haptic-centred literary studies through his fascination with touch and the body, and his efforts to find a language for haptic experience. This research intends to be situated within this emerging strand of literary studies and show the promise of haptic-oriented analysis of the writing of D.H. Lawrence.

Speaker: Amy Bouwer, MA in English Literature

Paper title: 'I sing to you / from my place with my righteous kin': Judith Wright's Decolonial Poetics

Abstract: In a speech now integral to the feminist canon, Audre Lorde criticises the 'most narrow parameters of change' that become possible 'when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy'. Though she addresses this to an audience of American women, her question of how best to dismantle systems of oppression is echoed by decolonial poets, whose contention lies with the literary traditions they have inherited. One such writer-activist concerned with transforming 'divide and conquer' into 'define and empower' is Judith Wright, widely celebrated as 'an icon of twentieth-century Australian literature and poetics.' From her place within the 'master's house', Wright mediates a critical negotiation of the literary and social spaces she occupies, exposing the constructed nature of colonial identities and canons. Although her poetry strikes at the foundation upon which she stands and excavates the violent history beneath it, she is nonetheless limited by her reliance on 'the master's tools', the literary traditions she has inherited. My research considers Wright's decolonial poetics through an analysis of the 'tools' she uses to disrupt dominant (neo)colonial Australian discourses, assessing the extent to which her poetry brings about 'genuine change'.

Speaker: Lucy Boynes, English

Paper title: 'The sick voice inside her': The self and other dichotomy and gothic representations of mental illness in *The Haunting of Hill House* and *Lighter Than My Shadow*.

Abstract: The dissociative behaviour of Eleanor Vance, Shirley Jackson's ill-fated protagonist in *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), introduces the idea of the existence of multiple selves, blurring the boundaries between the conceptual self and other. Over five decades later, Katie Green's autobiographical graphic novel *Lighter Than My Shadow* (2013) catalogues her experience of anorexia through a similar exploration of this self and other dichotomy. Despite the decades of cultural and literary history between their writings, this essay explores how both authors utilise classic tropes of the gothic genre, along with its iconographic haunted houses and ghoulish figures, to represent the psyche of their protagonists. The essay also demonstrates how the gothic genre can be used as a commentary on patriarchal evaluations of the female body and mind, demonstrating how the female psyche is haunted by its interactions with the patriarchal society in which it exists.

PANEL 2: LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

Speaker: Wirdatul Khasanah, MA Applied Linguistics and ELT

Paper title: It takes two to tango: But why woman always being blamed in infidelity?

Abstract: It takes two to tango. However, when there is an affair in extramarital status, it is the other women who are constantly being blamed. In Indonesia, there is a term to address the other woman in infidelity, namely pelakor which stands for Perebut Laki Orang (A stealer of someone else's husband). Oftentimes, the word pelakor is widely used in online newspaper to blame women and absent the role of men in infidelity. Thus, having this unequal portrayal of women in an online newspaper, this study addresses the injustice discursive of the word pelakor in a newspaper. Using the perspective of Feminist Critical discourse analysis (FCDA), I try to uncover the rooted construction of gender inequality and sexism in Indonesian newspapers specifically detik.com. From 31 newspaper headlines containing the word pelakor, the result shows that Detik.com puts woman as an active actor in the marital relationship; meanwhile man here is positioned to be the passive actor. It indicates that the society puts women as the one who is responsible in extra marital relationship while men is put as passive agents who are always innocent.

Speaker: Xinmei Sun, BA Hons English Language and Applied Linguistics

Paper title: Sacrificing long hair and the domestic sphere: A corpus-based critical discourse analysis of news reports on female medical workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in China

Abstract: News is a major discursive site for gendered assumptions to be re-enacted and circulated as natural and commonsensical. A major change in the news industry is its departure from print publication towards online publication. A popular form of online news in China is short news posts (approx. 100 words) posted by news accounts on social media with the numbers of followers approximating a hundred million. This form of news can be extremely influential to collective perception and is thus relevant to the attempts in addressing gender inequalities. This study analyses the way news posts represent female medical workers during the Covid-19 pandemic in China. It adopts an approach combining corpus linguistics and a framework of critical discourse analysis, with the former for establishing salient themes and recurring lexico-grammatical patterns in the representation, the latter for identifying and interpreting gendered ideologies in the representations. The analysis of keywords and their collocations uncovered that mentions of appearances often co-occur with representations of female medical workers as a group (as exemplified in references to their 'faces', 'eyes' and 'hair'), whereas mentions of domestic responsibilities often co-occur with representations of female medical workers as individuals (as exemplified in references to 'mom', 'husband'). Both representations are framed in a narrative of sacrifice, i.e., sacrificing appearances and domestic responsibilities. The study concludes by unpacking the gendered assumptions and implications of a narrative of sacrifice in the news posts.

Speaker: Ruth Serlin, Applied Linguistics by Web-Based Distance Learning MA

Paper title: 'After all, I'm only human': how veterinarians create a professional identity relating to animal euthanasia

Abstract: Taking a sociocultural linguistic view of language use as social activity, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) argue identity is the 'social positioning of self and other'. They posit that identity is created in a synthesis of both the micro-level, in locally shared positions and also in macro-level, 'brought along' identities, relating to past experience and our own perception of social categories. Identities thus formed are fluid and momentary and emerge from, are influenced by, and influence discourse. People overtly label their identity categories or develop them by more covert or unknowing means. In developing who we are, we also create a category of who we are not and who we should or shouldn't be. Through the telling of small stories, we position ourselves relative to others and take stances that allow identity construction.

Euthanising animals is a day-to-day procedure for veterinarians, yet they can struggle to resolve the caring-killing paradox of how, as carers, they also kill their patients. Handling owner emotions at this time can add to the stress.

In this presentation, I draw on my assignment for the MA Applied Linguistics module 'Professional Communication at Work'. Using this sociocultural linguistic approach, I investigated how young vets co-created professional identities in handling their emotions around euthanasia. Through sharing stories and giving personal accounts, two identities were created. Only one is interactionally preferred. This preferred identity allowed vets to 'be emotional and crying' with the clients, sharing their humanity as opposed to a colder, more 'professional' identity.

Bucholtz, M. and Hall, K. (2005) 'Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach', *Discourse Studies*, 7(4–5), pp. 585–614.

PANEL 3: ADAPTING FORM, CREATING

Speaker: Michela Villano, English Studies MA

Paper title: English and Italian Arthurian Medieval Romances from the 13th to the 15th Century: A Comparative Study

Abstract: This presentation explores how a selection of English and Italian medieval romances of 13th-15th centuries situate themselves within the Arthurian legends through the adaptation of romance tropes, motifs, characters etc. Moreover, it analyses how English and Italian renditions of Arthurian literature differ and/or converge in the treatment of themes, narrative techniques and characterisation from their shared literary influence. Through this presentation, I aim to show and advocate for the importance of researching and comparing how different European cultures responded to Arthurian legends: these responses are valuable because they can shed a new light in not only the diverse ways in which medieval romances adapted Arthurian material in England and Italy but also in showing how the medieval Arthurian romance reflects the cultural and historical contexts of literary production.

My presentation introduces this topic by looking briefly at the significance of the French Arthurian oeuvre and how it influenced and shaped medieval writers in England and Italy. I then move on to do a close analysis of a small selections and abstracts from English and Italian medieval romances to illustrate the above ideas. Finally, I end with a few closing points about what the above analysis can reveal about the nature of the transmission of Arthurian material across European medieval cultures and attitudes towards chivalry in medieval England and Italy.

Speaker: Lilith Lear Hudson, English and Philosophy

Paper title: Technological Threats and the Metafictional Mode: Analysing Dystopias in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Lionel Shriver's *The Mandibles* (2016)

Abstract: When I began research for my dissertation on dystopian fiction, the formal device of metafiction did not first come to mind. I knew the function of satire within both texts could not be ignored, but I wanted to bring this to light in an innovative way. As I continued my research, I realised the essential role that metafiction and intertextuality play in distancing the authorial voice in order to make implicit commentaries about the writer's own social milieu. However, investigations into the role of metafiction in dystopian texts has received minimal critical attention despite its prevalence within the genre.

I decided to dedicate my entire second chapter to this research. I begin by analysing the function of Goldstein's book 'The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism' in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* which establishes a book-in-book effect, provoking questions about the authenticity and credibility of the written word. I then turn to Shriver's contemporary text *The Mandibles* which, rather than formally integrating any texts into the narrative, uses intertextual references to other canonical texts, including *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Despite the overarching similarities in the way metafiction is used as a mechanism to communicate messages to their contemporary readers, my chapter compares the novels' difference too. Orwell is concerned with exposing the power of fiction to shape and control readers' minds while Shriver wishes to overcome what she assumes to be her readers' cynicism toward dystopias. Thus, writing in flooded market, Shriver's text conveys an important message about the relevance and plausibility of dystopias today.

Speaker: Joe Paternoster, English

Paper title: 'God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!': Marvel's Thanos as a solution to the death of God in an increasingly secular Western world.

Abstract: Friedrich Nietzsche famously declared that God was dead in the late-1800s. Nowadays, our Western world is as atheistic as it has ever been. Nietzsche feared a nihilistic moral catastrophe following God's death, unless some new bastion of moral guidance could take God's value-providing place. His proposed solution was the Superman figure, a conceptual ideal for humanity to strive towards to create moral value and resist nihilism. My interest was in assessing our society's relationship to this Superman ideal, and what value Nietzsche's ideas have in our increasingly secular world. Culturally, superheroes are attempts at attaining the Superman, embodying a version of humanity that strives to be better than what it currently is. Correspondingly, supervillains can make these same attempts at attaining the Superman. Thanos, the greatest villain of the largest film franchise of our time, is no exception. My dissertation thus explores the variety of connections between Nietzschean ideals and Thanos. Firstly, there is an analysis of the motivations of Thanos in the original comic books, and how their nihilistic themes reflect the sociocultural concerns of the era in which they were conceived. The latter half of the dissertation then considers film Thanos, and what alterations were made from his comic book counterpart. Those alterations, including the reemphasis of sacrifice and influence of Malthusianism, are considered in relation to the changing sociocultural concerns of our modern era. It results in a conclusion considering Thanos' role as a contemporary Superman figure, and the real-world lessons that must be taken from that.

Speaker: Simeon Cherepov, Classics and English

Paper title: Out of site, out of mind: escaping from and into the occult in *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace

Abstract: David Wallace's 'Infinite Jest' takes on two major topics of late 20th century American society: pleasure and irony. Although markedly different on the outside, the mechanics of overindulgence in pleasure and the abuse of irony for entertainment purposes overlap according to Wallace's grand agenda. This work aims to analyse the way Wallace integrates irony inside the ritualistic portrayal of drug consumption and draws parallels between irony and drugs as sinister entertainers and idols.

PANEL 4: HOW IT'S MADE: CONSTRUCTING LANGUAGE AND

Speaker: Noor Dabbas, Literary Linguistics MA

Paper title: 'Just Google It': A Cross-Corpus Study of Conversion and Cognitive Grammar

Abstract: Langacker's Cognitive Grammar paradigm offers explanations for how many linguistic morphological phenomena have come to be but has yet to be used to explain the process of conversion, the derivational morphological phenomenon where a new word is coined from an existing instance of its use by changing the part of speech it is originally used in. In this study, I use corpus linguistics research methods to demonstrate how Cognitive Grammar, which illustrates the cognitive mechanisms involved in the functional processing of language, can explain conversion by examining how the noun "Google" came to be popularly used as a verb. To do this, I tracked the increase of the instances in which the word "google" was used as a verb over the span of the years 2008-2018 by analyzing the enTenTen English Web 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2018 corpora. My results demonstrate that there has been an observed increase in the use of the word "google" as a verb compared to the overall use of the word google over the span of the years 2008-2018, indicating that the CG paradigm offers a reliable explanation for the morphological phenomenon that is conversion as it has done for other morphological processes.

Speaker: James Stevens, English

Paper title: 'For you know only a heap of broken images': how does T.S. Eliot transform his presentation of disillusionment, from manuscript to publication, in *The Waste Land*?

Abstract: The aim of my dissertation was to work out how and why *The Waste Land* changed so much, in terms of poetic voice and perspective, from manuscripts to publication. Over the course of my research, and what I try to articulate in the dissertation, I found that the manuscripts were key in enabling Eliot to really develop his own poetic voice. In his early poetry ('Gerontion', 'He Do The Police' etc.) we see Eliot's early style to largely revolve around the use of external masks and personas that each present their own disillusioned gripes and grumbles from a deeply personal and relativist perspective. With the help of Pound's annotations, Eliot's changes to *The Waste Land* (that, in the thesis, I point out are a shift to the impersonal, a shift from relativism to the absolute, and a deliberate use of poetic fragmentation) are exactly the axioms to which we can attribute to a 'style' synonymous with Eliot.

The dissertation itself directly compares Part I&II of 'He Do The Police in Different Voices' against 'The Burial of the Dead' and 'A Game of Chess' and looks at how the disillusionment of *The Waste Land*'s speaker(s) changes from one to the other. On top of this explanation as to 'how' the manuscript and publication was different, I then speculated as to 'why' such events occurred. The best answers I could come up with were: Pound had Eliot write in a style that matched the avant-garde movements of the time and that Eliot's development of an absolute poetic voice was a much more tactile and bulletproof way of interacting with what the postmodernists would later call 'Grand Narratives'.

Speaker: Anna Gant, MA English Studies by Web-Based Distance Learning

Paper title: 'The End is the Beginning': The 'What' and 'Whys' of Fanfiction in the Words of Those Who Are Both Fanficcors and Traditionally Published Writers

Abstract: Fanfiction is at once a pervasive and a polarizing topic. This presentation, drawing on extracts from my dissertation of the same title, will introduce the topic of fanfiction as it is expressed in a seminal work on the subject (Anne Jamison's "Fic: Why Fanfiction is Taking Over the World"), which, rather ironically and possibly unconsciously, discusses fanfiction via a stream of negative buzzwords. The presentation will then move to present fanfiction as it is discussed by the participants in my dissertation—all of whom are both writers of fanfiction and internationally acclaimed, traditionally published authors. Based on their positions in the fanfiction realm and in the publishing industry, their perspectives on fanfiction (what it is, what makes it enjoyable, why it is written, and what unusual dichotomies it creates) are diverse and do not encapsulate the negative overtones found in Jamison's research. Particularly intriguing is the consensus that one of fanfiction's greatest merits is an absence of limitations, which offers a space, on the one hand, for marginalized voices and, on the other hand, for pure fun and escapism. Serving as a foundational exploration of contemporary fanfiction, this presentation intends to highlight opportunities for further research in the fanfiction field, which will build on the preliminaries uncovered by my investigation.

