

Is it shame or is it water?

Poetry and research in conversation



LEVERHULME
TRUST _____

THURSDAY & FRIDAY, AUGUST 5-6

The Oxford Centre for Life-Writing

DR KATHERINE COLLINS, DR HELEN MORT, DR MARIAH WHELAN

5th August

12:30

Welcome

12:45

'You Must Do a Lot of Research'

Amit Chaudhuri

13:45

Break

14:00

Toward a Fugitive Aesthetics of Poetic Inquiry: Applying Douglass Kearney's 'Performative Typography' to Mobilise the Historic and Social Subtexts of Group Narratives **Javier Perez**

take /take /take /take Poetic reading and recipe books, **Olivia Smith**

The Print Museum - poems responding to letterpress and lithographic printing processes, **Heidi Williamson**

15:00

Break

15:30

'The soul in paraphrase': sources of poetic language

Carmen Bugar

16:30

Break

16:45

'Some things are too sacred': Navigating Qalipu Mi'kmaw Identity through Poetry and Poetic Inquiry, **Adrian M. Downey & Michelle Scott**

Desire, dreams, and destiny: Exploring how the subalterns 'speak' through pantoums and photos, **Darshini Nadarajan**

17:45

Close

6th August

9:30

Welcome

9:45

Poetry and young people's experiences
Kate Clanchy & Yasmin Musse in conversation

10:30

Break

10:45

Poetry and the Impacts of Impact on Poets and Poetry: Writing and Editing
Elegies and Ecopoetry, **Yvonne Reddick**

The impact of engaging with poetry on the reflective practice of doctors in
training, **Bethany Whittle**

Truth Tellers: Traumatic truth-making as art and politics, **Mariah Whelan &
Pablo de Orellana**

The Trickster, The Poet and The Stand-Up Scholar, **Kate Fox**

12:15

Lunch break

6th August

13:15

Poetic Inquiries and Black-Indigenous Solidarities as Ethical Imperative in Maternal Care: Investigating the implications of narrative and autoethnopoetic inquiry to examine Indigenous Australian maternal care experiences.

Alexus Davis

Rupturing Genre Thinking: On the Intersections and Boundaries Between Poetry and Research. A Feminist Decolonial Perspective, **Ana López H**

Bodies Unbound: Reinscribing the Testimony of Colonial Sex Workers, **April Yee**

Anxious specialism(s): the question of poetic expertise, **Hannah Copley**

14:45

Break

15:00

Small Boats and Silent Archives: Poetics and Paddling as Historical Method

David Gange

My island's the house I sleep in at night: Nissopoesis and island-making

Laurie Brinklow

15:45

The making of Opposite: Poems, Philosophy & Coffee

Aaron Meskin and Helen Mort

16:30

Close



AMIT CHAUDHURI

'You Must Do a Lot of Research'

Amit Chaudhuri is Professor of Creative Writing at Ashoka University. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He is honorary fellow of the Modern Language Association and of Balliol College, Oxford. He is the author of seven novels, the latest of which is the critically acclaimed *Friend of My Youth*, which explores the boundary between 'living' and 'writing'. He is also an essayist and musician. His major works of non-fiction include *Finding the Raga*, published in the UK, US, and India this year; *The Origins of Dislike*, a selection of critical essays that appeared in the UK in 2019; an influential book of critical essays, *Clearing a Space*; and a critical study of DH Lawrence's poetry, *D H Lawrence and 'Difference'*. He is also the author of a book of short stories, *Real Time*. His third book of poems, *Ramanujan*, came out this year in the UK. He is the editor of the Picador/ Vintage Book of Modern Indian Literature. Among the awards he has won for his fiction are the Commonwealth Writers Prize, the Betty Trask Prize, the Encore Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction, and the Government of India's Sahitya Akademi Award.



ELLEKE BOEHMER

Chair

Elleke Boehmer FRSL FRHistS FEA is Professor of World Literature in the English Faculty, Oxford, and Director of the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing at Wolfson College. She is a founding figure in the field of postcolonial and world literature studies in English. Recent work includes *Postcolonial Poetics* (2018) and *Indian Arrivals 1870–1915: Networks of British Empire* (2015), which won the ESSE prize 2015–16. Her biography *Nelson Mandela* (2008) has been widely translated, as has *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (1995, 2005). Boehmer's fiction includes *To the Volcano* (2019) and *The Shouting in the Dark* (2015), winner of the EASA Olive Schreiner Prize for Prose, 2018. *To the Volcano* was commended for the Australian Review of Books Elizabeth Jolley Prize, 2019. Elleke Boehmer was awarded a British Academy Senior Research Fellowship 2020 for 'Southern Imagining'—a project exploring understandings of the world from the Global South. Elleke also works on the UKRI funded 'Accelerate Hub' in which she researches how storytelling practices underpin and impact African identities. In 2019 Elleke Boehmer was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.



CARMEN BUGAN

"The soul in paraphrase": sources of poetic language.

Poets have the unique freedom to explore various meanings and sounds of words, to break rules, and to go further in language, where they can reveal, illuminate, invent, discover, re-imagine, describe, and ultimately, inspire. Their fodder is figurative language where the real meets the imagined, and language is transformed. The source of figurative language is the world around us, in the knowledge that comes from all areas of human occupations, and preoccupations. The terms of comparison of one thing to another come from science, politics, history, medicine, and so on. Because poetry takes a holistic view of "the person", it provides the richest expressions of the complexity of the human experience in language.

For a poem to truly communicate, it must have a certain naturalness and spontaneity about its language and thoughts, an ease about "the soul in paraphrase" and "something understood" as George Herbert put it, and, as Alexander Pope explained:

True ease in writing comes from Art, not Chance,
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

--Alexander Pope (1688-1744) from "An Essay on Criticism"

This talk considers the nature of statements poets make (figurative, normative, factual, descriptive) in relation to the quality of knowledge about the world and the ethical implications in relation to lyric language and imagination. What is the relationship between research, wonder, and imagination? What is the link between inspiration and discovery? And, more importantly to the task facing the poets writing in today's changing world, what about that "pause for po-ethics" -the notion of ethics through aesthetics/ the moral role of poetry—that Seamus Heaney alludes to in his book of poems *Electric Light*, in his elegy to Auden "W. H. Auden, 1907-73"?



CARMEN BUGAN

“The soul in paraphrase”: sources of poetic language.

Carmen Bugan, George Orwell Prize Fellow, is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *Lilies from America: New and Selected Poems* (a PBS Special Commendation), a memoir, *Burying the Typewriter: Childhood Under the Eye of the Secret Police* (a BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week) and a monograph on Seamus Heaney and *East European Poetry in Translation: Poetics of Exile*. She was the 2018 Helen DeRoy Professor in Honors at the University of Michigan, a Chargée de Cours at the Université de Fribourg in Switzerland, and taught in the Continuing Education department at the University of Oxford, while she was a Creative Arts Fellow in Literature at Wolfson College. She has a doctorate in English literature from Balliol College, Oxford. She currently teaches at the Gotham Writers' Workshop in Manhattan. Her most recent book, *Poetry and the Language of Oppression: Essays on Politics and poetics*, is just out from Oxford University Press.



KATE KENNEDY

Chair

Kate Kennedy is a biographer, librettist and broadcaster. She specialises in twentieth-century music and literature, the First World War, women's composition and writing, and illness narratives. *Dweller in Shadows: A Life of Ivor Gurney* was published by Princeton University Press in June 2021. The result of many years of research, it will be the first biography to look at all aspects of the war poet / composer's work, alongside his life from the trenches to a lunatic asylum. Kate is a Research Fellow in Life-Writing at Wolfson College, Oxford, and the Associate Director of the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing, an international centre for the discussion of biography, autobiography, and the many issues surrounding the ways in which we approach the narratives of lives. She has previously held research fellowships in both Music and English at the University of Cambridge. With Dame Hermione Lee as co-editor, Kate published *Lives of Houses* with Princeton University Press in 2020. A regular broadcaster on the BBC, particularly Radio 3, she appears on *Music Matters*, *Proms Plus*, *Record Review*, *Building a Library*, *Essential Classics*, *Composer of the Week* and *The Essay*. Her Sunday Feature documentaries have been selected for Pick of the Year by Radio 4, and she was awarded the Oxford Vice Chancellor's Prize for Public Engagement with Research in 2017.

6 AUGUST

9:45–10:30am



KATE CLANCHY

Kate Clanchy is a writer, teacher and journalist. Her poetry collection *Slattern* won a Forward Prize. Her short story 'The Not-Dead and the Saved' won both the 2009 BBC National Short Story Award and the VS Pritchett Memorial Prize. Her novel *Meeting the English* was shortlisted for the Costa Prize. Her BBC 3 radio programme about her work with students was shortlisted for the Ted Hughes prize. In 2018 she was awarded an MBE for services to literature, and an anthology of her students' work, *England: Poems from a School*, was published to great acclaim. In 2019 she published *Some Kids I Taught and What They Taught Me*, a book about her experience of teaching in state schools for several decades, which won the Orwell Prize for Political Writing in 2020.



YASMIN MUSSE

Yasmin Musse is a secondary school English teacher, poet and incoming PhD student in Education at Durham University. Driven by her pursuit of social justice in the classroom, Yasmin's PhD thesis is based on Black schoolgirls and epistemic justice, particularly how poetry can be utilised as a transformative tool for Black girls to vocalise and assert their schooling experiences and knowledge claims.



TAMARIN NORWOOD

Tamarin Norwood gained her doctorate in Fine Art as a Clarendon scholar at the University of Oxford in 2018, and is now a postdoctoral research fellow at the Drawing Research Group, Loughborough University, writing a book on metaphor and neonatal loss. She is also a visiting early career research fellow at the Centre for Death and Society, University of Bath, and researcher at the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing where she convenes the *Lives in Medicine* and *Beyond Words* research networks. Tamarin's scholarly publications focus on representation and loss in drawing; her related prose fiction, poetry and artwork have been published and shown widely including with the BBC World Service, *Art on the Underground*, ICA Philadelphia, MOCCA Toronto and Tate Britain. Much of her work is interdisciplinary, most recently as part of *Hubbub*, the inaugural Hub residency at Wellcome Collection, London.

6 AUGUST

3:45-4:30pm



AARON MESKIN

Aaron Meskin is Professor and Head of Philosophy at the University of Georgia. Previously, he was Professor of Philosophical Aesthetics at the University of Leeds. He has published more than fifty journal articles and book chapters on philosophical aesthetics, philosophical psychology, and the philosophy of food and was the co-creator, with Helen Mort, of *Opposite: Poems, Philosophy & Coffee* (2019). He has edited or co-edited five other books, including *Aesthetics and the Sciences of Mind* (2014) and *The Art of Comics: A Philosophical Approach* (2012).



HELEN MORT

Helen Mort has published two poetry collections with Chatto & Windus. She won an Eric Gregory Award in 2007 and in 2015 was chosen as one of the Next Generation poets. Collaborative projects with other artists have included working with a flamenco guitarist, a baroque orchestra, photographers, philosophers and football teams. Her first novel 'Black Car Burning' was published in 2019 and was long listed for the Portico Prize. She has also published short stories, she recently appeared on BBC Woman's Hour discussing my story 'Weaning', which deals with experiences of post natal depression and breastfeeding. She writes creative non fiction exploring landscape, desire, the body and many other topics. Her particular interest is in women and mountaineering. She has written essays for Radio 3 and her work has appeared in *The Independent*, *The Guardian* and many other journals.



KATHERINE COLLINS

Katherine Collins is a poet and a Leverhulme Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. Her research interests include the creative and critical practices involved in the writing of marginalised lives, such as the politics and poetics of life-writing, testimonial cultures and witnessing, and autobiographies of resistance. Her poetry has appeared in *The Rialto*, *Shearsman Magazine*, *Finished Creatures*, *Ink Sweat & Tears*, *Anthropocene*, and the anthology *Angled by the Flood*. Her pamphlet was shortlisted in *The Rialto's* 2020 competition.

JAVIER ERNESTO PEREZ

Toward a Fugitive Aesthetics of Poetic Inquiry: Applying Douglass Kearney's 'Performative Typography' to Mobilise the Historic and Social Subtexts of Group Narratives.

While some scholars call on poetic inquiry (PI) to draw more on 'traditional' poetic structures in avoidance of producing 'quasipoetic forms' (Lahman et al 2011; Furman 2006), this paper unsettles the implicit bias toward certain privileged forms by engaging with an innovative non-traditional writing style, performative typography. Building on the pioneering works of poets Douglass Kearney (2015a, 2015b) and NourbeSe Philip (2008), performative typography is a way of rendering sound and voice into the visual realm of poetic form, through which a poem's movement and breathe interplay by taking spatially unconventional and visually unpredictable shape.

This paper proposes that the refusal of 'traditional' form(s) through performative typography necessarily destabilises normative structures as the reader is called upon to figure their way through the seeming instability of narrative itself. As further articulated through the poetic works of Fred Moten (2008), Black poetic narratives in particular are fundamentally in a state of motion, ontologised by fugitivity itself. An approach to poetic inquiry based on performative typography can mobilise the individual narrative into its historic and social contexts by visually and sonically incorporating the Black radical traditions of fugitivity (Moten 2013) and marronage (Glissant 2001, 1989).

This demands of both researcher and reader a 'bone-deep listening' to participants' words, a descent into their depths with a 'listening so far into history that not only might the middle passage come (in)to mind, but the listener may also activate an 'ensemble of senses' (Mbowa 2013, 138). It applies this framework to transcribe a focus group discussion with a group of formerly-incarcerated men a during a series of poetry workshops I facilitated.

Javier Perez is a Salvadoran-American poet and PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Cape Town. Javier received his BA in Political Science at Swarthmore College. Javier is also recipient of the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship, Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, and Institute for Citizens and Scholars Fellowship's MMUF Dissertation Grant.

OLIVIA SMITH

take /take /take /take Poetic reading and recipe books.

This presentation is about the possibilities afforded by, and the research ethics of, reading seventeenth century recipe books poetically.

I research and teach from this corpus of manuscript books held in the Wellcome Library, the British Library, and many other places. These are books of medical and culinary recipes, usually collected by multiple generations of a family, and showing evidence of 'multiple hands' – several different writers. Because they signify a collection of recipes, and a complex array of mixed provenances, research has often focussed on accurately working out the origins of recipes, uncovering the identities of different writers, and even re-creating the recipes themselves as they would have been in their early modern context. Recipes range from the underspecified 'a good cake' to entries like 'my mother's balm for sore eyes' which seems to import more of its own story.

I have been experimenting with a new methodological approach to this corpus, which involves noticing poetic patterns and orders that seem to occur in the recipe book format. The form of the book, with its repetitive entries, yields images that match and reconfigure, and language that easily accrues into new lines.

In this talk I will show a few of my readings and ask questions about what this kind of work does. Can it tell us about the original object of study, and the kind of writing it contains, or does it just use the original object as a sort of collagist's store? Where do the findings sit between critique and creative writing? What are the ethics of encouraging anachronism? I will also talk briefly about how I've brought this work into line with the paintings of the artist Anna Ilsey, whose [exhibition](#) some of this writing recently accompanied.

Olivia Smith is Wellcome Trust Research Fellow in the English Faculty at Oxford. She teaches early modern literature at Oxford, UCL and KCL, and leads practical research sessions in the Wellcome Library. She also writes creatively and was shortlisted for the 2020 White Review Short Story Prize.

HEIDI WILLIAMSON

The Print Museum – poems responding to letterpress and lithographic printing processes.

Heidi Williamson is a poet, writing tutor and mentor. She studied poetry and prose at the UEA and regularly teaches for arts and literature organisations in the UK.

She is an Advisory Fellow for the Royal Literary Fund, and was Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of East Anglia from 2018 to 2020. From 2011 to 2014, she was writer-in-residence at the John Jarrold Printing Museum in Norwich and in 2008–09 was poet-in-residence at the London Science Museum's Dana Centre.

In 2008 she received an Arts Council award to complete her first collection, *Electric Shadow* (Bloodaxe Books, 2011), a Poetry Book Society Recommendation, which was shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry Prize. *The Print Museum* (Bloodaxe Books, 2016) won the Poetry Category and the Book by the Cover award in the 2016 East Anglian Book Awards. Her third collection, *Return by Minor Road*, is published by Bloodaxe Books in June 2020. A poem from this collection, 'With a rootless lily held in front of him', won the 2019 Plough International Poetry Prize.

Her work has been used to inspire poetry and science discussions in schools and adult creative writing groups, and has featured in NHS waiting rooms, cafés, and at festivals. Poems have been translated into Polish, Turkish, Romanian and German. She works with poets worldwide by Skype as a poetry surgeon for The Poetry Society, teaches for The Poetry School, and mentors poets through The Writing Coach, National Centre for Writing and The Poetry School.

ADRIAN M. DOWNEY & MICHELLE SCOTT

'Some things are too sacred': Navigating Qalipu Mi'kmaq Identity through Poetry and Poetic Inquiry.

Indigenous identity in Canada is a complicated terrain. Through the federal legislation known as “the Indian Act”—which was designed to assimilate Indigenous people into the Canadian body politic (Palmater, 2011)—Indigenous identity has been surveilled and policed by the Canadian government, ubiquitously to the detriment of Indigenous nations, and women in particular (Palmater, 2011). Yet, for federally unrecognized or recently recognized communities, such as the Qalipu Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Indian Act is a form of legitimacy and a validation of communal and ancestral identity. Since 2008, when the Qalipu gained federal recognition, a generation of Qalipu Mi'kmaq people have attempted to navigate what it means to be Indigenous in Canada—a label from which they were previously alienated.

Poetry from Qalipu community members, such as Douglas Walbourne-Gough's *Crow Gulch* (2019) and Shannon Webb-Campbell's *I am a body of Land* (2019), has provided a careful and considered navigation of this contested space. In the current presentation, we seek to contribute to this legacy of writing. Using life-writing and poetic inquiry, we share our lived experiences as Qalipu Mi'kmaq community members, suggesting that some things, such as Indigenous identity, are too sacred to be examined in a strictly academic lens. We highlight poetry as a space in which unsettled, ongoing, and turbulent issues that affect us as researchers can be brought into our work in a meaningful way without presenting those issues in overly simplistic terms. In concluding the presentation, we address whether poetry is a 'non-extractive' method of research by suggesting poetry as a sort of willful refusal (Ahmed, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2014) of traditional, extractive forms of research.

Dr. Adrian M. Downey is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at Mount Saint Vincent University. He is Mi'kmaq, with kinship ties in the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation. His work focuses on curriculum theory, poetic inquiry, Indigenous thinking, and the foundations of education, among other things.

Michelle Scott, Anaatsa'poopaki (Pretty Plume Woman), is the Director of Indigenous Initiatives at St. Mary's University, and a doctoral student at the Werklund School of Education, at the University of Calgary. She was born and raised in the traditional territory of many Nations; including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples where Treaty 13 was signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties was signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. The place is also known as Toronto. Her ancestral home is Ktaqmuk (Newfoundland), the ancestral and unceded homelands of the Beothuk and Mi'kmaq. She is learning what it means to be a good relative here, in Mohkinstis, as a L'nui'skw ktaqmukewey (Newfoundland Mi'kmaq woman). She is committed to opening up spaces within the Western Academy to center Indigenous Voices and Indigenous Ways of Knowing. To bring community together to learn alongside each other at the fire of all of our relations about the historical and ongoing legacy of colonization in what we now know as Canada. To provide the space at this fire for people to begin to understand themselves, their world, and the future they want to create together, in a good way, on the path of reconciliation.

DARSHINI NADARAJAN

Desire, dreams, and destiny: Exploring how the subalterns 'speak' through pantoums and photos.

Gayatri Spivak's (1988) provocative question; can the subaltern speak, forms the basis of this presentation. Spivak's provocation stands as a challenge in expanding our ways of knowing, that is, if the subaltern cannot speak as Spivak postulates, then perhaps we need to attend to alternative ways of listening to unearth subaltern knowledge (Young, 2003).

To gain the words to describe the loss,
I risk losing everything.

Inspired by Moraga's (1983: 62) poem to reimagine speech, I draw upon extraction as an alternative tongue to uncover subtle experiences and tacit knowledge that is underpinned by contemplative, critical, and creative modes of representation. In this sense, I argue that 'extraction' here is not a flippant approach of viewing participants as ecologies of knowledge ready to be mined at will; rather, it is a process of 'losing everything' to 'gain the words' that is, extricating the essence of the self as a way to open up spaces for subalterns to speak.

In the Malay cosmology, pantoums (or pantuns) are used as a vessel to gently transmit advice, ethics, and unspoken Malay customs through humour, banter, and riddles. Drawing upon decolonial scholarship (Darder, 2019; Smith, 2012) to demonstrate the nuances and complexity within the Malay milieu, I explore how the participants in this study weave pantuns and photos to narrate their unspoken pain, pleasure, and precarity to speak back against power and persecution in their roles as teachers of English with a limited language proficiency. Extracting "transgressive data" (St. Pierre, 1997:180) that encompass relational, sensual, transcendental, and dream data, I demonstrate how the pantuns which are framed through a *pembayang* (veiled or figurative lines) are coupled with the *maksud* (meaning or literal lines) to create a quatrain of their lived experiences. I end by discussing the limitations of extraction and some mitigating strategies that were used to avoid falling into the trap of Othering the Other.

Darshini Nadarajan is a doctoral researcher at the University of Oxford whose research is concerned with unpacking the notion of what it means to be a 'proficient' English language teacher in Malaysia. She was awarded a Fulbright scholarship at Michigan State University where she majored in Creative Writing and American Literature.

YVONNE REDDICK

Poetry and the Impacts of Impact on Poets and Poetry: Writing and Editing Elegies and Ecopoetry.

The impact of Impact agendas on poetry presents some challenges, but also opportunities for creativity, ingenuity, and exciting cross-disciplinary collaborations. In this presentation, I will explore how I have tried to take Impact as an opportunity to inspire and stimulate elegies and ecopoetry, for poets, literary publications, and members of the public. I will discuss how I have endeavoured to keep poetry and creativity central to two impact case studies, one submitted and one planned – in spite of institutional pressures to let medicine and the sciences instrumentalise poetry.

For REF 2021, my impact case study 'Poetry, Grief and Healing' was designed to benefit people who had experienced bereavement through creative writing, and to benefit writers by initiating a new collaboration between poets, psychologists and counsellors for a new issue of Magma journal. One of the resulting poems, by Malika Booker, won the Forward Prize for Best Single Poem in 2020. My planned case study for REF 2027 stems from an edited issue of Magma that involves a collaboration between poets, geologists and environmental scientists. This is the main impact pathway for an AHRC Leadership Fellowship grant, 'Anthropocene Poetry.'

I will raise the following questions: *Can Impact be used to inspire poetic practice and literary production? *Can impact work of this kind benefit poets, as well as the third sector and members of the public (and one's institution's QR budget)? *When collaborating with other disciplines, how can we ensure that poetry remains central to the project? *What are the tensions between the REF's emphasis on excellent publications – (60% of one's REF return, and in my field, sole-authored collections and monographs) – and publications that create impact (in my case, textbooks and edited journals)? At the end of the presentation, I will read two poems that I have written during the second project, and discuss how Impact can help to expand poets' literary networks.

Dr Yvonne Reddick is poet, editor and environmental humanities scholar. Her AHRC Leadership Fellowship project involves writing a monograph on how contemporary poets respond to the Anthropocene, editing the Anthropocene Issue of Magma Poetry, and writing a new sequence of poems on climate change and the oil industry. She has enjoyed working with geologists who love poetry, showing trilobites to poets, and helping members of the public to plant poems written on wildflower seed paper.

BETHANY WHITTLE

The impact of engaging with poetry on the reflective practice of doctors in training.

Background: Driven by the need arising from the COVID-19 pandemic to create 'meaningful narratives'(1) from our experiences, the author of this paper collaborated to develop an online creative community, to connect doctors who read and write poetry and foster a space to reflect. Does engaging with poetry impact the ways in which doctors in training reflect on their experiences? If there is an impact, can this be quantified in a way that satisfies the traditions of evidence-based medical practice?

Discussion: I will discuss poetry arising from the experiences of healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. I will suggest that poetry impacts the reflective practice of doctors through: 1. Metaphorical activity - producing clarity through obliqueness. 2. Perspectival shifts - enabling reflexivity. 3. Group discussion - as an act of 'collective contemplation'(2). I will ask why attempts in the existing literature to reconcile poetic practice with a medical model of evidence are rarely successful. Why is it so problematic for research in medicine to accept interdisciplinary methodologies? Is it possible to protect the autonomy of poetry as an art form whilst it is being instrumentalised as an intervention and product in medical research?

Conclusion: Engaging with poetry is a valuable alternative reflective practice for doctors, which can influence their development as clinicians. Existing medical models of evidence must evolve to accommodate poetry. Researchers must avoid conceptions of poetry as a simple intervention. There is an opportunity for medical curricula to foster creative reflective methods if they are mindful of this.

I am a junior doctor currently working at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, UK. Before entering medical school I studied for a MSt in English (1900 - present) at St. Hugh's College, Oxford. I want to use my experiences in these disciplines to create research that explores the value of humanities training in medical education. In 2021 I collaborated with colleagues to set up an online creative community (the Med Poets' Society), which connects healthcare workers interested in poetry.

1. Greenberg, N., Brooks, S. K., Wessely, S., Tracy, D K., (2020). How might the NHS protect the mental health of health-care workers after the COVID-19 crisis?. *The Lancet Psychiatry*. 7 (9), 733-734.

2. Leveen, L., (2017). Finding purpose: honing the practice of making meaning in medicine. *The Permanente Journal*. 21: 17-048.

PABLO DE ORELLANA & MARIAH WHELAN

Truth Tellers: Traumatic truth-making as art and politics.

Pablo de Orellana is a Lecturer in International Relations at King's College London. His interdisciplinary research interests include diplomacy, identity, nationalism, the history of these ideas and the relationship between aesthetics and conflict, particularly art-based methodological approaches to analysing violence. In happier times, instead of researching nationalism, he drives his vespa and pursues poetic, painterly and archaeological passions.

Mariah Whelan is a poet and academic. She is the author of the novel-in-sonnets *the love i do to you* which was shortlisted for The Melita Hume Prize, won the AM Heath Prize and was selected as an Oxford Poetry Library Book of the Month. Mariah is the Jacqueline Bardsley Poet-in-Residence at Homerton College, Cambridge and a Fellow in Creative Practice at University College London.

The Truth Tellers project seeks to understand the 'unspeakable' aspects of descriptions, narratives and other representations, in both text and images. What is the meaning behind widely reproduced images of terrorists and victims? How do visual memorials and rituals function in political and social senses? What messages are communicated subliminally and subtly, beyond the headlines? Truth Tellers seeks to recover and explore representations of political and politicised trauma, delving into their wider meanings, functions and associations in a forensic manner.

In this presentation, academic Dr Pablo de Orellana and poet Dr Mariah Whelan discuss their collaboration within the poetry strand of the project. In order to explore the above questions, the pair mobilised a hybrid of poetry and international relations approaches to retrieve and understand the aesthetic dimension of representations of the Manchester Arena bombings in 2017. The pair will discuss their approach to collaborative and interdisciplinary research, the project's findings and the difficulties of disseminating these results through conventional academic channels.

KATE FOX

The Trickster, The Poet and The Stand-Up Scholar.

Kate Fox works mainly as a stand-up poet and as a broadcaster and speaker. As she points out on stage, if you say you're a comedian who does poems, not many people will come and see you; whereas if you say you're a poet who does comedy...still not many people will come and see you but at least you get Arts Council funding... She enjoys being a variety of things but has found it can make you hard to categorise. Basically she's a writer and performer and due to her extensive work on the radio in the past few years, quite a few people do come and see her work after all.

That includes two comedy series called *The Price of Happiness* for Radio 4 about things she's supposed to want but doesn't and her current touring show "Where There's Muck There's Bras" about notable Northern women. She is a familiar radio voice, having presented *Pick of the Week* on Radio 4 and been a regular contributor to Radio 3's *The Verb*, among many other broadcasts.

She has been Poet in Residence for the Great North Run, Glastonbury Festival and Radio 4's *Saturday Live*. She has also performed her poetry on BBC1 and BBC2. She has supported acts including Linton Kwesi Johnson, Hollie McNish, John Cooper Clarke and John Hegley and is a headline act in her own right.

She's also a gentle activist and campaigner for the voices of Northerners, the working class, women and the neurodiverse to be heard; mainly by teaching and running workshops in schools and community groups -and by speaking, writing, raising awareness and tutting at injustice and inequality.

ALEXUS DAVIS

Poetic Inquiries and Black-Indigenous Solidarities as Ethical Imperative in Maternal Care: Investigating the implications of narrative and autoethno-poetic inquiry to examine Indigenous Australian maternal care experiences.

Indigenous knowledges and methodologies have always existed. Indigenous methodologies of Indigenous Australian peoples have been described as a dynamic and fluid “living knowledge”, with methodologies passed through generations, forever developing (see Louis 2007, Ryder et al 2020). My work examines birth stories of Indigenous Australian women, with a living, self-reflexive narrative poetic inquiry (PI), distilling birth story transcripts of Indigenous Australian women-- birth stories, as the Indigenous methodology of “yarning” in Aboriginal communities (see Martin and Mirraboopa 2003)-- into poems for analysis, analyzing the processes, therein. My use and interrogation of PI in research through autoethnopoetics, attempts an act of solidarity, as ethical imperative, at the mechanistic nexus of maternal health crises in Australia and in my native United States.

From 2009 to 2018, there was a maternal mortality rate of 6.7 deaths, per 100,000 Indigenous Australian women giving birth (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020). In 2018, Black Americans died 2½ times more often than white women (37.1 vs.14.7 deaths per 100,000 live births) (US National Center for Health Statistics 2020). My use of PI is a reflexive engagement with the birth stories of Aboriginal Australian women from my positioning as a Foundational Black American birth doula (with a familial heritage of formerly enslaved African diasporic and Indigenous American peoples). Poetry aligns itself with the fundamental intent of qualitative research: “to examine, share and reveal human experiences” (Furman 2004; 162) and attend to their complexity. I ultimately seek to interrogate a dialectical, autoethnopoetic writing-as-research, as it “distances us from lived experiences— [by allowing] us to discover the existential structures of experience” (van Manen 2001) in ways that can be likened to experiences of maternal/pregnant phenomenology and racism in Australian maternal care.

Alexus Davis is an American poet, birthworker, and PhD candidate at University of Manchester (UK). Her research explores and recognizes the birth experiences of Indigenous Australian women. Davis’ poetry has previously appeared in Potluck Magazine, The Melanin Collective, The Nervous Breakdown, The Audacity, Wax Nine, God Is in the TV, LEVELER, Red Flag Poetry, Silk + Smoke, and a host of others. She is the author of the forthcoming *Cartoon Logic*, *Cartoon Violence* (Baobab Press 2022), as well as two chapbooks: *Two Birds, All Moon* (Gap Riot Press 2019) and *St. John’s Wort* (Animal Heart Press 2019).

ANA LÓPEZ H.

Rupturing Genre Thinking: On the Intersections and Boundaries Between Poetry and Research. A Feminist Decolonial Perspective.

The presumed boundaries between poetry and research are a product of genre thinking (Wynter, 1990), a pillar that sustains disciplinary divisions within the *Studia Humanitatis* as a western epistemological paradigm ruled by Man. As traditional research methods (often embedded in patriarchal, racist, extractivist, and colonial logics) face the decolonization of Academia and the visibilization of historically excluded experiences and voices, the boundaries between poetic work and research dilute. This process slowly paves the way for what Sylvia Wynter calls 'the Third Event,' an epistemological turn that involves autopoiesis – telling our own stories – as a method for rupturing and expanding the western understanding of the Human. Authors like Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa and her views on writing as spiritual and political praxis break through genre thinking. They open possibilities for rethinking humanity and, in that sense, how we engage with ourselves and others, critically and radically transforming how we do research.

Following this line of thought, as a Colombian queer white-mestizx poet and researcher, I will reflect on how articulating poetry and research is a decolonial praxis that opens new radical possibilities for relating, being, and knowing that exceed the Western logics of the *Studia Humanitatis* and the paradigms that sustain it. By engaging with Sylvia Wynter's critique of the Human and Gloria Anzaldúa's poetic, theoretical, and spiritual practices, I will navigate the intersections and boundaries between research and creative work to see how a feminist decolonial radical praxis in writing destabilizes genre thinking and allows for new meanings of life to materialize through autopoiesis.

Ana López H (They/She) is a Colombian poet and researcher studying their PhD in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. They hold an MPhil in European, Latin American, and Comparative Literatures and Cultures from the University of Cambridge, a Specialization in Epistemologies of the South from the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales CLACSO, and a B.A in Literary Studies from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá.

APRIL YEE

Bodies Unbound: Reinscribing the Testimony of Colonial Sex Workers.

How do we revoice the stories of those omitted from the historical record? As a poet, I've spent 2021 collaborating with historian Elise Hanrahan (Freie Universität Berlin) and performance artist Lena Chen (Carnegie Mellon University) to locate the voices of women of colour in French and British colonies during the interwar period, when occupying powers imposed control by subjecting native women to pelvic exams and sex worker registration. Venereal disease was proof a woman was a prostitute; prostitution was proof a woman had venereal disease. Healthy women were required to report for exams as often as twice a week; unhealthy women might be locked in clinics in which treatment consisted of beatings and acid baths. All this was in service of keeping healthy the occupying military (who were often the ones who had set up and policed the brothels) and of maintaining the boundary between white women and their Chinese, Moroccan, or other counterparts. Sexual surveillance upheld white supremacy.

Our project, BODIES UNBOUND, seeks to reinscribe and reembody the voices of women absent from the colonial record. But how do we do that without appropriating? In this presentation, I will review techniques from docupoetry texts that excavate colonial violence against women, including Tarfia Faizullah's SEAM, Emily Jungmin Yoon's A CRUELTY SPECIAL TO OUR SPECIES, and Don Mee Choi's DMZ COLONY. I will discuss my choices (in particular, subjectivity and translation) in creating new work out of the archive and our creative and ethical decisions as we prepare the poems, selected archives, and embodied video performances for public consumption.

April Yee is a writer and translator published in Salon, Electric Literature, and Ploughshares online. A Harvard and Tin House alumna, she reported in more than a dozen countries before moving to the UK, where she serves on University of the Arts London's Refugee Journalism Project and tweets at @apriljee.

HANNAH COPLEY

Anxious specialism(s): the question of poetic expertise.

In an interview with BOMB magazine in 1996, Sharon Olds was asked if she had finally written 'everything' that could be said about her father. The question contains an interesting edge, particularly in relation to autobiographical writing. That Olds' return to a previously addressed topic might signal a lack of ambition or even an unwillingness to 'get over it' raises questions about expertise, originality, and expectation.

In academic research, a specialism is an essential requirement – it is not uncommon for a scholar to dedicate their career to a single author or literary movement. Yet in creative writing and poetry this notion of expertise is more muddled. In my own work, autobiographical and deeply personal material is informed, intersected, and placed in conversation with extensive historical and archival research. But is my current academic specialism gynaecological history, poetry, or even my own body? And what happens to this research now that the collection is finished?

As Sharon Olds' interview in BOMB suggests, with each poetry collection there is a certain expectation to move on and choose a brand-new topic. But what happens if you are, in part, your own topic? What happens if your 'expertise' is ongoing, traumatic, or unresolved? What are your options if you're simply not finished?

For Sharon Olds, there was no question that she would return to the subject of her father: 'We don't choose who our muses are (...) I expect I will be writing about the same things all my life.' I feel less sure. For the symposium I would like to discuss this uncertainty. My contribution will consider this notion of expertise – arguably an area of unresolved tension within the hyphenated identity of the poet-researcher – drawing on poets like Anne Carson, Tracy K. Smith, Denise Riley for inspiration and example.

Hannah Copley is writer, editor and academic. She is a lecturer in creative writing at the University of Westminster, where she specialises in poetry and creative non-fiction. Her poetry collection, *Speculum*, is forthcoming with Broken Sleep Books in October 2021. Hannah is a poetry editor at Stand magazine.

DAVID GANGE

Small Boats and Silent Archives: Poetics and Paddling as Historical Method.

Coasts have been frontlines of colonial dispossession, language loss, and historic erasure. They've therefore required largescale reinterpretation outside the frameworks of historical research that were complicit in their marginalisation. This reinterpretation has been achieved more successfully by poets and poet-scholars than historians, from the anti-colonial poetics of Glissant in Martinique, to First Nations poets in Turtle Island, and the quiet unravellers of imperium on North-East Atlantic coastlines. Christine Evans' re-reading of Ynys Enlli, or the rewriting of Shetland heritage from R.A. Jamieson to Roseanne Watt, exemplify the latter. My work sits somewhere between research and poetry. It argues that historical archives under-represent experience of small coastal communities. For instance, far more than 90% of boats on Atlantic coastlines have been small undecked rowed or paddled vessels, but big decked ships account for almost the entire archive. This means that poetic traditions are a major resource, and poetic writing a natural medium.

My work uses long journeys in small boats as its method and the work of poets as its historiography. It explores relationships between ocean, subsistence, language (particularly small and lost languages), and resistance to the integration of coasts into national polities. It uses the poetic idea of 'potential histories', from the work of visual theorists like Ariella Azoulay and poets like David Lloyd, to explore alternate ways of being through coastal traditions. As that implies, questions of genre and audience are crucial to producing this work: academic writing wouldn't be appropriate and something closer to prose-poetry, peppered with verse, is required. This talk explores the experience of balancing requirements of REF against this subject matter, the voices of current communities, and the methods of sea travel, asking what definition of 'research' is required to make this plausible in a contemporary university.

David Gange is a Historian at the University of Birmingham. His books include histories of archaeology, such as *Dialogues with the Dead* (Oxford, 2013), and histories written from boats, such as *The Frayed Atlantic Edge* (Harper Collins, 2019) which won the 2019 Highland Book Prize and was shortlisted for the Wainwright Prize for Nature Writing. He collaborates regularly with sea-inspired artists and poets, and is currently working on *Black Metal*, a collection of oceanic short stories.

1. Greenberg, N., Brooks, S. K., Wessely, S., Tracy, D K., (2020). How might the NHS protect the mental health of health-care workers after the COVID-19 crisis?. *The Lancet Psychiatry*. 7 (9), 733-734.

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LAURIE BRINKLOW

My island's the house I sleep in at night: Nissopoesis and island-making.

The sea your road
the hole in the sky
your light to travel by

—from 'Always leaving', in *My island's the house I sleep in at night*

With this presentation proposal, I suggest a hybrid between the scholarly and the poetic as I present my research through poetry in my book, *My island's the house I sleep in at night* (Island Studies Press, 2021).

While interviewing artists from Newfoundland and Tasmania about the idea of 'islandness', I was often struck by something that was said which sounded 'like a poem'. This resulted in either 'found poems' (Butler-Kisber, 2010, 84) in the practice of poetic inquiry, or as poetic re-imaginings with roots in what Thomas (2009, 128) has called "nissopoesis" or "island-making": "a search to represent island phenomena, to reveal feelings and essence of experience, while embracing ambiguity, complexity—leaving spaces open to a multiplicity of meanings and epistemological uncertainty." As Bachelard ([1958] 1994, xxi) writes: "forces are manifested in poems that do not pass through the circuits of knowledge." Similarly, in what Glesne (2011, 250) calls "poetic transcription", "poem-like pieces from the words of participants [in order to] get at the essence of what's said, the emotions expressed, and the rhythm of speaking" became the poems. This was created a 'third voice', a combination of both interviewer and participant, "disintegrat[ing] any appearance of separation between observer and observed."

Re-imagining academic research through the creative lens offers contextual understanding and insight, providing the potential to access and share research material and conclusions—such as emotionally charged content or deeply personal stories—in ways that might not be possible through purely academic avenues. Through the poems, then, I re-present my research into the phenomenology of 'islandness', and will present a dialogue between the researcher and the artist, the scholarly and the poetic.

Laurie Brinklow teaches Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island. In addition to scholarly writing, she is the author of two books of poetry, *Here for the Music* (Acorn Press, 2012) and *My island's the house I sleep in at night* (Island Studies Press, 2021).