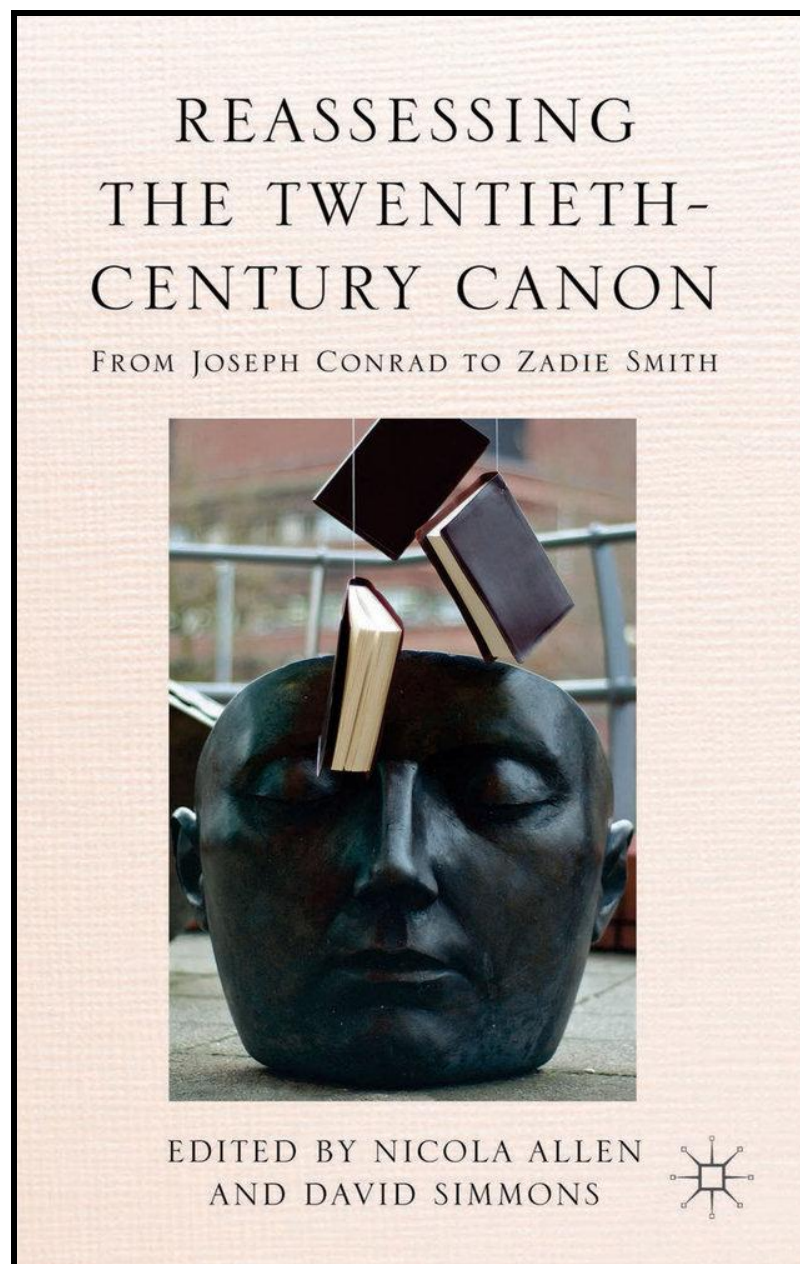




THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHAMPTON
School of The Arts



Research Seminars and Events
Autumn 2014

Research Seminars and Events, Autumn 2014

All Seminars will be held in Room MY120 at 2.15pm unless otherwise stated. There will be free tea, coffee and biscuits. All SOTA staff and students welcome to attend.

Wednesday 8th October – Professor John Drew (The University of Buckingham), 'Viewing the Voiceless Ghosts: Authorship and Anonymity in the Late Victorian Press.'

Wednesday 15th October – Emmanouel Aretoulakis (The University of Athens, Greece), 'Posthumanist Ecology in English Romantic Poetry.' **Note: Room MR10.**

Tuesday 21st October – **Special Lecture:** Tabish Khair (The University of Aarhus, Denmark), 'The Significance of the Scream: Otherness in Postcolonial and Gothic Fiction.' **Note: 1pm, MY35 (changed from previously advertised).**

Wednesday 5th November – Dr James McLaughlin (The University of Northampton), 'The Phenomenology of the Meisner Technique.' **Note: 3.15-5pm in MY120.**

Wednesday 12th November – Peter Parker, 'The Re-Examined Life: Researching the Modern Lives of Christopher Isherwood and J.R. Ackerley.'

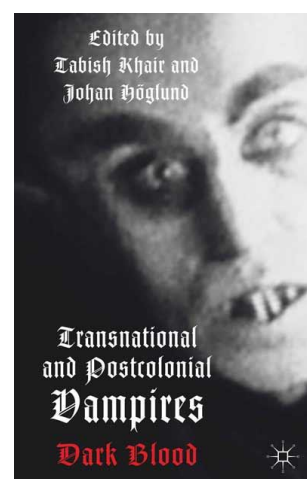
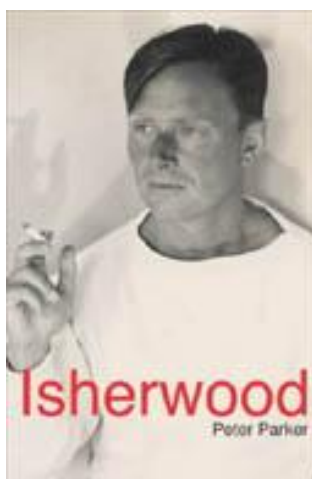
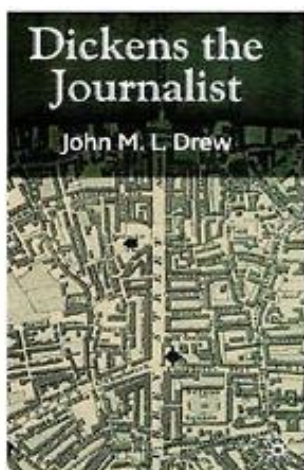
Wednesday 26th November – Roy Wallace (The University of Northampton), '"Shooting in the Dark" - DIY documentary videomaking and the politics of process.'

Wednesday 3rd December – Dr Hayley Linthwaite, 'Unmasking Workshop Ecology in Applied Performance.' **Note: 3.15-5pm**

Friday 12th December – **Special Lecture:** Professor Nick Groom (The University of Exeter), 'John Clare at Christmas, the Seasons and the English Calendar.' **Note: 5pm drinks, followed by lecture at 6pm in MR5.**

Wednesday 17th December – Dr David Simmons, Dr Sonya Andermahr, Dr Claire Allen, 'Rethinking the Twentieth Century Canon.' With special guests Professor Gina Wisker (The University of Brighton) and Dr Martyn Colebrook (The University of Hull). **Note: This event will take place in The Boardroom.**

If you would like to attend any of these events, but are external to the School of the Arts, please contact Larissa.Allwork@northampton.ac.uk to book a place.



Speakers and their Presentations

Visiting Fellow Professor John Drew

(The University of Buckingham)

8 October 2014

'Viewing the Voiceless Ghosts: Authorship and Anonymity in the Mid-Victorian Press'

Abstract: The nineteenth-century periodical press has long been recognised as a key constituent of both the bourgeois public sphere and of a modern market-driven culture, but the widespread practice of anonymous publication of both non-fiction and fiction has posed a major barrier for traditional critical methods. The so-called 'fourth estate' of the Victorian realm has been hard to call to account for its pronouncements and its influence, given its highly selective approach to revealing the identity behind its many voices. This seminar will ponder the implications of this, and examine specific examples of ways in which, in the digital age, the authorship of previously unattributed articles can be ascertained.

John Drew is Professor of English Literature at the University of Buckingham, and Visiting Fellow in the School of Arts at the University of Northampton. He directs the Leverhulme Trust funded *Dickens Journals Online* project, an open access online edition of Dickens's weekly journals *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. Publications include extensive work on the *Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens*, the co-editing of Volume 4 of the *Dent Uniform Edition of Dickens' Journalism*, an edition of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* for Wordsworth Classics, *Dickens the Journalist* (Palgrave 2003), a short collection of so-called 'blacking poems' attributed to Dickens (*The Pride of Mankind*, Hedge Sparrow Press, 2006), and numerous articles on aspects of Victorian journalism.

Dr Emmanouel Aretoulakis

(The University of Athens)

15 October 2014

'Posthumanist Ecology in English Romantic Poetry'

Abstract: To say that nature is central to the nineteenth-century literary consciousness is to state the obvious. When Wordsworth, in 'The Tables Turned (1798)', demands that we 'quit [our] books' he is formulating the famous 'back-to-nature' motto. From an environmental point of view, Wordsworth's request may not point in the right direction. In other words, it may not be absolutely ecological to highlight the necessity of loving nature. Humanist theories of ecology have traditionally concentrated upon the importance of preserving nature for the sake of humanity. More recent theories of the environment such as *deep* ecology pointed to the fact that humanity and the physical universe are one and the same—which is rather too convenient for the anthropocentric mind. Can posthumanism help us form a truly ecological consciousness? At the turn of the twenty-first century there was a critical shift to posthumanist ecologies that attempt to go even "deeper" than deep ecology—which arguably cannot extricate itself from humanism. Dark ecology, for instance, emphasises the need to 'decentre' nature by placing it in the background, that is, in areas 'surrounding' the centre. How helpful in attaining an ecological mind is such a posthumanist perspective? Can we look to, traditionally humanist, romantic poetry for making a case for what would seem to be a posthumanist or "dark" ecology today?

Emmanouel Aretoulakis is a Senior Teaching Fellow at the Faculty of English Language and Literature at the University of Athens, Greece. He has a BA from the English Department of the University of Athens. He holds an MA English Literature and Literary/Critical Theory from the University of Athens. Before joining the English Department he taught at the University of Crete and the University of Patras. His research interests include sixteenth-century English Poetry and Prose, Critical Theory/Literary Criticism, Utopian/Dystopian Fiction and eighteenth/twentieth century Philosophy and Aesthetics. He has participated in various international conferences while he has published articles and review essays on Anthony Burgess' fiction, Ecology and Literature, the aesthetics of terrorism, Jean Francois Lyotard and Chaos Theory. His latest work 'Aesthetic Appreciation, Ethics and 9/11' was published in the American philosophical journal, *Contemporary Aesthetics*.

Visiting Fellow Tabish Khair
(Aarhus University, Denmark)

21 October 2014

'Significance of the Scream: Otherness in Postcolonial and Gothic Fiction'

Abstract: Starting with an examination of some of the gothic tropes used to narrate India in colonial literature (fiction and non-fiction), this paper will look at some highly visible postcolonial narratives of/about India and compare them to 19th century Gothic narratives. It will argue that the problem of narrating otherness can only be resolved partially – and in very different ways – by Gothic narratives and postcolonial ones. It will propose that the imperial Gothic sometimes manages to address aspects of colonial otherness that overtly postcolonial texts cannot access.

Born and educated in Bihar, India, **Tabish Khair** has won the All India Poetry Prize and published a number of critically acclaimed collections of poetry, including *Where Parallel Lines Meet* (2000) and *Man of Glass* (2010), and novels. His novels have been translated into various languages and short-listed for a dozen major awards, including the Man Asian Prize, the Encore Award and the Hindu Best Fiction Prize. He has also written or edited several ground-breaking studies and anthologies, including *Babu Fictions: Alienation in Contemporary Indian English Novels* (2001) and *Other Routes: 1500 Years of African and Asian Travel Writing* (2005). Apart from contributing to major academic and literary journals, he writes regularly for the Hindu in India and papers in UK. His latest novel is *How to Fight Islamist Terror from the Missionary Position*. Khair now lives in Denmark, where he is an Associate Professor at Aarhus University. Home page: <http://www.tabishkhair.co.uk>

Dr James McLaughlin
(The University of Northampton)

5 November 2014

'The Phenomenology of the Meisner Technique'

Abstract: By applying a range of phenomenological perspectives to three key exercises of the Meisner Technique (Observation, Repetition, and Independent Activities), this paper will tease out the Meisner actors' relationships with their environment, their fellow performers, and their actions. The outcomes of this analysis will demonstrate that the Meisner Technique is applicable to modern, realist theatre as well as the core concerns of key postmodern performance practitioners. As

such the Meisner Technique might constitute a bridge between diverse modes of theatre/performance that could be exploited to increase the versatility of acting students thereby enhancing their employability.

James McLaughlin, a new lecturer in Acting and Drama at the University of Northampton completed his PhD, *Meisner Across Paradigms: The Phenomenal Dynamic of Sanford Meisner's Technique of Acting and its Resonances with Postmodern Performance*, at the University of Exeter in 2012. He studied the Meisner Technique for two years under Michael Saccente, one of Meisner's alumni and the New Zealand representative of the Neighborhood Playhouse. He has a second major research interest in improvisation and popular performance, having won the inaugural World Cagematch Championship of improv at the Chicago Improv Festival and is the author of 'Why is Improv Funny', in *Comedy Studies* 4(1).

Visiting Fellow Peter Parker

12 November 2014

'The Re-Examined Life: Researching the Modern Lives of Christopher Isherwood and J.R. Ackerley'

Peter Parker discusses writing the authorised biographies of two writers - one arguably 'major', the other decidedly 'minor' - whose lives spanned and reflected the 20th Century. Both Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986) and J.R. Ackerley (1896-1967) spent their careers subjecting their own lives to close scrutiny and writing books that were largely autobiographical. So what was left for the biographer to do? Isherwood's papers are housed in several huge archives, while those of J.R. Ackerley (1896-1967) fitted into a small suitcase; Isherwood spent half his life in America, while Ackerley remained part of the British literary establishment; Isherwood's literary executor had been his long-term partner, Ackerley's merely a close friend. How did such factors effect the research and writing of these biographies?

Peter Parker is the author of two books about the First World War, *The Old Lie* (1987) and *The Last Veteran* (2009), and has written biographies of J.R. Ackerley (1989) and Christopher Isherwood (2004). He edited (and wrote much of) *A Reader's Guide to the Twentieth-Century Novel* (1995) and *A Reader's Guide to Twentieth-Century Writers* (1996). He was also an associate editor of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), with responsibility for modern literature, and is now an advisory editor. An animated film of Ackerley's *My Dog Tulip*, for which he collaborated on the script, was released in 2010. His edition of G.F. Green's 1952 novel *In the Making* was published as a Penguin Modern Classic in 2012, and he was a contributor to *Britten's Century* (2013). He writes regularly for the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Spectator*, and the *TLS*, and is currently writing a book about A.E. Housman and Englishness.

Hayley Linthwaite (The University of Northampton)

3 December 2014

'Unmasking Workshop Ecology in Applied Performance'

Abstract: This practice-led research enquiry identifies, develops and illustrates *workshop ecology* in Applied Performance. It explores how Applied Performance forms are applied in and transformed through action in two distinct community-learning settings. The research is undertaken in two performance sites. The first, involving an executive leadership program addressing complex project management for Australia's

Defence Materiel Organisation in Canberra, Australia. The second, a sexual health, HIV and AIDS education program to raise awareness and encourage the prevention of transmission of sexual diseases within Karkar Island, Papua New Guinea. The research strategies draw upon a mixed method approach involving:

- practice-led research
- participant observation.

The findings from each performance site show how the *workshop ecology* shapes and transforms performance forms as they are applied and influences the degree to which they are effective. It is anticipated that the findings from this research will assist Applied Performance practitioners to more carefully consider *workshop ecology* in the design and delivery of Applied Performances.

Hayley Linthwaite is a Senior Lecturer in Acting and Drama at the University of Northampton School of the Arts.

Professor Nick Groom
(The University of Exeter)

12 December 2014

'John Clare at Christmas: The Seasons and the English Calendar'

This talk examines what John Clare's poetry, such as *The Shepherd's Calendar* (first published in 1827), tells us about the customs and folklore of the seasons in England, and what significance his writing might have for environmentalists today. A particular seasonal focus will be on English festivities at Christmas.

Nick Groom is Professor in English at the University of Exeter and the author of several books, most recently, *The Seasons: A Celebration of the English Year*, which has been shortlisted for the 2014 Katharine Briggs Folklore Award. He is also currently working on the Gothic, is a contributor to the current exhibition on the Gothic imagination at the British Library, and has edited Horace Walpole's inaugural Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, for the 250th anniversary of the book's first publication this year.

Dr David Simmons and Guests

17 December 2014

'Rethinking the Twentieth Century Canon'

Abstract: Working from the belief that the twentieth-century novel can now be considered to form a distinct and popular area of study, our recent edited collection, *Reassessing the Twentieth-Century Canon: From Joseph Conrad to Zadie Smith* (Palgrave, 2014) brings together experts in the field of twentieth-century writing to provide a volume that is both comprehensive and innovative in its discussion of a set of newly canonical texts. During this extended research seminar, the editors, and a range of contributors, will discuss their approaches; how they went about re-evaluating canonical writers and their work, synthesizing original and established interpretations of the texts, and providing readers with new and exciting entry points into modern day classics.

David Simmons lectures in English Literature and Screen Studies at the University of Northampton. He is the author of *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel: From Heller*

to *Vonnegut* (Palgrave, 2008). He has also published several edited collections and articles as well as chapters on American fiction, film and television. He has written on a wide range of issues relating to popular twentieth century American Literature including H.P. Lovecraft (*New Critical Essays on H.P. Lovecraft*, 2013); 1960's fictional reconfigurations of the cowboy figure (*Paperback Westerns: A Collection of Critical Essays*, 2008); and the novels of Chuck Palahniuk (*Chuck Palahniuk: Beyond Fight Club*, 2008).

Claire Allen is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Northampton; she has published several articles and chapters on British and American twentieth century and millennial fiction. Her recent publications include: 'Young Protagonists in the Contemporary London Novel: Hanif Kureishi and Rupert Thompson', in *Literary London* (December 2008) and 'Wampeters and Foma? Misreading Religion in Cat's Cradle and The Book of Dave', in David Simmons (ed.) *New Critical Essays on Kurt Vonnegut* (Palgrave, 2009). She has also made regular contributions to the Routledge Annotated Bibliography of English Studies.

Sonya Andermahr is Course Leader for the MA in Modern English Studies and Reader in English Literature at the University of Northampton, she has published extensively in the field of twentieth century literature and is an expert in contemporary women's writing, especially Anglo-American literature, modern British fiction, and feminist theory and pedagogy. She is a member of the UK Network for Modern Fiction Studies and the Contemporary Women's Writing Network, she is also Associate Editor of *Critical Engagements: A Journal of Criticism and Theory* and Associate Editor of *Contemporary Women's Writing*. Her recent publications include: *Trauma Narratives and Herstory* (co-edited with S. Pellicer-Ortin, 2013), *Angela Carter: New Critical Readings* (co-edited with L. Phillips, 2012), and 'Gender and the Student Experience: Teaching Feminist Writing in the Post-Feminist Classroom' in: A. Frrebe, and F. Tolan (eds.) *Teaching Gender* (2012).

Martyn Colebrook received his PhD from The University of Hull for a thesis focusing on the works of Iain Banks. He has wider research interests in contemporary American literature, transgression and contemporary culture, and apocalypse fictions. Martyn has also published a number of chapters on topics including Paul Auster, J.G. Ballard, Don DeLillo, The Gothic, terrorism, novelistic depictions of the Yorkshire Ripper, and Scottish Crime Fiction. He is currently editing a collection of essays focusing on Jeanette Winterson and co-editing one on Iain Banks.

Gina Wisker is Professor of Contemporary Literature and Higher Education at the University of Brighton where she teaches literature, and is head of the centre for teaching and learning. Gina's specialism is in Postcolonial, women's writing and the Gothic, particularly horror. Gina has written numerous essays on the Gothic and horror of Angela Carter, Sylvia Plath, Nalo Hopkinson, Toni Morrison, women writers from the Caribbean and the Far-East, including Erna Brodber, Catherine Lim, Beth Yahp, and many essays on contemporary women's vampire writing. Her books include *Horror Fiction* (2005), and *Margaret Atwood: An Introduction to Critical Views of her Fiction* (2011). Gina also writes on postgraduate learning and supervision: *The Postgraduate Research Handbook* (2nd edn, 2007) and *The Good Supervisor* (2012).