

Volume 1 | Issue 2

October 2020

PERCY

Welcome to the second issue of *Percy*, a round up of news dedicated to our School's research community.

Recent work by (clockwise)
Robbie McLaughlan, Karen
Corrigan, Sinéad Morrissey,
Joseph Hone, Sean O'Brien,
Emily Murphy and Bill
Herbert



Linda Anderson

*Over four decades, **Linda Anderson** has made a major contribution to our School and its research culture. In a Percy exclusive, and in his own inimitable style, **Sean O'Brien** marks Linda's retirement:*

“Normally I'd write something more comic for an occasion like Linda's retirement, but the times seem unpropitious. So here's a brief poem written in spring, early in the lockdown. I've spent more time in our back garden this year than I have in the whole thirty years we've lived here. I came across the tiny white flowers of Star of Bethlehem. The poem has no religious intent, but the plant crops up in 2 *Kings* 6.25 under the less appealing name of Dove's Dung - which is said to have been eaten during a famine. Let's hope it doesn't come to that.”

Star of Bethlehem

Your pilgrimage is halted here
beside the path, beneath the storm
that would uproot you:

far too few, and none to spare,
but times are evil: now the tiny
candour of your stars must be enough.

Sean O'Brien

Ann Coburn

*We are also losing another lovely colleague this semester: **Ann Coburn...***

Lars Iyer sums up her contribution within and beyond SELLL:

Ann Coburn is an award-winning children's novelist who also writes for the theatre and TV. She has been very active in the literary world, judging competitions, giving talks, running workshops for schools, undertaking residences and teaching creative writing since 1991, when her first novel was published. She has strong links with the Hexham Book Festival.

Her fiction includes *Glint* (2005), for older readers, which won an Arts Council writer's award and a Northern Writers' award; her series *Dream Team* (2006-), aimed at younger readers; and *The Borderlands* sequence (1996-) which, like most of her work is strongly informed by the history and mythology of Northumberland and the Borders.

Her theatre plays include *Get Up and Tie Your Fingers* (1997), which won the John Whiting award; *The Devil's Ground* (2003), winner of a C.P. Taylor bursary; and, for younger audiences, *Alex and the Warrior* (2004) and *The Last Snow Rider* (2010).

Most recently, she published a book of re-written fairy tales, and she is currently working on a very timely sounding novel, *Scrapers*, about the return of smallpox.

Ann has been a very inspiring colleague and a model of commitment to her students.

Awards

Sinéad Morrissey was awarded the Gdansk's European Poet of Freedom Literary Award 2020 for her collection "On Balance", translated into Polish by Magda Heydel. The jurors recognized the way the poet travels between different cultures, her impressive knowledge of the world, and the ability to speak the languages of various poetic forms, which echo both the fascination with folk imagination and modern science. "Morrissey's poetry seeks balance. Nor for herself, but for a world that has fallen off its tracks, subjected to the rush of conquest, social atomisation and alienation. Enslavement reaches us through violence against nature, social disintegration, exclusion of the less privileged and hierarchies of values imposed by the corrupted with conformism to power and wealth." – Chairman of the Jury, Krzysztof Czyżewski.



Lucia Qureshi (third-year QV31) was awarded a commendation for her essay 'Crossing the Boundaries Between Primates and People: An Exploration of Anthropomorphism and Zoomorphism in *The Jungle Books* and *She*' in **The Global Undergraduate Awards 2020**. There were 4148 submissions to the Awards this year, and commendations were only given to those judged to be in the top 10% of all essays received.

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/e11/newsandevents/news/globalundergraduateaward2020.html>

Jenny Richards won the **European Society for the Study of English (ESSE) Book Award for Literatures in the English Language** for *Voices and Books in the English Renaissance: A New History of Reading* (Oxford University Press, 2019). *Voices and Books* was also commended by the Delong Book History Prize Committee. Earlier this year, Jenny also secured a Leverhulme Visiting Professorship to bring Prof Bruce A Smith to Newcastle for two semesters between 2020 and 2022.

NCLA Research Associate Dr Theresa Muñoz has been awarded a Creative

Scotland Open Fund Grant to write 'Mixed Feelings', one of the first poetry sequences about inter-racial relationships in Scotland and the UK. She'll be working in various online and physical archives to conduct research on historical inter-racial relationships. She will also be interviewing interracial couples and counsellors as part of her research.



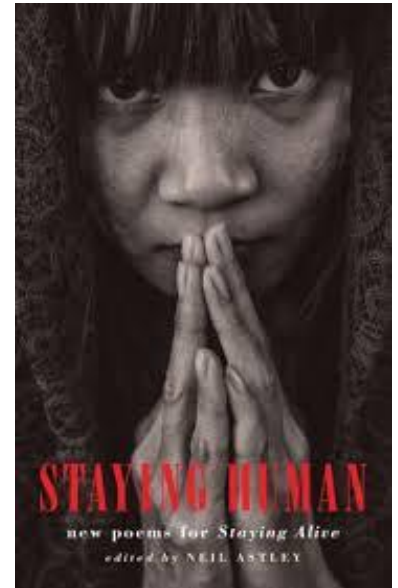
The sequence explores issues surrounding inter-racial relationships, as well as her own experiences as part of an interracial couple, in the form of prose poems, redacted poems and visual poetry. She will also run an inclusive online workshop 'Writing your Inter-racial Character and Relationship', which will take place at the end of 2020.

Right: Poster of Sinéad's grandfather, Sean Morrissey

Sinéad Morrissey has been awarded a Research Fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust to work on *Seeing Red: An Anatomy of an Irish Communist Childhood*: a collection of essays exploring her Communist upbringing in Belfast which will revisit and interrogate the 'vanished' worlds of the Soviet Bloc and the Northern Ireland Troubles from a uniquely interconnected perspective. Fusing personal recollection with deeper considerations of identity and division, written as lyrical creative non-fiction, *Seeing Red* will engage with current debates concerning history, nationhood, belonging, and the conflicting legacies of the past.



Sinéad Morrissey has also been awarded a British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Small Grants award for the project “In Person: Bloodaxe Books”. Launched in Newcastle in 1978, Bloodaxe has grown to be one of the most important independent poetry publishing houses in the world, with its authors winning every major poetry award from the TS Eliot Prize and Pulitzer to the Nobel. “In Person: Bloodaxe Books” will produce the first comprehensive history of Bloodaxe to date via a series of filmed interviews with founder and editor Neil Astley. Dr John Challis, Research Associate with NCLA, and PGR student Pete Hebden, an AHRC/National Productivity Investment Fund awardee, will also be working closely with Sinéad on this project.



Emma Whipday's book *Shakespeare's Domestic Tragedies* is the co-winner of the **Shakespeare's Globe Book Award** (with Oliver Morgan's *Turn-Taking in Shakespeare*). The Shakespeare's Globe Book Award is awarded every two years to an early career scholar for a first book that has made a significant contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the theatre of Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Shakespeare's Domestic Tragedies: Violence in the Early Modern Home argues that Shakespeare both borrows from, and transforms, the genre of domestic tragedy, using heightened language, foreign settings, and elite spheres to stage familiar domestic worlds. The paperback is now available to [preorder](#).

Emma and Oliver's prize talks, recorded in the candlelit Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, was streamed via the Shakespeare's Globe YouTube channel on 12th October.

Julie Joins The Globe

Julie Sanders has recently been appointed as a Trustee of The Globe. Below she reflects on this exciting new role:

“The great globe itself ...” (*The Tempest*, 4.1)

Being a board member was a role I couldn't have begun to imagine for myself even a few years ago. Those roles were done by other people with different kinds of profile and confidence. But things have changed for me in recent years; I've realised that we all need to be the change we want to see so being involved with boards and helping to diversify thinking and drive a values-led approach has become a really important part of my work. I have had the opportunity at Northern Stage to work with a terrific set of fellow trustees and to be part of bringing younger members into the team – something I am especially pleased to say includes a recent SELLL graduate. Now at the Globe I have the chance again to work with a Board Chair and Deputy Chair who are changing the way boards speak, think and act in a very tangible way.

The Globe is a special place – those of us who work on early modern drama in the School will hopefully attest to that. As the Academic board member, I am excited to be part of future thinking, especially around HE and the broader educational space (how the Globe engages with its local Southwark community will be a particular focus). This is a hugely testing time for the creative and cultural industries so the future will look and feel different but there is the chance for some brave resets and “barefoot creativity” which I am excited to learn from.



Julie Sanders, 27 August 2020

Bibliothèque Bleue. An exhibition on children and cheap print in early modern France

Dr **Elisa Marazzi**, working on a EU-funded **Marie Skłodowska Curie project** at the School, is co-curating an exhibition at **MuCEM Marseille** (Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée).

Based on the MuCEM's collections, the exhibition will show how the French corpus of popular print, known as *bibliothèque bleue*, was part of children's everyday life in early modern France. It is widely shared that the *bibliothèque bleue* contained many educational works such as ABCs and catechisms. Moreover, social historians have shown how keen the early modern society was on romances and tales disseminated through cheap print. Children were also part of the society, nonetheless their encounter with the booklets of the *bibliothèque bleue* has hardly been investigated so far.



The exhibition is an activity of Elisa's project, **Children and Transnational Cheap Print, 1700-1900 (CaTPoP)**, supervised by **Matthew Grenby**, which aims at gaining further insight into the encounters between children and cheap print both before and after the birth of children's literature. It also hopes to assess whether a shared culture of cheaply printed reading materials existed among children from different areas of Western Europe

The exhibition, co-curated by Elisa and Dr **Sophie Bernillon**, head of the bibliographic collections at MuCEM, will take place in Marseille, at MuCEM's *Centre des conservations et des ressources*, from **15th February to 7th May 2021**. It will aim at showcasing the books and the stories that children might have enjoyed in the past, when what we now know as children's literature was still on its way and was not available to everyone. Activities will include workshops for schoolchildren of the *Belle de Mai* neighbourhood, in order to let them explore the past through the readings of their early modern counterparts.

Our Visiting Professors

Steph Newell, Leverhulme Visiting Professor, SELLL (1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020), reflects on her time at Newcastle:

“This was a year of two halves. I arrived in August and the semester got off to a great start, with lots of opportunities to work with colleagues and graduate students on campus, an *Insights* lecture, a Leverhulme lecture at Durham University, and meetings with colleagues at Newcastle and the University of Northumbria. I also used this time to travel to and from the archives in London every couple of weeks to get my Leverhulme project, *Newsprint Creativity in Colonial West Africa*, off the ground.

With lockdown looming in March, I put in as many hours as possible in the British Library trying to read 300 or so locally published Nigerian pamphlets from the 1950s and 1960s. But of course, all activities ground to a halt in mid-March: one by one the lectures, workshops, seminars and conferences were cancelled.



I had a wonderful, productive time with colleagues at SELLL. Neelam Srivastava and James Procter were generous, hospitable and great fun to be around, and Laura Elliott was really helpful, not least for showing me (repeatedly) how to navigate the online reimbursement system. The postcolonial reading group run by graduates at Newcastle Uni was a particular highlight of my time at SELLL. Warm thanks to the whole School for having me, even though the professorship was cut short by the pandemic.”

Karen Sands-O'Connor is British Academy Global Visiting Professor in the School.

This past year, she has been researching and writing two books. The first, *Activist Authors and British Child Readers of Colour*, will be published by Bloomsbury and examines how activists and radicals from the turn of the twentieth century to the present time attempt to address child readers, particularly readers of colour, and encourage them in radical thought. The second, *Diversity and Inclusion in Young Adult Publishing 1960-1980*, will be published in the Cambridge Elements series and investigates the way that three early British Young Adult imprints (Penguin Peacocks, Heinemann New Windmills, and Macmillan Topliners) represented racially diverse communities in their books. She continues to work with CILIP on the Carnegie Medal diversity review (including publishing a short article for *Youth Library Review*), CLPE on their Reflecting Realities diversity in publishing reports, and Seven Stories on multimedia projects to highlight Black British children's literature.



Joseph Hone's *The Paper Chase*

In 2019, Joe joined our School as an Academic Track (NUAct) Fellow. To mark his arrival, Percy asked him to tell the fascinating story behind his latest book:

The Paper Chase started with a chance encounter in the spring of 2017. I was in the Manuscripts Reading Room of the British Library, rummaging through the papers of the eighteenth-century statesman Robert Harley. My interest was not in Harley himself, but in the information his papers contained. The minister and I shared a common goal. We both wanted to unearth the identities of the anonymous opposition authors, printers, and publishers whose satires were plaguing the government of Queen Anne. But whereas I had to rely on a close analysis of typefaces, advertisements, and anecdotal snippets, Harley possessed a small army of spies and informants whispering into his ear.

I had spent several hours combing through his notes before I found the depositions. They were written in the hand of Harley's secretary, but signed by David and Mary Edwards, a husband-and-wife team responsible for printing several of the most dangerous books of the decade.

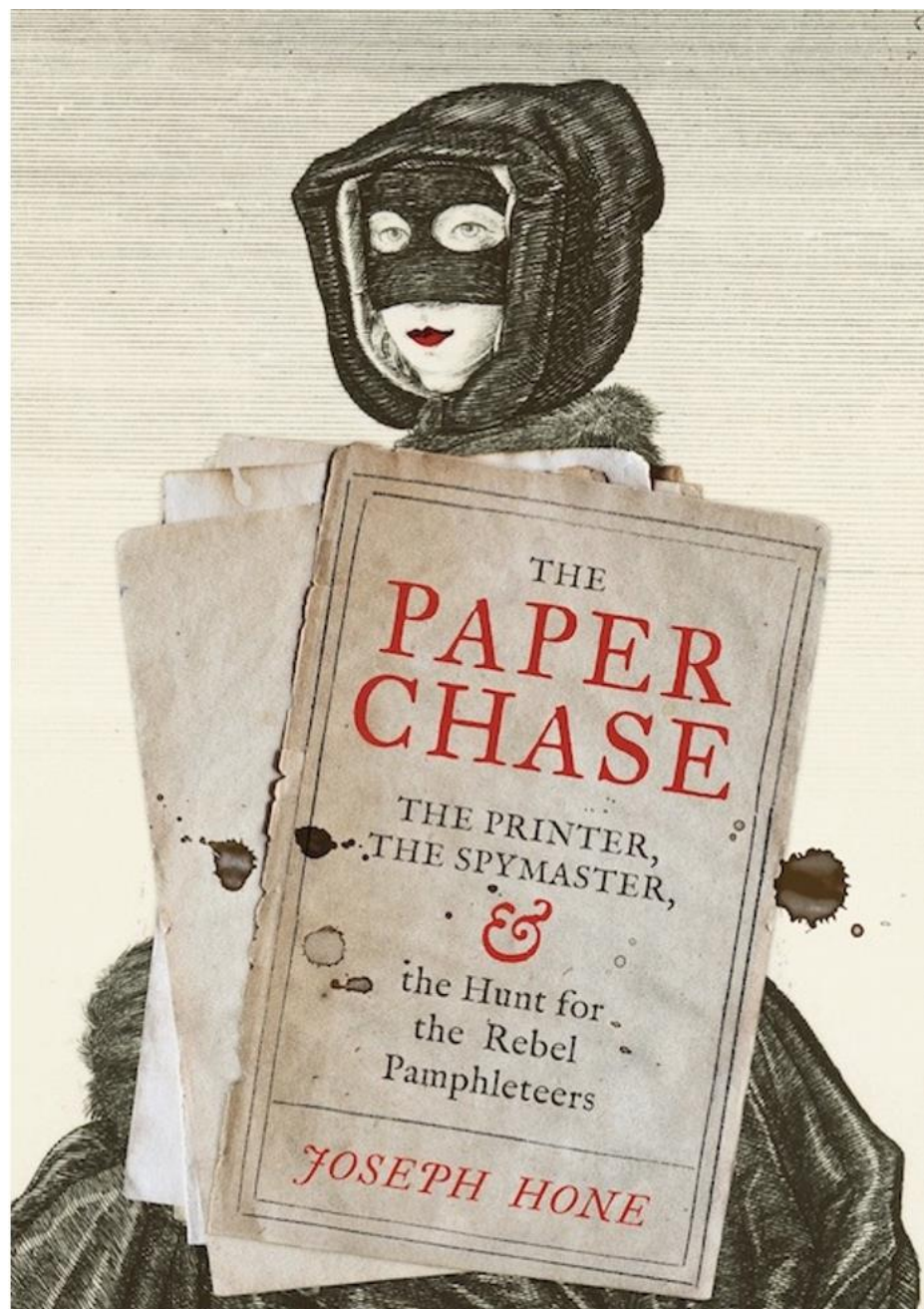
They told Harley their story. A masked woman had visited their workshop six months earlier, in the summer of 1705. She had left the manuscript of a dangerous pamphlet, instructing them that a courier would come in a fortnight, bearing a secret token in exchange for the finished books. The pamphlet had since caused outrage, triggering a nationwide manhunt for the persons responsible. Now Edwards had come to Harley, promising, in return for protection, that he could find the masked woman and her masters. Under Harley's direction, the printer would turn spy.

My interest is in the literary underground of eighteenth-century England, in secret printing and under-the-counter bookselling. At this time, England was still a censoring society, one in which troublesome writers and printers were pilloried, imprisoned, or silently bumped-off. Sources of information on this murky world are few and far between. Forensic bibliographical analysis can reveal who printed a book; it can even illuminate how the book was made. But it can't tell you how a manuscript was delivered to a print shop, how books were sold, or where and in what manner they were distributed and read. It can't tell you much about the culture of the underground printing house, or whether compositors altered a text from their manuscript copy.

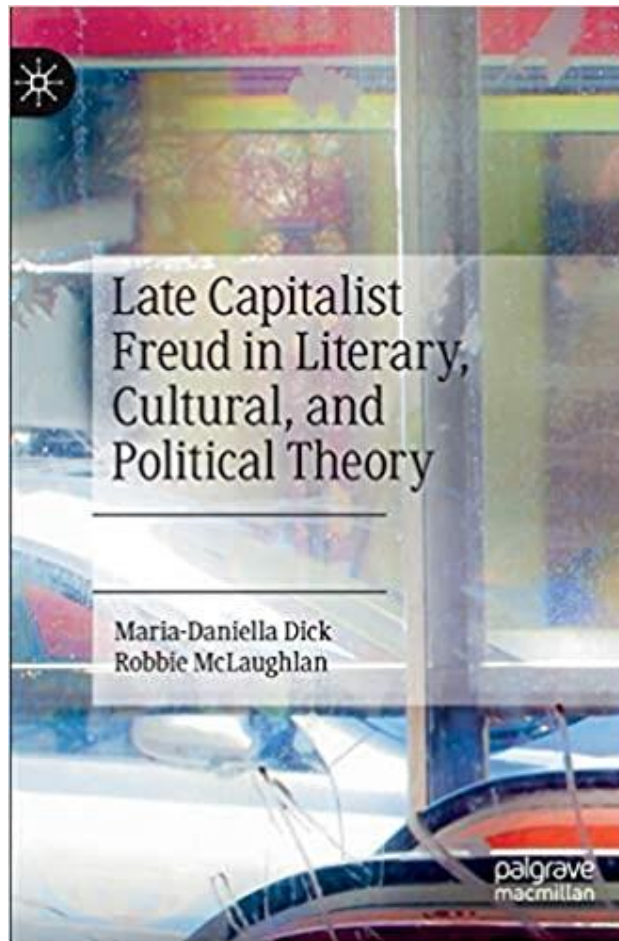
From this perspective, the insights provided by David and Mary Edwards were invaluable. The documents shed greater light than ever before on the

hidden but fundamental mechanics of how controversial books were printed and distributed during this period, on the processes that occurred between a manuscript leaving an author's desk and a finished book arriving in a reader's hands.

But their value was more than academic. From the moment I found these documents, the printer's voice crackled from the page. I saw that this was my opportunity to bring the history of the book to life. And so I decided to delve into this three-hundred-year-old mystery and follow Edwards's investigation. *The Paper Chase* is the result. My hope is that the book has something new to say about the literary culture of the early eighteenth century. And perhaps, if I'm lucky, it might introduce this extraordinary period to a new audience.

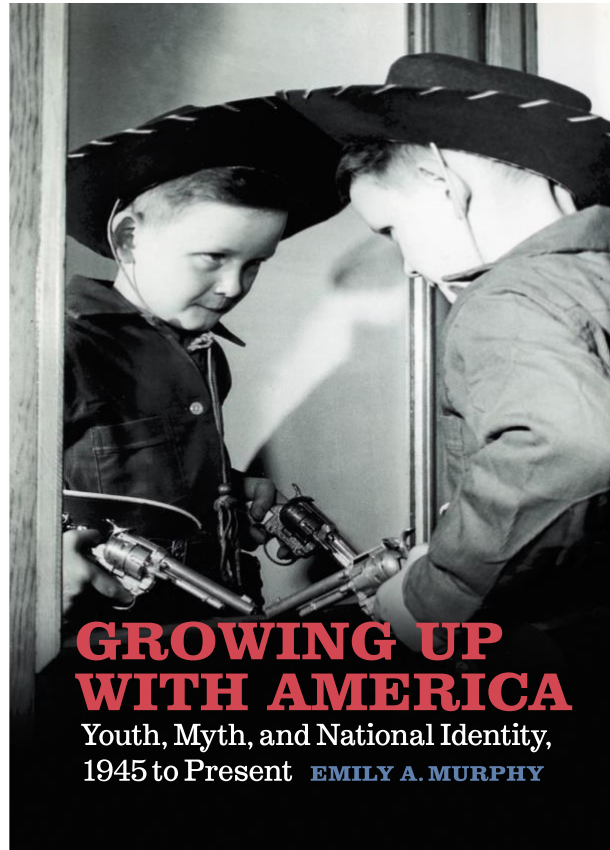


RECENT PUBLICATIONS:



Robbie McLaughlan on *Late Capitalist Freud in Literary, Cultural and Political Theory* (Palgrave, 2020)

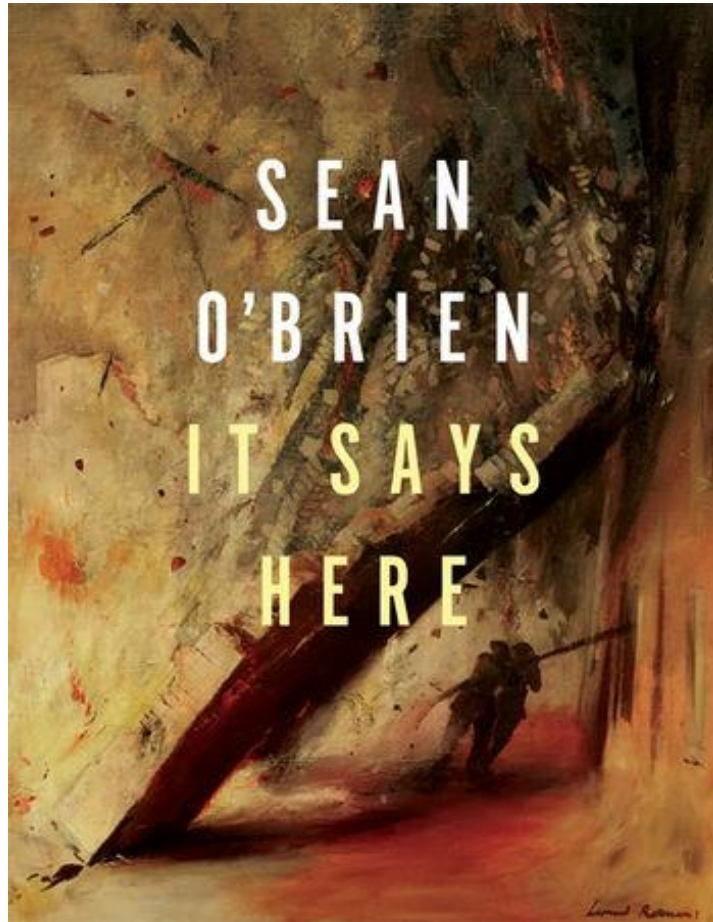
“Hello everyone in SELLL. I co-authored a book for Palgrave entitled *Late Capitalist Freud in Literary, Cultural, and Political Theory* (we only had a say in the first 3 words of the title!) that was published in August. We propose that late Freudian theory has had an historical influence on the configuration of contemporary life and is central to the construction of twenty-first-century capitalism. In the book we investigate how we continue to live in the Freudian century and do so by turning our attention to specific crisis points within neoliberalism — the rise of figures like Trump, the development of social media as a new superego force, the economics that underpin the wellness and self-care industries — to maintain the continued historical importance of Freudian thought in all its dimensions. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory and literary theory more broadly, our book assesses the contribution that an historical and theoretical consideration of the late Freud can make to analysing certain aspects of late capital. Despite being published fairly recently, we have already received a few invites to give talks, lectures and even to appear on some rather niche podcast, seems like there are some benefits to publishing in such unusual circumstances.”



Emily Murphy's *Growing Up with America* (University of Georgia Press, 2020)

When D. H. Lawrence wrote his classic study of American literature, he claimed that youth was the "true myth" of America. Beginning from this assertion, Emily A. Murphy traces the ways that youth began to embody national hopes and fears at a time when the United States was transitioning to a new position of world power. In the aftermath of World War II, persistent calls for the nation to "grow up" and move beyond innocence became common, and the child that had long served as a symbol of the nation was suddenly discarded in favor of a rebellious adolescent. This era marked the beginning of a crisis of identity, where literary critics and writers both sought to redefine U.S. national identity in light of the nation's new global position.

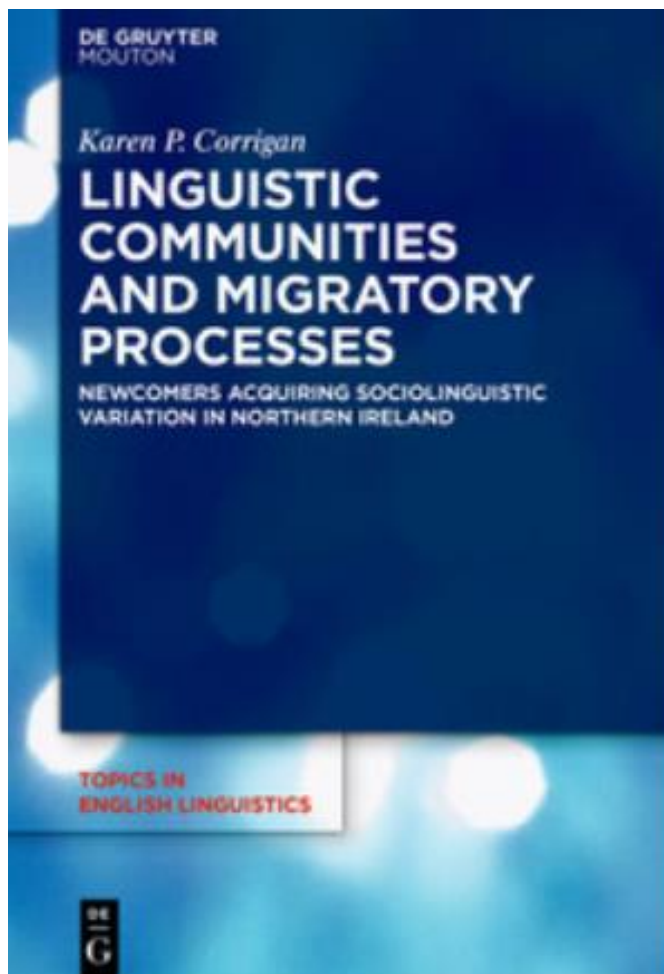
The figure of the adolescent is central to an understanding of U.S. national identity, both past and present, and of the cultural forms (e.g., literature) that participate in the ongoing process of representing the diverse experiences of Americans. In tracing the evolution of this youthful figure, Murphy revisits classics of American literature, including J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* and Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*, alongside contemporary bestsellers. The influence of the adolescent on some of America's greatest writers demonstrates the endurance of the myth that Lawrence first identified in 1923 and signals a powerful link between youth and one of the most persistent questions for the nation: What does it mean to be an American?



Sean O'Brien's *It Says Here* (Picador, 2020)

It Says Here is Sean O'Brien's follow-up to his celebrated collection *Europa*, and has a vision as rich and wide-ranging as its predecessor. Set against shorter, ruthlessly focused pieces – vicious and scabrous political sketches and satires charting the growth of extremism and the disintegration of democracy – are meditations on the imaginative life, dream and remembrance, time and recurrence. There are elegies for friends and fellow poets; paranoiac, brooding pastorals; other poems lay bare the maddening trials of a historically literate mind as it attempts to navigate a world gone post-content, post-intellectual, and at times post-memory. At the centre of the book is the long poem *Hammersmith*, a shadowy, cinematic dream-vision of England during and since the Second World War. Here, O'Brien charts a psychogeographic journey through the English countryside and the haunted precincts of London, mapping a labyrinth of love, madness and lost history. The result is a stirring, illuminating document of a time of immense societal flux and upheaval by one of our finest poets and most insightful cultural commentators.

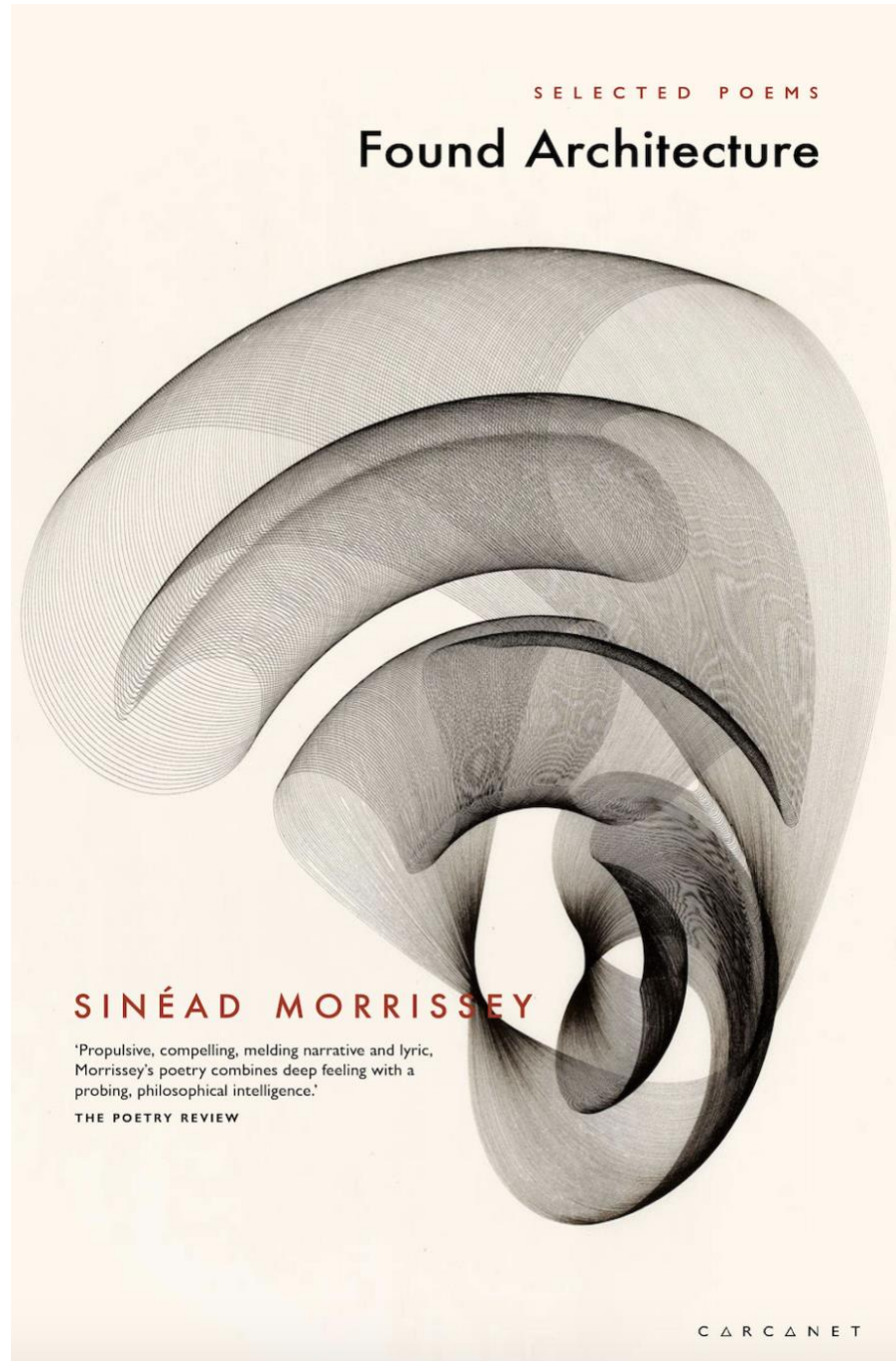
'In both technical mastery and his belief in the seriousness of the poetic art, O'Brien is WH Auden's true inheritor.' *Irish Times*



Karen Corrigan's *Linguistic Communities and Migratory Processes* (De Gruyter Mouton, 2020)

This inter-disciplinary book of Karen's is the first in an Irish context to address issues connected with the 'super-diversifying' of language and society engendered by recent and historical migrations. It analyses novel data from interviews with allochthonous and autochthonous groups of monolingual and plurilingual youngsters living in Northern Ireland. A key aim is to test models within second language acquisition and language variation and change research. Another goal is to examine the extent to which distinctive migratory trends generated changes in the language ecologies of communities on the island of Ireland as well as globally in regions where the Irish settled intensively from the 1700s. The book also compares contemporary migratory experiences with historical records to further our understanding of the dynamics of identification through language across time. For more,

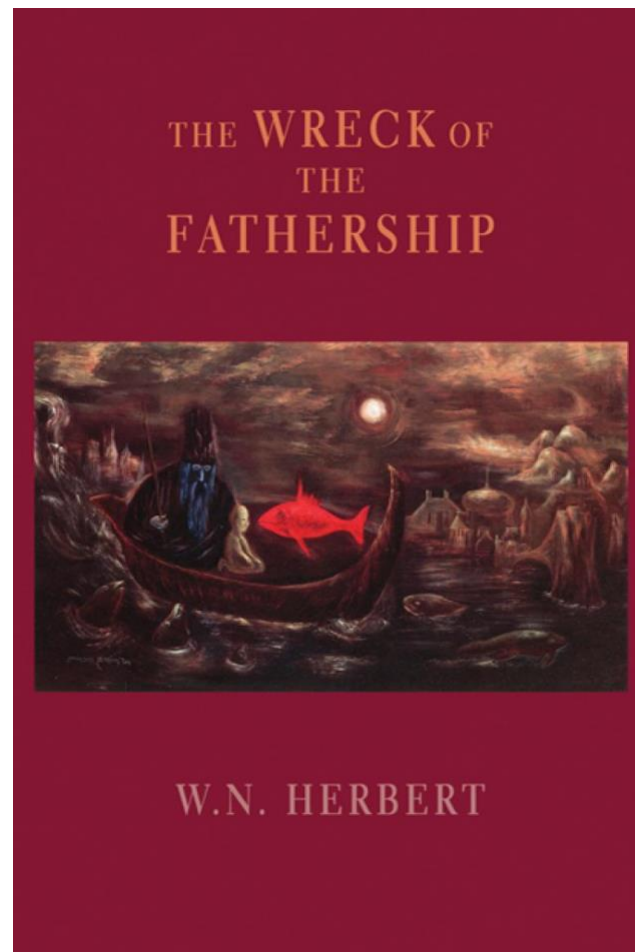
see: https://www.degruyter.com/view/title/540248?tab_body=overview



***Sinéad Morrissey's Found Architecture* (Carcanet, 2020)**

Sinéad Morrissey's first UK selected poems, *Found Architecture*, was published in May this year, encompassing work from all six of her collections to date, beginning with *There Was Fire in Vancouver* (1996) and ending with the Forward-Prize winning collection, *On Balance* (2017). "Sinéad Morrissey gains power with each collection. She's one of those generous writers whose images and structures open so invitingly that your response is to grab a pen and write back to her: in other words, an inspiration." – **Hilary Mantel**.

Bill Herbert's *The Wreck of the Fathership* (Bloodaxe, 2020)



Being appointed Dundee Makar (or City Laureate) implied that Bill Herbert might settle into middle age. He rented a flat overlooking Broughty Ferry harbour to write about his home town in both its native tongues. Then within six months his much-loved father died, and that civic idyll was thrown into crisis. Personal and political roles collided as referenda for Scottish independence and EU membership, then the US elections, signalled that the post-war liberal value system was very much in crisis.

This is his *Dundonian Book of the Dead*, in which he explores both his own

grief and the encroachment of a new intolerance. His town's defining modern disaster – the loss in 1959 of the lifeboat *Mona* with all hands – becomes a symbol for a world turned upside down.

But while patriarchy flounders in a storm of its own undoing, his absurd alter ego, William McGonagall, brings his unique tragedian's eye to bear on both the city's and our society's efforts to right itself. The comic and the tragic become catastrophe's flotsam and jetsam, and the image of the overturned boat is reflected in the very structure of this book, with a keel-hauling of Dundee Doldrums for its climax – poems which resist any stasis of the imagination.

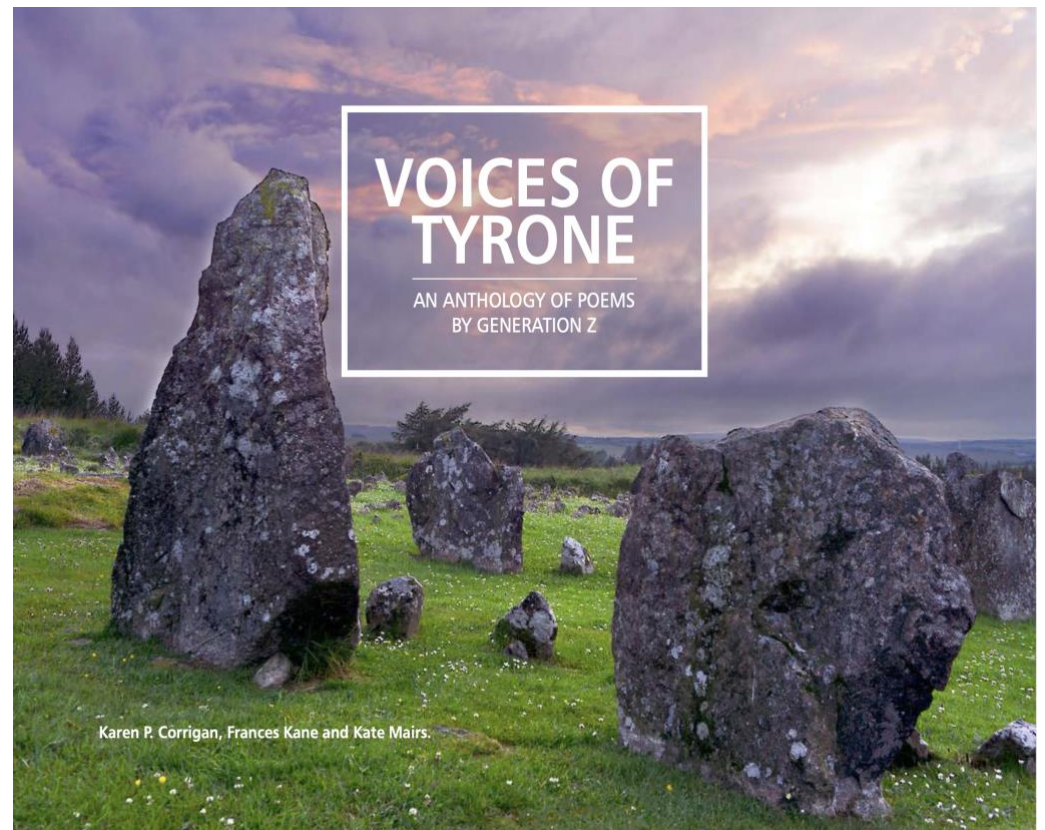
'A weird mix of Desperate Dan, MacDiarmid and Dostoyevsky...a rare and fantastic voice.' – **Fiachra Gibbons, *Guardian***

'This antithesis of the slim volume bubbles and seethes with wit and polysyllabic adventurousness.' – **Edwin Morgan, *The Scotsman***

Impact

The *Voices of Tyrone* Anthology is one output from Karen's impact project on language, integration and inclusion funded by an AHRC OWRI award via its 'Language Acts and World-Making'

initiative: <https://languageacts.org/related-projects/may-2019-call/language-acts-and-social-inclusion-post-primary-classrooms/>.



It features poems that reached the final of a Northern Ireland schools' competition in 2020 for pupils aged 11-12. The contributions were judged by our very own Sinéad Morrissey and Jaspreet Kaur, a spoken word artist from East London. Pupils were encouraged to write on the theme of belonging, place and identity and to use language that reflected their own linguistic backgrounds. The poems thus include Mid-Ulster English dialect, Ulster Scots, French, Irish, Polish, Portuguese and Tetum, the indigenous language of East Timor, where many newcomer children in Northern Ireland have emigrated from. Olivia O'Neill, Education Manager for English Language and Literature at Northern Ireland's Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, has called it "a beautiful piece of work. The photos, the artwork, the history snippets and, of course, the pupils' poems combine brilliantly. A triumph!! And a well-needed reminder to me at present of what kids are capable of when given the scope to explore their creativity."

Northern Bridge: Newcastle-Rome

An account of Valentina Varinelli's Northern Bridge funded placement at Keats-Shelley House, Rome:

“From early October till late December we hosted Valentina Varinelli, a PhD student working on Percy Bysshe Shelley, for a two-month Northern Bridge research internship in Rome. Valentina spent four days a week working for the museum, with one day a week devoted to her own research. Valentina was able to play a full and active part in the life of the House, attending events and giving her own talk on ‘Percy Bysshe Shelley and the Italian language’ to a full and enthusiastic house. She also travelled to schools across Rome and Lazio and gave workshops on our museum and library collection, using facsimile manuscripts and drawing on the marvellous resource that is our new catalogue of digitized manuscripts, art works and relics from our collection, which has been completed but which, at time of writing, is still to be officially launched. Valentina was also able to conduct research into some of the many wonderful books on long-term loan to the Keats-Shelley House from the collection of Lord Abinger, Shelley’s closest living descendent. Some of her research will soon be published on the European Romanticisms in Association’s RÊVE website (<http://www.euromanticism.org/virtual-exhibition/>), which contains a virtual exhibition of romantic objects held in public and private collections across the world. Valentina’s piece explores the story behind Shelley’s copy of Homer, which has been stored in a bookcase in the museum antechamber since 2013, the handsome red leather spine of its bespoke solander box standing out amongst the Abinger loan books. We are grateful to the present Lord Abinger for allowing Valentina to research and write about this most precious family heirloom, which sheds light on Shelley’s taste for books and intellectual formation as a poet and a thinker. Valentina was the third such intern to join us from Newcastle University via the Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership, and she was the first to reside in the House for the duration of her internship in our recently refurbished foresteria, a residence made available to scholars, writers and collaborators. It is hoped that during the course of 2020 the apartment will be made available for Friends of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association to book stays with us, although we plan for it to remain a residence for visiting scholars and writers for part of the year.”

Extract from: Giuseppe Albano's 'Report from Rome' (Keats-Shelley Review, 34.1 (April 2020), p. 4)

VIVA!

Congratulations to the following PhD students, who recently has successful vivas:

29 July 2020

Marco Medugno - Examiners were Dr Robbie McLaughlan and Prof Francesca Orsini (SOAS University of London).

The title of his thesis was "Writing the Diaspora: Somali Voices in Postcolonial English and Italian Literature" and he was supervised by Prof Neelam Srivastava and Prof James Procter.

14 July 2020

Azza Al-Kendi - Examiners were Dr Jalal-eddin Al-Tamimin (ECLS) and Prof Maria Uther (University of Wolverhampton).

The title of her thesis was "Foreigner-Directed-Speech and L2 Speech Learning in An Understudied Interactional Setting: The Case of Foreign-Domestic Helpers in Oman" and she was supervised by Dr Ghada Khattab and Prof Martha Young-Scholten.

4 June 2020

Hana Ehbara – Examiners were Gary Taylor-Raebel and Bronwen Evans (UCL). The title of her thesis was 'Impact of Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Training on Libyan Child Learners of English' and she was supervised by Jalal Al-Tamimi and Martha Young-Scholten.

Classified Ads

James Harriman-Smith

I would like to chat to someone about writing teaching manuals / textbooks, with accessible introductions and detailed exercises on a topic. Any discipline!

James Procter

I would welcome more ads!