

Time and Temporality in Literature and Media

CUSO Workshop University of Geneva

6 November 2024

Room 211, Boulevard des Philosophes 22, 1204 Genève

Organized by Deborah Madsen and Aïcha Bouchelaghem

Guests: Dana Medoro (University of Manitoba) and

Sherryl Vint (University of California, Riverside)

PROGRAM

10:00 – 10:15	WELCOME (and refreshments)
10:15 – 10:30	Introductions
10:30 – 12:00	Dana Medoro (University of Manitoba) “Bartleby, Race, and Time”
12:00 – 14:00	Lunch Café du Marché, Avenue Henri-Dunant 16, 1205 Genève
14:15 – 15:45	Sherryl Vint (University of California, Riverside) “Proleptic Futures: Finance Temporality and Twenty-First Century Life”
15:45 – 16:15	PAUSE (and refreshments)
16:15 – 16:45	Gemma Allred (UNINE) ‘The time is out of joint’: Gambling, Ghosts and Gielgud”
17:00-18:30	Roundtable: “Time and Temporality: Research Subject / Research Methodology” interventions by guests, followed by open discussion.

ABSTRACTS

Dana Medoro (University of Manitoba), “Bartleby, Race, and Time”

With this paper, I will make the case for seeing Melville's *Bartleby* as a freedom seeker who escapes slavery only to find himself transcribing mortgage agreements on enslaved people. *Bartleby's* infamous refusal to continue doing so – "I prefer not to" – constitutes a refusal to reproduce the system powered by Wall Street's capitalization on and investments in slavery. In keeping with the workshop's theme, I will discuss the ways in which Melville represents capitalism and slavery in relation to future time in "*Bartleby, the Scrivener*."

Dana Medoro is Professor of American Literature in the Department of English, Theatre, Film & Media at the University of Manitoba on Treaty One Territory. She is the author of *The Bleeding of America: Menstruation as Symbolic Economy in Pynchon, Faulkner, and Morrison* (2002) and, most recently, *Certain Concealments: Poe, Hawthorne, and Early Nineteenth-Century Abortion* (2022). She has published on a wide range of writers, including Benjamin Franklin, Emily Bronte, William Faulkner, Thomas Pynchon, Toni Morrison, and Han Kang. She is currently working on a book-length project on Melville's "*Bartleby, the Scrivener*," slavery, and capitalism.

Sherryl Vint (University of California, Riverside), “Proleptic Futures: Finance Temporality and Twenty-First Century Life”

This paper will draw on Lisa Adkins' book *The Time of Money* to examine how past, present and future blur into one another in the temporality instantiated by finance capital through its reliance on the derivative form. Following Adkins, we will explore how the ubiquity of debt culture encumbers the present with both past obligations and future hedging, to ask what forms of resistance are needed to respond to a political context in which time itself seems reconfigure for financial extraction.

Sherryl Vint is Professor in the Departments of English and of Media & Cultural Studies at the University of California, Riverside. Her research focuses on relations between speculative fiction, and science and technology. Her publications include: *Science Fiction: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2014), *The Wire* (2013), *Animal Alterity* (2010), *Bodies of Tomorrow* (2007), and with Mark Bould, *The Routledge Concise History of Science Fiction* (2011). *Science Fiction* (2021) outlines the importance of science fiction as a way of thinking about and responding to sociotechnical reality, with chapters on the utopian tradition, futurology, the colonial imagination, AI and robots, biotechnology and genomics, and climate change, this book explores how science fiction gives us tools for conceptualizing and perhaps shaping the ways that science and technology have an impact on daily life. *Biopolitical Futures in Twenty-First Century Speculative Fiction* (2021), theorizes how speculative fiction interrogates a number of sites where bodies intersect with biotechnology. Her current research project on economics and speculative fiction builds on her previous research in “The Futures Industry” about the sf imagination, futurity, and the temporality of finance capitalism.

Gemma Allred (UNINE), ‘The time is out of joint’: Gambling, Ghosts and Gielgud”

1963, the set of Becket. A coin toss. Peter O’Toole and Richard Burton had decided both to play Hamlet. The flipped coin determined the city and director.

1963, O’Toole stars in Laurence Olivier’s *Hamlet* in London, in the inaugural production of Britain’s National Theatre.

1964, Burton stars in John Gielgud’s *Hamlet* on Broadway.

2023, 60 years after the infamous coin toss, Jack Thorne's *The Motive and the Cue* opens at the National Theatre. A play that transports the audience back to the rehearsal room of the Burton/Gielgud *Hamlet*.

2024, Mark Gatiss wins an Olivier Award for his portrayal of Gielgud.

But is this timeline complete? Is that where the story starts and ends? This paper takes as its focus both original O'Toole and Burton *Hamlets* and *The Motive and the Cue* to ask why Hamlet, why Shakespeare and why now?

Gemma Kate Allred is a doctoral researcher focussing on the marketing of *Hamlet* in contemporary performance. She co-edited *Lockdown Shakespeare: New Evolutions in Performance and Adaptation* (Arden, 2022). Her examination of celebrity and Shakespeare was published in *Shakespeare Survey* (2020). She has contributed a chapter on marketing Emilia for *Notelets of Filth: An Emilia Companion Reader* (Routledge 2023). She also has a chapter on the biofictional representation of Shakespeare on the modern stage in the collection: *Shakespearean Biofiction on the Contemporary Stage and Screen* (Arden 2023).

PARTICIPANTS

Organizers

Aïcha BOUCHELAGHEM (UNIGE): Aïcha.Bouchelaghem@unige.ch

Deborah MADSEN (UNIGE): Deborah.Madsen@unige.ch

Guests

Dana MEDORO (University of Manitoba): Dana.Medoro@umanitoba.ca

Sherryl VINT (University of California, Riverside): sherryl.vint@ucr.edu

Gemma ALLRED (UNINE): gemma.allred@unine.ch

Participants

Chen CUI (UNIL): chen.cui@unil.ch

Mattia FERRARO (UNINE): mattia.ferraro@unine.ch

Vinathi GURIJALA (IHEID): vinathi.gurijala@graduateinstitute.ch

Corey HEIMLICH (UNIL): coreyraymond.heimlich@unil.ch

Ramatu MUSA (UNIL): ramatu.musa@unil.ch

Elodie ROGLIARDO (UNIL): Elodie.Rogliardo@unil.ch

Devarya SRIVASTAVA (IHEID): devarya.srivastava@graduateinstitute.ch

Yin ZHANG (UNIGE): zhangyinmsn@gmail.com