DESECRATING

4TH CELEBRITY STUDIES JOURNAL CONFERENCE

JUNE 26-28 2018, 9 AM - 7 PM
FACOLTÀ DI LETTERE E FILOSOFIA

BOOK

OF

ABSTRACTS
Thanks to
TUESDAY, JUNE 26

11:00 am - 12:30 pm PARALLEL SESSIONS 1

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (A) 1

LITERATURE AND CELEBRITY
Andrea Carta, Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy
A woman's century of love: Apollinaire's Saint-Georges portrait - Posture, Patience and Existence

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (A) 2

LITERATURE AND CELEBRITY
Andrea Carta, Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy
A woman's century of love: Apollinaire's Saint-Georges portrait - Posture, Patience and Existence

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (A) 3

CELEBRITY NEWS
Kathleen Friel, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand
Celebrity news: The multi-faceted nature of celebrity

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (A) 4

CELEBRITY NEWS
Kathleen Friel, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand
Celebrity news: The multi-faceted nature of celebrity

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (B) 1

CELEBRITY CULTURE PERSPECTIVES
Lorena Agostino, Cathrin Institute of Journalism, Recognizing Celebrity Culture: A Practical Guide to Celebrity Theory in CULTURE

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (B) 2

CELEBRITY CULTURE PERSPECTIVES
Lorena Agostino, Cathrin Institute of Journalism, Recognizing Celebrity Culture: A Practical Guide to Celebrity Theory in CULTURE

12:45 pm - 1:15 pm LUNCH (Hall)

1:45 pm - 3:00 pm PARALLEL SESSIONS 2

PARALLEL SESSIONS 2 (A) 1

DONALD
Jamie Burke, Brunel University, London
Africana Studies and Gender: A Comparative Approach

PARALLEL SESSIONS 2 (A) 2

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Jamie Burke, Brunel University, London
Africana Studies and Gender: A Comparative Approach

PARALLEL SESSIONS 2 (A) 3

DONALD
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Africana Studies and Gender: A Comparative Approach

PARALLEL SESSIONS 2 (A) 4

DONALD
Jamie Burke, Brunel University, London
Africana Studies and Gender: A Comparative Approach

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm PLENARY KEYNOTE (Hall)

4:30 pm - 5:00 pm COFFEE BREAK (Hall)

5:00 pm - 6:45 pm PARALLEL SESSIONS 3

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CELEBRITY AND RELIGION
Isabella Frazzoni, Bambino Gesù, Rome
Celebrity and Religion: A Comparison of Western and Eastern Religions

PARALLEL SESSIONS 3 (B) 2

CELEBRITY AND RELIGION
Isabella Frazzoni, Bambino Gesù, Rome
Celebrity and Religion: A Comparison of Western and Eastern Religions

PARALLEL SESSIONS 3 (C) 3

CELEBRITY AND RELIGION
Isabella Frazzoni, Bambino Gesù, Rome
Celebrity and Religion: A Comparison of Western and Eastern Religions

PARALLEL SESSIONS 3 (D) 4

CELEBRITY AND RELIGION
Isabella Frazzoni, Bambino Gesù, Rome
Celebrity and Religion: A Comparison of Western and Eastern Religions

6:46 pm GALA DINNER at Cicle dell'Avventura: AULAE DELL'UNIVERSITÀ
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**THURSDAY, JUNE 26**

**9:30 am - 10:00 am PLENARY KEYNOTE (Hall A)**

**9:30 am - 10:00 am PLENARY KEYNOTE (Hall A)**

**10:00 am - 11:45 am PARALLEL SESSIONS I (Hall A)**

**11:45 am - 1:20 pm PARALLEL SESSIONS II (Hall B)**

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**5:45 pm - 7:25 pm LUNCH**

**7:30 pm - 8:15 pm PARALLEL SESSIONS VII (Hall G)**

**8:15 pm - 10:00 pm FINAL SEMINARS**

**9:00 am - 10:30 am PLENARY SEMINARS**

**10:30 am - 12:15 pm PLENARY SEMINARS**

**12:15 pm - 2:00 pm PLENARY SEMINARS**

**2:00 pm - 3:45 pm PLENARY SEMINARS**

**3:45 pm - 5:45 pm PLENARY SEMINARS**

**5:45 pm - 6:30 pm PLENARY SEMINARS**
CELEBRITY AND RELIGION, CELEBRITY AS RELIGIOUS

Isabella Pezzini, Bianca Terracciano, Sapienza Università di Roma
The Pope-celebrity and the role of cinema

Simona Romani, Paolo Peverini, LUISS Guido Carli
Pope Francis: the representation of a celebrity between actions and narratives

Anna Maria Lorusso, Università di Bologna
Popularity and populism

THE PURSUIT OF FAME AT ALL COSTS: IDENTITY WORK AMONG YOUNG CELEBRITIES AND CONSUMERS

Annebeth Bels, Hilde Van den Bulck, University of Antwerp
Social Media Celebrities as Salient Resource for Preteens’ Identity Work

Pilar Lacasa, Julián de la Fuente-Prieto, Sara Cortés, University of Alcalá
Adolescents as cultural activists: Remixing celebrities in fandom communities

Stephanie Patrick, University of Ottawa.
Desecrating Disney: The 2007 Celebrity Photo Hacks and Crisis in American Hegemonic Femininity

CELEBRITIES IN BRAZILIAN FAVELAS: CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP THROUGH FAME

Thiago Soares, UFPE
Performance and cultural citizenship: Methodological scripts for favela celebrities in Brazil

Fabiana Moraes, UFPE
Poverty and celebrification in everyday life: negotiation and confrontation of the new deprived and famous on Instagram

Camila Monteiro, University of Huddersfield
The whitening process to mainstream: Funk celebrities and the white approach to reach larger audiences

CHALLENGING AUTHENTICITY IN CELEBRITY ACTIVISM: STRATEGIES OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL AUTHORITY

Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University, Denmark.
The celebrity branded activist campaign: a case study of the Danish pop-singer Medina’s Mevaton* project

Katrine Meldgaard, University of Southern Denmark
“Bombing the idea of the state as a health authority to pieces”: celebrity and antivaccination
advocacy

Helle Kannik Haastrup, University of Copenhagen
The Celebrity as Activist and Cultural Critic: Emma Watson’s Feminist Book Club & The Handmaids Tale

DAVID BOWIE: CELEBRITY DESECRATION, FLUIDITY AND CRITIQUE

Toija Cinque, Deakin University/SAE Institute
David Bowie: Desecration and Desire in the Social Mediasphere

Ian Dixon, Deakin University
Fame, Rotting on the Slimy Thoroughfare: David Bowie’s Desecrating Celebritization between ‘Diamond Dogs’ and ‘Blackstar’.

Lisa Perrott, University of Waikato
David Bowie, Hauntology and Uncanny Celebrity.

DESECRATING ITALIAN CELEBRITIES. SCANDALS, FAME MIGRATIONS AND MEDIA EFFECTS

Silvia Vacirca, Sapienza Università di Roma
“Il caso Tortora”: assuming the celebrity’s guilt

Antonella Mascio, Università di Bologna

Rachel Haworth, University of Hull
Legacies of Scandal in the Celebritization Process: The Case of Mina, Italian Popular Music Diva

CELEBRITIES IN THE HIGHEST SPHERES: DEGRADATION, CELEBRIFICATION, AND DESACRALIZATION OF SAINTS, POPES, AND ANGELS.

Paola Bonifazio, University of Texas
‘Maria Goretti Superstar: Female Sainthood, Celebrity, and Fandom’

Giancarlo Lombardi, College of Staten Island, CUNY Graduate Center
‘Holy Celebrity: The Young Pope’

Nicola L Marini-Maio, Dickinson College, Ellen Nerenberg, Wesleyan Universit
‘The Winx Club: Angelic Celebrities, Pastoral Edutainment.’

HISTORICAL FIGURES BETWEEN ACCREDITATION AND DEGRADATION

Sara Pesce, Università di Bologna
Luxury Pays. Marie Antoinette Queen of Fashion

Fabio Cleto, Università di Bergamo
Notorious: Oscar Wilde, the queer “it” and the grammar of celebrity
Lucio Spaziante, Università di Bologna
Bob Dylan as an anti-celebrity Nobel Prize laureate

FAME AND CELEBRITY STUDIES’ HISTORICAL TURN - 1: THE INVESTIGATION OF REPUTATION, RENOWN, RUMOUR AND SCANDAL (ANTIQUITY, MEDIEVAL, AND RENAISSANCE PERIODS)

P David Marshall, Deakin University
Panel Introduction

Charles Hedrick, UC Santa Cruz
Antiquity and its organization of fame/celebrity: the tension of reputation and scandal

Gianni Guastella, Università di Siena
From Rumour to Glory: the Personification of Fame in the Middle Ages.

Arnoud Visser, Utrecht University
The Renaissance of Fame

FAME AND CELEBRITY STUDIES’ HISTORICAL TURN - 2: THE FORMATIONS OF CELEBRITIZATION AND CELEBRIFICATION? INVESTIGATION OF PUBLIC INDIVIDUALITY AND SCANDAL IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT, REVOLUTION AND CONTEMPORARY ERAS.

Eva Giloi, Rutgers University-Newark
Twilight of the Gods, Dawn of the Heroes: Celebrity, Charisma and Hero-Worship as Paths to Power in the Age of Revolution

Katja Lee, University of Western Australia
The Contemporary History of the Notorious in the 20th and 21st century

POLITICAL UNIONS: THE CELEBRIFICATION OF THE BRITISH-AMERICAN SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Shelley Cobb, University of Southampton
“Political Soulmates”: Reagan, Thatcher, and the Powerful Chemistry of Celebrity Coupledom

Hannah Hamad, Cardiff University
“I Will Be With You, Whatever”: Blair and Bush’s Baghdadi Bromance

Neil Ewen, University of Winchester
“An unholy alliance”: Trump and Farage’s Celebrity Populism

GIRL MELTDOWN: GIRLS, SCANDAL AND CELEBRITY

Fiona Handyside, University of Exeter
Becoming the ‘anti-girl’: Shopping and Scandal in Contemporary Hollywood
Danielle Hipkins, University of Exeter
Surviving Berlusconi from the Margins: Scandalous girls becoming women in the Italian media

Catherine O’Rawe, Bristol University
Girls, Stardom, and the Danger of Film Acting in Post-war Italy

“NO PLACE FOR SISSIES”: CELEBRITY AND THE AGING FEMALE BODY

Georges-Claude Guilbert, Université Le Havre Normandie
Age, Gender and Politics: the uncommon case of Brigitte Macron

Brenda R. Weber, Indiana University
Flipping the Scripts on Gender, Sexuality, and Aging: Grace and Frankie and Orgasms on Demand
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Welcome!

Dear delegates,

A warm and sincere welcome to the fourth international Celebrity Studies Conference Desecrating Celebrity, hosted by Sapienza Università di Roma, and sponsored by Routledge, Fondazione Sapienza, PHD Programme in History of Europe and Nuova Cultura Publisher.

Scholars have been drawn from around the world to reflect on the conference’s driving theme Desecrating Celebrity: what happens when celebrities lose their own status? How can celebrities manage their status in the contemporary fluid media-scape? What role do media rituals have in building representations of both celebrification and degradation? What role does the audience play in desecrating a celebrity? What set of communicative practices may compose a degradation ceremony, transforming the social identity of the celebrity into another of a lower rank (such as an ordinary person)? These are just some of the questions that will guide us through a wonderfully rich and diverse three day conference filled with keynotes, panels, presentations, discussions, and social events.

We ask you to embrace the philosophy of the conference, that is to share, discuss and debate, in an open, constructive and supportive environment, the ideas that emerge in and across the keynotes, panels and papers you go to see and hear. For three days, Rome, famous for being the Eternal city of visible history, will truly become the City of Celebrity.

A special issue of the journal Celebrity Studies will be dedicated to the best papers of the conference; details of submission requirements will be available on the website after the conference. As Celebrity Studies is committed to fostering and sharing high quality academic research and being a central space for the field to grow and explore new ideas, the conference committee is pleased to announce that we will publish electronic proceedings. Moreover, a special issue of Mediascapes Journal (http://www.mediascapesjournal.it/) will be dedicated to media and celebrities. The deadline for sending full papers is August 30th 2018. More information about length and style will be available on the website after the conference and it will also be promoted via emails to all delegates.

At the end of this booklet, you will find practical information about the city of Rome and about conference venues.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our keynotes, to our review board, for their support in helping us to prepare for these three upcoming days. Let’s celebrate!

The scientific committee:

Romana Andò (chair)
James Bennett
Neil Ewen
Gaston Franssen
Hannah Hamad
Andrea Minuz
Sean Redmond
Alessandro Saggioro
Keynotes speakers

ABSTRACTS

(in alphabetical order)
Beautiful penitent whore: the desecrated celebrity of Mary Magdalene, Superstar

Marina Warner writes: “The Magdalene, like Eve, was brought into existence by the powerful undertow of misogyny in Christianity, which associates women with the dangers and degradations of the flesh” (1994: 225).

Mary Magdalene is a superstar: a perennial character of cultural fascination in the East and the West, embodying the classic dichotomy of virgin and whore. In this paper, I will examine her as a celebrity and a film star, using the way in which star studies examines the sources of meaning in a star image, in order to encompass and analyse her contradictory elements. This will be an interdisciplinary encounter with Mary Magdalene, from the perspectives of theology, church and art history, feminist film and media studies, celebrity and pop culture. My aim is to provide a means for productive analysis of her unique complexity, when notions of ineffability and confusion sometimes obscure her.

Films are the most common way the world experiences her, not the verses in the Gospels or the processes of biblical interpretation and revision. She is a movie star, playing an integral role in the Jesus biopic, and has been played by many star actors: Anne Bancroft, Barbara Hershey, Debra Messing, Juliette Binoche, Monica Bellucci, and now Rooney Mara. These roles and performances have variously perpetuated the myths and misrepresentations of the Magdalene which were promulgated by Pope Gregory in the 6th Century, most of which have now been revealed and discarded.

So how has her desecrated celebrity played out in art, cinema and pop culture? In this paper I will analyse the incarnations of Mary Magdalene and explore the themes and tropes that pervade her star image, both visual and conceptual. I will argue that there is a thirst for a dilution of the popular images of the patriarchal masculinity of Christianity and for recognition of the personality of Mary Magdalene. The new film directed by Garth Davis shows a Mary who has a cerebral, spiritual life as well as a practical one, and a brain as well as a body. How does this latest depiction work to offer a revised understanding of Mary, and what does the reception of this film tell us about her celebrity today?

Taking Down the Sacred: Fuck-me vs. Fuck-you Celebrity

The time has come for those of us who study celebrity to talk about fucking. That, after all, is what everyone else is talking about, in an effort to name, dissect and desacralise the toxic tangle of power, gender and sex that has upheld the hallowed halls of Hollywood-built celebrity. Even beyond the strict sense of having sex, celebrity has always been libidinal, organised around fantasies of fucking-who as well as fucking-with. Not so long ago, in June 2015, Caitlyn Jenner was unveiled in the pages of Vanity Fair as the hot new babe of L.A., all eyes upon her as she channeled Hollywood glamour to achieve the height of ‘fuck-me’ celebrity. Her poses and poise were perfect, so much so that Jon Stewart (then of The Daily Show) ironically praised her for winning the TV commentators’ game of ‘comparative fuckability’. The fact that Caitlyn is a transwoman, however, exposed the rules and norms of ‘fuck-me’ celebrity at the same time as she became its newest poster-girl. Far less visible, although at least as loud, have been the fight-the-system proponents of ‘fuck-you’ celebrity, from the self-conscious punk aesthetic of Courtney Love to the visual and verbal resistance campaigns of model Tess Holliday (who launched Instagram site #effyourbeautystandards). Now the celebrity system, which has heavily favoured the fuck-me over the fuck-you, is beginning to shift: the sudden desacralisation of the Weinstein star-making
apparatus, followed by the seismic effects of the #MeToo movement, have radically shifted the old balance between fuck-me and fuck-you celebrity, as women such as Rose McGowan and Stephanie Clifford, a.k.a. Stormy Daniels, (re)build their own celebrity by talking back to the celebrity men who have used and abused them. Whereas fuck-me celebrity requires a demure agreement not to talk about what we’re really talking about, which is to say that the disempowered must bear the shame of sex in exchange for the pay-off of celebrity, fuck-you celebrity talks openly about sex and its imbrications with power, and cannot be shamed. This talk will address the economics and dynamics of celebrity and fucking to ask whether celebrity as we know it has in fact been desacralised, or only momentarily desecrated.

Douglas Kellner, UCLA

Donald Trump as (Bad) Celebrity and President

Donald Trump is the first US president of modern time, maybe in US history, to win the presidency purely as a celebrity and without any political experience. I will interrogate the role of celebrity in US culture, society, and politics and will discuss how one of the key factors in Trump’s surprise victory was his manipulation of his celebrity status. Then, looking at the first 18 months of his presidency, I’ll discuss how his lack of political experience and knowledge has produced what many judge to be a (bad) celebrity presidency based in part on an authoritarian populist base. Finally, I’ll take up whether the term fascism can be applied to Trump’s base and movement.

Pramod K. Nayar, University of Hyderabad

Desecration and the Politics of ‘Image Pollution’: Ambedkar Statues and the ‘Sculptural Encounter’ in India

Indian newspapers often report the desecration of statues of Dr B.R. Ambedkar, the man who drafted the constitution of India. Ambedkar was responsible for the political rights being made available to the historically oppressed castes, the so-called ‘untouchables’ in post-Independence India. His statues now dot the Indian landscape, even as he serves as the icon of ‘Dalit’ (the term now used to describe the historically oppressed communities) consciousness, political campaigns and assertion. He is now, therefore, a significant constituent of the visual culture of India’s new modernity (Sandria Freitag 2001). Within this visual culture, contemporary representations of Ambedkar depict him as a statesman, a boddhisatva (one who is ready to acquire nirvana), a figure of authority, and is now clearly in the pantheon of Indian leaders (Johannes Beltz 2015) even approximating to a ‘mythicization’ by the Dalits (Debjani Ganguly 2002). When desacralization of the sort mentioned here occurs, it is this membership in the pantheon that is interrogated, and may be seen as an attempt to once more throw out, banish, Ambedkar beyond it, just as members of the ‘lower’ castes were ostracized.

I first examine the rhetoric of celebrity statues, such as those of Ambedkar, in the renewal of Indian public culture and public histories. These monuments, I suggest, are at once the symbol and body of the now-dead famous man, which moves Ambedkar beyond the temporality of mortals (Katharine Verdrey 1999). I then argue that the statue’s pervasive presence and ‘critical passivity’, its ‘stillness’ (David Gesty 2014), embodies the resistance of the community itself, to continuing oppression. It is these two key features of the celebrity Ambedkar that the act of desecration alters, at least symbolically. The attempt at desacralizing Ambedkar’s atemporal, embodied form, I suggest, is an instance of ‘image pollution’ (I use the term from Schölzel, cited in Axel Philips, 2015, advisedly, since pollution and taboo are key elements of Dalit oppression at the hands of upper-castes).
Further, in the process of defiling the atemporal Ambedkar statue, they also imply that social hierarchies are atemporal: beyond and before time.

Instead of battling the newly emancipated and politically empowered classes – the Dalits – those resisting equality of rights for all engage in a ‘sculptural encounter’ (Gesty), which results in the desecration. This sculptural encounter serves as a direct address to, a trigger for social tensions, the demographic segment of India that Ambedkar represents: the Dalits. (As the Merriam Webster informs us, to desecrate also means ‘to treat irreverently or contemptuously, often in a way that provokes outrage on the part of others’.)

To desecrate or profane the Ambedkar statue is to question the pure/impure distinction as well, founded on sectional interests. As Robbie Duschinsky (2010), following Durkheim and Bourdieu, argues: ‘the pure may appear to symbolise the order and benevolence of society, and the impure its anguish and disequilibrium’. Ambedkar symbolizes a sustained interrogation of the caste-identities founded on this very premise of purity (the upper-castes as ‘pure’), and his statue is a reminder of this historical interrogation of artificial constructions of the pure/impure binary. To profane the statue of the man who questioned the foundations of the sacred/profane binary, as these acts suggest, may then be read as an instance of social revanchism and attempted reversal of public histories.

Martin Shingler, University of Sunderland

Bette Davis: Actor, Star & Celebrity

Bette Davis (1908-89) operated throughout her long film career as an actor, star and celebrity. A distinguished and award-winning screen performer, she developed her own unique acting style with a highly visible set of mannerisms. During the 1930s, she became a major film star at Warner Bros. with a distinct screen persona and a name which, when placed above the title of her films, could draw sufficiently large audiences to first-run cinemas to ensure the profitability of her star vehicles. In the Thirties, her publicity typically stressed her talents as a film actor, her capacity for hard work, her professional rivalry with female co-stars and her frustrations with the restrictions of her contract with Warner Bros. In subsequent decades, however, various details of her personal life were disclosed. This included potential affairs with male co-stars and directors, the reasons behind the failure of her four marriages, her volatile temper, wicked sense of humour, controlling behaviour, as well as an increasing dependency on alcohol. Consequently, Davis emerged much more fully as a celebrity during and after the 1960s, whilst becoming a cult star for a younger generation of audiences and a gay icon. Live public appearances and TV chat show interviews took on an increasing importance for Davis in the 1970s, when film work proved hard to come by for an actress in her sixties. In the Seventies, some considered her to be a living Hollywood legend, while others regarded her as a has-been. Yet in the early 1980s, Davis proved her worth once more as a dramatic actor in a series of socially conscious TV movies about old age. This proved short lived, however, when ill health and the ravages of age severely undermined her ability to act, speak and move, hampering her attempts to secure film work after suffering a major stroke and breaking her hip in 1983. To sustain her career and maintain her public profile, Davis published a second set of memoirs and embarked upon a grueling round of live appearances and TV chat shows during the last three years of her life. By the time of her death in October 1989, she had transcended cult status to become a popular cultural icon with a strongly defined brand image that included her trademark eyes, brightly painted red lips and a gloved hand holding a smoking cigarette. After her death, a flurry of biographies and plays transformed her life story and her personality into something much more forceful, passionate and complex than any of the strong, independent and rebellious heroines that she had performed on screen throughout her long film career. Increasingly fictionalized
accounts of Bette Davis have subsequently lent her star persona even greater force and complexity. Public fascination with her has so far shown no sign of subsiding. In 2018, the 110th anniversary of her birth, Bette Davis seems to be more relevant than ever when it comes to understanding the dynamics of stardom and celebrity.
Parallel sessions

ABSTRACTS
(in alphabetical order)
Reconceptualising Celebrity Capital: Advancing the Application of Bourdieu’s Fields’ Theory in Celebrity Studies

Previous studies relying on Bourdieu’s fields’ theory have defined celebrity capital as the accumulation of visibility and attention capital gained through recurrent media representations (Driessens, 2013; Van Krieken, 2012; Cronin and Shaw, 2002; Heinich, 2012; Gamson, 1994). This concept of celebrity capital illuminates the fact that celebrity capital behaves differently in the different fields that it is introduced to. My paper is proposing, however, that celebrity capital can usefully be reconceptualised from what has been presented in previous literature.

The paper will argue that celebrity is not only a form of capital which affords the bearer influence in many social fields but can arguably be conceptualised as a social field, where the requirement for entry into that social field is the accumulation of visibility/attention capital. The paper will argue that the more attention/visibility capital an individual has, the more that individual is able to attain power and dominance in the celebrity field. Using research findings from research conducted on celebrity political endorsement in Ghana, the paper will provide empirical evidence that celebrity capital is not one form of capital but rather a representative term for the many forms of capital that a celebrity accrues in their social field. The paper will further argue that celebrities use attention/visibility capital in the celebrity field to accumulate and acquire other forms of capital, which can then be used to dominate or distort their original field and the different social fields they wish to migrate to.

The Celebrification of Samira Bawumia, Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana

According to Driessens (2013), modern celebrity is a creation of the media, which bestows celebrity status on an individual by providing them with attention, visibility and promotion. Driessens (2013) calls this process ‘celebrification’, a term which captures the moment an individual is separated and legitimatised by the media as extraordinary, or a celebrity. This paper examines the celebrification of Samira Bawumia, the Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana, by examining the moment when Samira Bawumia moved from being the wife of the running mate of the NPP Presidential Candidate to a political elite and a political celebrity.

Samira Bawumia, unlike previous Second Ladies of Ghana who were relatively unknown, is skilled in managing the requirements of the media field. She demonstrates an ability to effectively communicate an appealing personality through her skilful media performances. The paper will examine how through her skilful performances, the media have legitimised her celebrity status through celebritized reports about her leading to an objectification of Samira Bawumia; where her personal image and superficial matters seem to marginalize more substantive political issues she is involved in.

The paper will further explore how Samira Bawumia is negotiating the relationship between the political and media fields through negotiating a balance between her popular and political self by translating and consolidating the power of her celebrity in the context of the political field. This study will shed more light on the complex nature of political celebrity in Ghana.

Instagrammatically (In)Correct: A study of transmedia celebrities of contemporary Hindi film industry
The paper aims to analyse transnational and transmedia circuits of the new age Hindi cinema actors who bank upon social media and apps to connect with their fan-base across all digital portals. A case study of Hindi film actress Sonam Kapoor stands relevant here. Kapoor recently launched an app by her name with a forum, where “Sonamholics” (name of her fan base who use the app) emulate her looks shared on Instagram and her life philosophy as shared on a multitude of social media. This fluid mediascape and constant need to be the visible and active user of the social media has created a parallel visual economy. Here images are highly aestheticized and filtered to create a “happy bubble” of a star’s life, where she is constantly working as an actor or conversely endorsing products and creating her own brand of clothing (example – Rheson – brand by Sonam Kapoor). Through this constant sharing of her private space, there is a dual process at play. On end of the spectrum is the celebrity endorsing products as democratised commodities that fans can buy. The other end of the spectrum is the constant negotiations with the public eye through diplomatic viewpoints and positive PR. Excavating the hyperlinks (digital wormholes (David Bell,2010)) and placing them in a map elucidates the crucial role fashion industry plays in creating publicity in every move the star makes. Stylists are therefore as important as actors to transcend Hindi film actors to a celebrity status in the contemporary film industry. Thus, this paper will delineate the ways in which celebrity status of stars operates through the filter enhanced images on social media and transmedia platforms.

Neil Alperstein, Loyola University Maryland

Selling out and Sailing Onward: How Micro-Celebrities Manage their Self-Presentation on Social Media

Diffused audiences sometimes, through their engagement with social media, employ micro-celebrities in order to make sense of their world. While celebrities may have a paid staff of public relations experts at their beck and call, micro-celebrities have to manage their presence on social media with little or no assistance, which may subject them to the vagaries of their audiences. One of the ways in which audiences demonstrate this sense making process is through their responses to those micro-celebrities that break with some social expectation, like those that “sell-out” to commercial interests. There is an expectation that micro-celebrities will present themselves in an authentic and sincere manner, which raises the bar for them and potentially makes their fall from grace steeper, potentially turning fans into haters. This critical analysis is based on case studies of micro-celebrity travelers who rely on social media channels to share their experiences sailing around the world and raise money to support their adventures. The study concludes that if the micro-celebrity “sells-out” disparagement may be contained within pockets of the micro-celebrity’s social network. While few fans may abandon the micro-celebrity, most fans react or respond in variable ways; in other words love and hate operate along a continuum. Parasocial interaction may serve to mediate the imaginary social relationship between fan and micro-celebrity. As a micro-celebrity labors to maintain their authenticity and sincerity, playing an important social role in a fan’s life, there is greater likelihood for understanding and perhaps forgiveness when the micro-celebrity crosses the proverbial line.

Ben Aslinger, Bentley University

Roy Cohn and Queer Villainy

Like most minoritized intellectual traditions and fields of study, queer studies has spent most of its energies animating a hagiography and a memorialization of pioneers who pushed the boundaries of
normativity, busted barriers, and fought for full political, cultural, and economic citizenship. This paper examines Roy Cohn, Senator Eugene McCarthy’s right-hand man during the 1950s red scare and 1970s and 1980s New York litigator who helped paved the way for Trump’s successful move from Queens to Manhattan, as a notorious and infamous queer anti-icon, a blatant target of queer disrespect, and asks how the definition of bad queerness animates queer politics and queer studies and how the specter of unacceptable, unpalatable, and unethical queerness works to encourage individual queers to perform their queerness in particular ways. Through an analysis of the 1992 HBO Films made for cable movie Citizen Cohn starring James Woods, Tony Kushner’s dramatic construction of Cohn in Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes, a play in two parts, Al Pacino’s performance of Cohn in the HBO miniseries adaptation of Kushner’s plays (2003), and popular press accounts, images, and representations of Cohn, I examine how Cohn became enshrined as exactly what a gay man ought not to be. While Cohn would never have accepted the appellations gay or queer, in queer memory he is the archetypal bad subject. Long before Milo Yiannopoulos, Cohn was the quintessential gay troll.

Emilio Audissino, University of Southampton

Episodes and Real Rob: Celebrities at Their Worst.

The paper examines two TV series based on self-desecration. In Episodes (2011–2017, five seasons) Matt LeBlanc plays a version of himself reminiscent of Friends’s Joey Tribbiani. The fictional LeBlanc is as dense and, in his acting profession, as inept as Joey was. Unlike Joey, fictional LeBlanc is (undeservedly?) successful and wealthy and, quite unlike Joey, he is not amiable but selfish, on the verge of being a sexual predator, prima donna-like capricious and vain, and totally unreliable. The series tracks the vicissitudes of two British screenwriters trying to adapt their critically-acclaimed BBC show into a product for the American market, suffering much damage to their artistic integrity, most of which caused by LeBlanc, imposed as the series’ star by the Head of the network. In Real Rob (2015–ongoing, two seasons) Rob Schneider – famous for his raunchy roles in such comedies as Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo (1999) – teams up with his real-life wife Patricia to produce a series in-between the reality and the sit-com. The show follows the daily life of the Schneider family – including the three-year-old daughter Miranda. Rob is depicted as pathologically egotistical, at times a squander at times a close-fisted, gasping for a relaunch of his waning career, envious of his wife’s increasing success, and cruelly bossy to his slave-like personal assistant.

Both fictional LeBlanc and fictional Schneider mix traits from both their public and screen personae but deliberately and mercilessly push the tone towards the negative extremes – LeBlanc ends up in bed with his barely legal-age female stalker; Schneider forces his personal assistant to get a vasectomy in his stance. They come to embody the worst stereotypes associated with celebrities. In Episodes and Real Rob LeBlanc and Schneider have opted for a renewed visibility built on desecration. In the complex dynamics of stardom and fandom, fans have loved ‘heroes’ as well as ‘villains’; they have been mesmerised by grand gestures as well as by sordid scandals. What Episodes and Real Rob seems to point to is the fact that, no matter how desecrated, celebrities will still be followed and admired precisely because they are celebrities.

Caroline Bainbridge, University of Roehampton.

Who will fix it for us? Toxic celebrity and the therapeutic dynamics of media culture

The recent exposé of Jimmy Savile as a perpetrator of heinous abuse over many decades enables new understandings of the links between processes of mediatisation and affective, emotional
experience. The much hallowed ‘national treasure’ status accorded to Savile during his lifetime was violently overturned following the disclosure of documentary evidence linked to hitherto disavowed knowledge, leading to the desecration of his reputation in both real life and media contexts. Savile’s toxic rendition of celebrity has subsequently given rise to popular cultural narratives based on the scandal, most notably the television drama, *National Treasure* (Channel 4, UK, 2016), which attracted widespread critical acclaim and impressive ratings. This paper explores the role of media processes in both shaping and responding to the desecration of celebrity, to suggest that there is a therapeutic quality at play. Operating over time at representational, affective and formal levels, popular media provide important outlets for unconscious emotional experience, creating space in which to resist otherwise dominant narratives that contrive to shape celebrity as somehow ‘untouchable’. Media also provide a valuable means of grappling with painful experience, allowing it to surface and be worked through. Using Savile as a case study, this paper argues that the entanglement between mediatisation and celebrity culture creates important psychological space in which to make sense of lived, affective experience. It further draws on object relations psychoanalysis to examine the containing and reparative dimensions of popular culture, offering an analysis of *National Treasure*, and its international media reception.

Anita Biressi, University of Roehampton

**Paying the price: the gendered economics of celebrity downfall**

In July 2013 former IMF leader and French presidential hopeful Dominique Strauss-Kahn (DSK) defended the behaviour which led to his arrest for sexual assault and his subsequent dramatic ejection from the seat of power. In a CNN interview he protested his torpedoed career and the cost of the financial settlement made to the complainant Diallo Nafissatou:

STRAUSS-KAHN: …I don’t think I have any kind of problem with women. I firmly have a problem with understanding that what is expected from a politician of the highest level is different from what can do Mr. Smith in the street [sic].
INTERVIEWER: That’s the price of being at the top?
STRAUSS-KAHN: Exactly. And I didn’t want to pay this price, so finally, I paid it twice.

In this paper I consider what news coverage of DSK’s downfall (and others such as Weinstein) reveals about the persistently gendered relationship between capital and labour, the privileged and the disadvantaged and between public and private selves. In cases like this embedded assumptions about gender relations, male potency, celebrity charisma, sexual appetite and female seduction come together to underscore the economic power of the influential celebrity male, his vulnerability to exploitation and the questionable motivation of women who complain. This paper interrogates the economic logic by which the media operates when it tries to make sense of allegations of sex assault against rich and powerful celebrities and how this informs its depiction of celebrity disgrace. In sum, how do the media evaluate the cost of celebrity downfall?

Giovanni Boccia Artieri, Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo, Elisabetta Zurovac, Università degli Studi di Sassari

**Invisible followers, ephemeral content and unaggregating hashtags: performing and perceiving the microcelebrity status in Snapchat**

We can think of microcelebrity as a set of techniques involving “people ‘amping up’ their popularity over the Web using [...] video, blogs, and social networking sites” (Senft 2008: 25) and who may be
famous only within small networks (Marwick 2013). Besides the wideness of their popularity, microcelebrities have a curated persona which is narrated in order to be perceived “more ‘real’ than television personalities” (Senft 2008: 16) and closer to the audience because of the open channels of feedback, focused to engage them within a conversation (2008). In other words microcelebrities curate a persona that feels “authentic” to the audience (Marwick 2013: 114). Our aim was to understand what kind of practices define the microcelebrity status in an online space which does not display networks nor feedbacks, and if these practices are successfully perceived. We have conducted a one year long online ethnographic research in the Italian Snapchat community, combined with 10 in depth interviews with some of its members. We chose to explore the Italian Snapchat because of its affordances and peculiarity in adoption: it began to spread among Italian users not as Instant Messaging app but as a platform which introduced the ephemeral stories format. Our preliminary results show that on one side users performed specific tactics in order to present themselves as popular within the network; and on the other side users perceived these tactics as “staged”. Microcelebrity practices seem to have been assimilated by individuals, and this makes them well recognizable but mostly perceived as non authentic.

Arrigo Bonifacio, Sapienza Università di Roma

Revamp celebrity throughout its desecration: the case of Marshal Tito

During the cold war mayor and minor individuals raised to celebrity thanks to their role in the great east-west confrontation that characterised those years. Unsurprisingly, cold war celebrities that felt into disgrace within their own side typically faced desecration, soon followed by substantial demotion and oblivion (e.g. Molotov, Rákosi, MacArthur, MacCarthy). The most important case of cold war celebrity that escaped this framework is that of Tito. Indeed, the Yugoslav leader overcame many desecration processes even succeeding in exploiting them to foster his political career as well as his celebrity. The aim of this proposal is to investigate this aspect of this unique historical figure, Tito, the eventual non-aligned movement founding father that built his celebrity throughout the desecration processes carried out by both cold war blocs, which he both lined up with and seceded from. To achieve this goal the analysis will focus on those stages of his long-lasting political career in which his public image underwent to outstanding desecrating processes: his 2018 trial in Yugoslavia; the prosecutions against him during the great purge in late 30ies Moscow; his 1945 confrontation on Trieste and the monarchy with the allies; internal and external criticisms to his 35 year regime; above all, his well-known 1948 break with Stalin and the following eastern bloc smear campaign against him, one of the most significant and iconic case of historical celebritiy taking advantage of the attempts to defile his own figure in order to strengthen and revamp it.

Nandana Bose

Faking it?: The Ranaut-Roshan Bollywood Celebrity Scandal

For two years, Bollywood stars, Kangana Ranaut and Hrithik Roshan have been involved in a uniquely protracted and outrageous scandal about their alleged romantic liaison, which has intrigued and divided the Indian nation. This ‘perverse mess,’ to quote Roshan, fueled by salacious rumor-mongering, and a celebrity gossip culture driven by multi-lingual mass media and the internet via popular social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Whatsapp, involves issues pertaining to the disingenuous, exposed celebrity, possibly engaged in fraudulent activities to create a hoax romantic relationship; libel and slander with allegations of cyberstalking, bullying and hacking; and gender bias, nepotism, and insider privilege prevalent in the Bombay film industry. In the context of this unprecedented celebrity scandal, the paper examines the media ecosystem that
thrives on the manufacture and dissemination of scandal and notoriety, and the routine degradation of Bollywood celebrities through established and emergent sites, strategies, rituals, and ceremonies of desecration that have comprised of negative news items, interviews and advertising; lengthy, prime-time coverage by prominent, mainstream news channels; planting of fake news; malicious and abusive Twitter trolls, and accusatory Facebook posts and comments from fans/anti-fans, friends and family taking sides and casting aspersions on the moral character and sanity, vested interests, and career agendas of Roshan and Ranaut. The paper also considers the limitations of such desecration media rituals, as reflected by audience satiety and exhaustion with the prolonged media attention on a ‘frivolous’ scandal/hoax. To what extent, if at all, has scandal, notoriety and defamation affected celebrity credibility, reputation, and fan base; and are there long-term repercussions on their respective brands?

Anita Brady, Victoria University of Wellington

Houses of Cards and Closets: Coming Out as Scandal Management

As performers such as k.d. lang, Neil Patrick Harris or Ellen DeGeneres might attest, the declarative act of a celebrity ‘coming out’ usually inaugurates celebration from LGBTQI+ media commentators. Even those celebrities forced out under the hostile lens of media scandal, such as George Michael, can nonetheless expect to find a welcoming respite in the queer press. Actor Kevin Spacey’s 2017 Twitter declaration that he was “living life as a gay man”, however, was widely condemned by queer commentators who under other circumstances might have reacted with glee. Spacey’s mistake was the discursive proximity of his utterance of outness to his apology (of sorts) for an alleged sexual advance toward the then 14-year old actor, Anthony Rapp. LGBTQI+ commentators accused Spacey of attempting to deflect attention away from the alleged assault, and of reinforcing well-worn homophobic associations of gay men with paedophilia. Subsequent accusations of sexual assault and predatory behaviour by Spacey further underlined that dismay. This paper examines the complicated and, at times, contradictory queer politics of Kevin Spacey’s coming out and its aftermath. It draws on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s sustained analysis of the politics of outness in *Epistemology of the Closet*, and the queer theories informed by that text, to ask: what does the queer community do with the celebrities it doesn’t want? In answering this question, I consider what the response to Spacey’s failure to follow the ‘correct’ coming out script tells us about the discursive work of ‘the closet’ in both producing and managing gay scandal.

Stefano Brilli, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, IUAV University of Venice

Where is the sacred in online celebrity? Praise, loath and physical interaction with Italian webstars

This paper aims to investigate how the online proximity between internet celebrities and their audiences is translated in physical settings, through a multi-sited ethnography that explores fan-star interaction in online environments and in offline events where Italian webstars participate. Events in which fans encounter with celebrities are among the most relevant media rituals (Couldry 2003) where the celebrity status is reproduced, particularly through the definition of specific rules of interaction that mark the exceptionality of the famous person. However, in the social media landscape, the interaction with celebrities – especially with internet born stars – shifts from being relegated to rarity or para-sociality, to being a more frequent possibility of multisocial interaction (Hills 2015). This increased potential for interaction doesn’t necessarily correspond to an undermining of the symbolic distance between audiences and highly visible people. In the case of Italian webstars, for
example, such passage from scarcity to abundance of presence have produced two very different
scenarios: on the one hand we have social media stars that cultivate a deep intimacy with their fans,
and are therefore requested to perform friendship, closeness and equality; on the other hand we find
“trash stars”, people famous because they are ridiculed or ironically praised by networked publics,
who are demanded to perform a stylized “memetic” version of themselves.
By examining ten occasions where Italian webstars participate in clubs, parties, book signing events
and meet-and-greet events, this study will try to show 1) the existence of two distinct types of
proximity with social media celebrities: one that is “fast”, bounded to the event and interested in
preserving the idol’s exceptionality, and one that is “extended”, repeated in time and aimed at an
emotional and physical intimacy, 2) how this encounters can be regarded as instances of the “bio-
economic sacred” (Mellor & Shilling 2014), which is affectively stronger in extended proximity but
formally more present in fast proximity.

Safa Canalp, Humboldt University of Berlin

Emotional Alliances: Erdogan’s Celebrities

This paper focuses on mostly representational socio-political activities of Turkish celebrities --with
an emphasis on the musicians-- who have remained in Turkish President Erdogan’s (in)famous
celebrity circles, and it intends to propound a conceptual discussion on their roles in the social
normalization of deviance within the country during AKP’s autocratic regime which has grown in
the last fifteen years. The paper questions and observes those celebrities’ motivations for and
potential gains and losses from their highly mediated engagements with the state, and accordingly,
it perceives these celebrity circles as illustrative to socio-politically influential groupings which I
call emotional alliances. With reference to anthropological discussions on media and emotion, my
argumentation is built upon Grossberg’s (1984, 1992) notion of affective alliances, Elias’s (1939)
seminal work on the civilizing process and Berger and Luckmann’s (1966) stimulating discussions
on the social construction of reality, albeit with some appropriative changes which are intended to
serve for the empirical exploration. While Grossberg’s notion focuses on fans, my notion puts
emphasis on celebrities. Besides, while looking upon celebrities’ alignments and their influence on
the society, the notion’s relatively more dystopic perspective makes it agonize over processes of de-
civilizing and objective (as both discursive and institutional) constructions of un-reality and
delusion. Furthermore, the paper tries to handle the socially segregated conjuncture of the country
through following thinking paths provided by Williams (1977) in his discussions on structures of
feeling and dominant culture. Instead of blaming such alignments insensitively, the paper eventually
observes that when joining the alliances, even the celebrities may admire or fear (the regime), and
even their potential gains and losses may range from subvention to prosecution (by the regime).
Within such social segregation which is reinforced by the cultural bio-politics of emotion that
operate under Erdogan’s neoliberal autocracy, the celebrities’ above-mentioned position-takings
make them encounter horns of a social dilemma: pro-Erdoganists’ embracement and anti-
Erdoganists’ condemnation.

Francesca Cantore, Sapienza Università di Roma, Giulia Muggeo, Università di Torino

Reshaping and estranging the star. The case of Alberto Sordi and Walter Chiari

As noted by the recent studies on Celebrity culture, the modern mediatic system has a crucial role
on the formation of celebrities and the distribution of their related images. If today’s star and it’s
perception rises and spreads across mediatic platforms with such ease and fluency, it is with the
same amount of naturalness that it also often stigmatized, set aside and, lastly, forgotten. Today we have multiple instances of this phenomenon that, as we know, has its roots in much distant times. This speech aims to analyse a couple of central figures in the Italian’s show business of the 20th century, who either suffered from a reshaping by the critics and the audience or were pushed away by the same mediatic system that originally embraced and carried them to success.

In the first case study, we shall analyse the hostile relationship between Alberto Sordi and the intellectuals of his time derived from a widespread skepticism towards comedy Italian style as a genre itself by the elite intellectuals. The relationship worsened from the Sixties onwards, following Sordi’s decision to start directing. «[The critics] severity reached unreasonable heights as if beyond every reasonable opinion lied something else: perhaps an aversion towards Sordi-the character, or an inconvenience caused by the arrogance that led him to seize other people's jobs, by improvising himself as a director» (Grazia Livi, 1967:152). By using the critical reception of Sordi’s first directing work, Fumo di Londra (1966) as a case study, by analyzing the film magazines active at the time («Cinema 60», «Film Critica», «Cinema Nuovo», etc...), we aim to investigate the contradictory situation that sees the consecration of Sordi as a popular culture icon on the one hand and his refusal by the elite intellectuals on the other.

In the second case study, we’ll analyse the figure of Walter Chiari, whose case reveals the reshaping and estrangement that the Milanese host suffered after the drug possession charges. In 1970, following his detention, the career of one of the main figures in Italian show business and most beloved tv hosts, comes to a complete halt.

These case studies, though far from today’s context, are nonetheless useful to the understanding of star desecrating phenomenons.

Lucía Caro-Castaño, David Selva-Ruiz, Universidad de Cádiz (Spain)

Making visible the non-visible: an ethnographic study about women that prescribe home and personal care goods on YouTube

This is an ethnographic work in progress about a specific female community online: mature age women who share their daily shopping bag on their channels in YouTube. Typically, they use the unboxing formula to make a comment about their home purchases and the review format to recommend or criticise “finished products” (from hygienic paper to washing-up liquid). What led us to start this project was the aim to understand what we felt as a paradox —from our positions as thirty-seven-years-old-academics—: the relational work developed to create a community and a public persona around the public (?) prescribing of domestic, non-visible products.

The questions that are leading this exploratory research are: Do these women feel YouTube as a public/media arena? Do they consider themselves as a community? If they are, which are the goods of this community? Does the action of prescribing this domestic products related in some way to their sense of agency? Are they developing micro-celebrity strategies and practices? The methodological design combines qualitative and quantitative techniques (ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, and content analysis).

Andrea Carteny, Sapienza Università di Roma

A woman celebrity of belle époque: Valentine de Saint-Point between Futurism, Feminism and Esotericism

As a symbol of the belle époque and among the first feminists of Western history, Valentine de Saint-Point (1875-1953) collects different sides of the women of his time: poet and writer, painter and choreographer, journalist and “orientalist”. In his life she spends period of engagement in
Carlos K.F. Cheung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Unfriending the pseudo-local star: Localism and the disintegration of the precarious fandom for G.E.M. Tang in Hong Kong

This paper explicates the “un-fan” of fandom in the context of cross-border identity politics between Hong Kong and China. In the pop music field, the persona and the music are the mediated resources for constituting fandom among the fans who share the same imagination of identity (Brown & Schulze, 1990; Hills, 2002). However, with the convergence of regional media markets (Keane, 2016), singing contests in China evolve into a politicized trans-border televisual musicscape (Cheung, 2017). Hence, the overarching question arose as to how regional identity politics influence fandom. This study analyzes the reception of G.E.M. Tang, a renowned Hong Kong pop singer and the winner of 2015 Nickelodeon Kids’ Choice Award for Favorite Asian Act. This case demonstrates Tang’s controversial participation in the China produced reality singing contest I am a Singer and the aftermath of her hypocritical involvement in the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. Specifically, it explores how fans of Tang perceive her involvement in China’s cultural industry and Hong Kong’s political contest, and how cross-border identity politics become alternative means for the local fans to evaluate a celebrity’s reputation and refigure fandom. After interviewing eighteen local “ex-fans” of Tang in Hong Kong, it finds that the defaming of Tang is because of her inability to meet the youths’ expectation of local identity, or Hong-Kongness. In other words, in a fans community which is intertwined with regional identity politics, the precarious local fandom for a celebrity can be disintegrated by the perceived misalignment of localism imagination.

Elaine W. Chung, SOAS, University of London

National Identity and Collective Star Desecration: Transnational Stardom of Korean Actresses and Online Nationalism in Chinese Social Media

With Sabrina Yu’s Star Vulnerability (2012) as conceptional framework, this paper interrogates how foreign stars are vulnerable to desecration triggered by geopolitics and online nationalism, and how some of them are more successful in evading it.

The ban on South Korean celebrities in China caused by diplomatic disputes since mid-2016 is the entry point to discuss this vulnerability. Either voluntarily or reluctantly, most fans clubs of Korean stars openly endorsed the ban in Chinese social media Weibo with the slogan ‘No idol in front of nation.’ Korean actress Choo Ja-hyun however is an exceptional survivor in this collective desecration, thanks to her well perceived persona as a ‘foreigner sincerely loves China’.

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Centred at Choo, this paper enquires the role of national identity in the management of transnational stardom. How Choo’s ‘Koreanness’ is appropriated shall be revealed by a discursive analysis on her online trajectories in forms of social media posts, publicities and entertainment news. How this constructed persona is rearticulated by Chinese consumers/audiences will be discussed by a study on commentary threads that argue to exclude Choo from the latest anti-Korean discourses. Online discourses surrounding her Korean coevals who are especially accused of being ‘half-hearted’ and ‘merely gold-rushing’ in China (e.g. Jang Na-ra) will be compared. The paper seeks to demonstrate that in a politicized entertainment industry, transnational stardom is indispensably entwined with the strategic rebranding of national identity, aiming not to gain political agencies, but merely to become ‘exceptional cases’ amid attempts to collectively desecrate stars of particular nationalities.

Laura Clancy, Lancaster University

‘Best female role model’? A feminist desecration of Kate Middleton

Desecration of Kate Middleton is rare. Since her wedding to Prince William in 2011, she has consistently topped a variety of ‘Best Female Role Model’ polls, and in the British royal family she is marketed as the perfect wife and mother to the future king(s). In most representations, she operates as an optimistic figure of attachment, through which people’s hopes and dreams about idealised, ‘good’ forms of femininity, family and motherhood are negotiated and made sense of.

In the vein of rethinking desecration as productive, however, this paper argues that it is politically urgent to undertake a feminist desecration of Kate. Kate performs a type of femininity specific to the patriarchal and conservative norms of the monarchical institution; that is, it is a controlled, manufactured, and sanitised package of feminine perfection. Her mediated display of domestic bliss, for example, draws on characteristics of the 1950s housewife figure so disparaged by 1970s feminist scholarship and activism for reproducing hegemonic heterosexuality, nuclear familialism and oppressive forms of feminine embodiment (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982). Undertaking a feminist desecration of Kate as a public figure opens up space to consider how the notion of a ‘celebrity role model’ is mobilised in popular culture and in academic scholarship, and the kinds of sense-making this might facilitate. What kind of feminist politics are being enacted when, if one were to follow discourses on what constitutes an appropriate feminist role model to their logical conclusion, one could easily end up with Kate Middleton?

Cristina Colet, Università di Torino

Ruan Lingyu (1910-1935): celebrating a star, desecrating the woman.

On 8th March 1935 Ruan Lingyu, one of the most popular and appreciated Chinese star, died for suicide. On 14th March 1935 30,000 people crowded the streets in Shanghai to participate to her funeral. It was the first case of fanaticism with some following episodes of suicide between her fans. Considered one of the most influent actress and renamed “the queen of melodrama”, becoming a model for the next generation of actress, she was victim of a scandalous love affair that produced rumors and gossips that circulated on each magazine and newspaper and that in few months changed Ryan Lingyu’s reception through the Chinese audience, becoming a cheating star. Her case was considered the first related to Chinese celebrity and stardom, as a model of emancipation for many women and stars, also because of her many performances that reflected the spirit of transformation of the country. Before the scandal where she got involved she was considered one of the actress to represent the Chinese nation during the struggle of liberation from foreign countries (Japanese and Western Countries in particular), for this reason she became popular and celebrated
by media and cinema, after the scandalous affair she was exhibited to the public pillory, conceived as a symbolic charge by media in the process of emancipation of women.
The proposal wanted to analyze the process of celebritification and creation of stardom in China through this particular and crucial case that changes the rules in Chinese Film Industry some years before the foundation of the Popular Republic of China (1949).

Camila Cornutti Barbosa, FSG, Susan Liesenberg, ESPM

YOU’RE THE FAMOUS WHO? Reflexions about sub-celebrities and the dichotomy of a word

Stemming from the discussion of the word “sub-celebrity”, we tried to understand how some people have millions of YouTube followers and become celebrities, but, at the same time, they are not considered “genuine” celebrities by a portion of the press and digital influencers, who call them, pejoratively, “sub-celebrities”. Based on analysis of the Brazilian reality, we verify that this de-legitimization occurs due to humble origins of these people, the fact that they have been born or live on a certain region or because they are not considered cool, glamorous or hype. We point to the definitions of the concept of sub-celebrity (ROJEK, 2008; INGLIS, 2012; TURNER, 2004; MARWICK and Boyd, 2011) and we discuss the objections to the acknowledgment of these YouTubers as celebrities. We focus on the case of Whindersson Nunes, considered one of the most popular Brazilian YouTubers, with over 12 million followers but nonetheless considered a “sub-celebrity”. Here we discuss the reasons for the dichotomy of the word “sub-celebrity”, which carries within itself judgements of value, hierarchy and evidence of prejudice.

Charlotte De Backer, University of Antwerp, David Giles, University of Winchester, Gaëlle Ouvrein, University of Antwerp, Heidi Vandebosch, University of Antwerp

Why are you interested in celebrity gossip? Scale development and validation of the Celebrity Gossip Motives Scale

Celebrity gossip is an ongoing booming business. This study tries to answer the question: Why are so many people interested in the daily lives of celebrities, people they don’t even know in real life? Increasing our knowledge about the underlying reasons for the fascination of celebrity gossip is necessary in order to gain better insights in this behavior and the predictors of it. As no instruments are available to capture the motives behind people’s interest in celebrity gossip, this study designed and validated the Celebrity Gossip Motives Scale. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses in R were applied on a sample of 68 students with a mean age of 21.02 (SD= 2.17) years old (69.5% female). The results supported an eight-factor solution, with the dimensions ranging from increasing one’s popularity and improving one’s mood, to bashing celebrities and enjoying celebrity scandals. Cronbach’s alpha indicated a good internal consistency for all dimensions.

This is a work in progress. A new and larger-scale data collection is planned in November, allowing us to test the suggested scale structure, further validate the proposed scale and test it against existing scales relating to general interpersonal gossip (Tendency to Gossip Questionnaire and the Motives to Gossip Questionnaire). A third study will be conducted at the beginning of next year. In that study, the relationship between celebrity gossip motives and some personality traits will be explored. The results of the three studies will be presented at the conference.

Charlotte De Backer, Gaëlle Ouvrein, Heidi Vandebosch, University of Antwerp
“Sometimes you have to let haters know their place”. A framing analysis on celebrity testimonials on their experience of and coping with cyberbullying

Celebrities regularly become the subject of negative comments online. While this practice is often referred to as “celebrity bashing” from the perpetrators’ perspective, it is often experienced as “cyberbullying” among celebrity-victims. Given that celebrities are a difficult group to recruit for research, the number of studies on their actual experience of and coping with cyberbullying is very limited. This study aims to increase our knowledge on this by conducting a framing analysis on online news articles containing celebrity testimonials about cyberbullying. A total of N = 106 online articles were selected from two American celebrity teen magazines, Seventeen and Twistmagazine. The analysis revealed 10 frames, classified within two themes: experiences and coping strategies. Frames about celebrities’ negative experiences with cyberbullying dealt with consequences and the uncontrollable character of the situation. On the contrast, the second group of frames stated that the situation could be handled with the “right” coping strategies. The most dominant coping frame was the “biting back” frame, representing celebrities fighting back against the bully by making sassy comments themselves.

The use and promotion of this “biting back” strategy by celebrities and journalists will be further analyzed with a case study on the ongoing conflict between Katy Perry and Taylor Swift. Both celebrities regularly attack each other with sassy comments and celebrity news media eagerly follow up this word-play. We are currently working on a framing analysis on the news reporting of this conflict. The results of both studies will be presented at the conference.

Ruth Deller, Sheffield Hallam University

‘All hail the comedy vicar’: clergy as celebrity

When former popstar Richard Coles, now the Rev Richard Coles, participated in 2017’s Strictly Come Dancing, it marked the latest development in the evolution of the ‘celebrity vicar’. Several media friendly clergy (including Giles Fraser, Kate Bottley, Peter Owen Jones and Joanna Jepson) are familiar presences in British print and broadcast media. Celebrity vicars can be found not only in formats focused on religion or moral issues, but in political and news media, hosting Have I Got News For You, presenting history and travel shows, and (in the case of both Coles and Bottley) as participants in celebrity reality shows.

This paper looks at the phenomenon of the celebrity vicar within British media and how they reinforce wider media narratives about Christianity in Britain (or rather England) (see Deller 2012). These white, middle-class, warm and often slightly eccentric personalities represent a particular version of Christianity that is politically progressive, yet curiously traditional (signifiers include stone churches, old hymns and ecclesiastical robes).

Unlike celebrities whose faith has sparked controversy (e.g. Tom Cruise and Scientology; Justin Bieber and Hillsong), the celebrity vicar offers a safe, unthreatening presence that offers a ‘cosy’ connection to the CofE and its status as a national institution, as well as exemplifying Grace Davie’s (2001) notion of ‘vicarious religion’, where a few perform religion on behalf of a wider population. The celebrity vicar offers a very particular form of Britishness, rooted in tradition and humour (see Bennett 2011), providing a form of reassurance that an Anglican Middle England is still out there, even if only in the media imaginary.

Glen Donnar, RMIT University, Fran Pheasant-Kelly, University of Wolverhampton

Promoting Terrorism, Desecrating Celebrity: The Case of ‘Jihadi John’
According to criminology scholars, Robert Reiner, Sonia Livingstone and Jessica Allen, ‘[d]eviance is the quintessential element of newsworthiness’ (2003: 13). Violent crime has long been a factor in establishing media notoriety and celebrity, especially in romanticised terror figures such as Carlos the Jackal. Brigitte Nacos’ (2016) survey of mass-mediated terrorism in a US-based context suggests that terrorist figures are not only accorded celebrity status through extensive media coverage, but also through their ‘Hollywoodised’ portrayal. This celebritisation of terrorism remains pertinent, perhaps most notably in the case of Mohammed Emwazi, a British Arab thought to appear prominently in several ISIS-produced beheading videos in 2014-15. This paper, part of a larger project on representations of extremism and radicalisation on screen, explores the concept of celebrity terrorism, and will use celebrity theory and studies of mediated terrorism to produce quantitative and qualitative analyses of British media representations of Emwazi. Rather than celebrating the elite or ordinary people, as Turner observes of the increasing turn to celebrity culture (2014: 92), the representation of Emwazi in the British press complicates typical processes of celebritification, including media rituals of recruitment and degradation. In dubbing him ‘Jihadi John’, the British news media first celebritified Emwazi, then enacted a degradation ceremony, mocking his perceived desire for celebrity. In removing celebrity from a place of value in ways markedly different to typical forms of celebrity desecration, the portrayal of ‘Jihadi John’ and other foreign fighters not only stages a complex ritual of degradation, but degraded notions of celebrity itself.

Diana-Luiza Dumitriu, University of Bordeaux, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration

The walk of shame as part of the sports’ success dialectics

Sports has become one of the main fields fuelling the dynamic celebrity market. This was facilitated by the high media visibility and the emotional engagement it triggers among such wide and heterogeneous audiences. The ups and downs that define the sports’ winning-losing dialectics “are the kinds of topics that usually generate widespread passion and disputation” (McGuigan, 2010, p.10). Along with them come the pride and shame media discourses that reflect not only the meritocratic and competitive nature of the sport field, but also the symbolic nature, high emotional engagement and identification power brought by the sport performers and their performances.

The aim of this paper is to address the “walk of shame” media discourse as a mirroring construct of the walk of fame celebrity path of sport actors. Using a corpus of online articles from the main Romanian sport publications, the study focuses on the context and the content of the shame framing being used by media in covering sport performances. What makes a sport performance be redefined as a shameful one and how face threatening is this for the sport stars? How volatile is the media discourse in moving sport celebrities from the walk of fame to the walk of shame? Within this constant reconfiguration of the success mapping, the media celebrity logic seems to find desecrating sport stars through the walk of shame framing as captivating as their walk of fame stories.

Diana-Luiza Dumitriu, Elena Negrea-Busuioc, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration

Back to square one: visualizing and verbalizing celebrity

Abstract: When discussing about the dynamics of the celebrity culture, whether we speak about super-stars, anti-stars or micro-stars, the main approaches have been focussed on who, why and how celebrities are made or unmade. Little attention has been given so far to the empirical assessments to uncover the feelings and the less rational and easy to verbalize associations that
people make with the mere concept of celebrity – what is celebrity about? How can we bypass the powerful name-listing or sorting when defining celebrities, so that we access a more symbolic and rich layer of the celebrity social imagery?

The aim of this research is to elaborate a new interdisciplinary framework to investigate the way people define, relate and feel about “celebrity” as social construct, by stimulating a metaphorical meaning-making process that is visual-anchored. Based on existing tools and techniques from marketing (i.e. Photosort – Hofstede, Hoof, Walenberg & de Jong, 2007; Hussey & Duncombe, 1999; Multi-Sensory Sort – MuSeS, Cian & Cervai, 2011), psychology (i.e. International Affective Picture System- IAPS, Lang, Bradley & Cuthbert, 2008) and discourse analysis (i.e. MIPVU metaphor identification protocol and VisMet corpus) we explore and test a three-step research design that starts with a Photosort association technique, which is less structured, yet rich in metaphors, continues with a sense-making narrative about the selected association(s) and a multisensorial exploration of the concept on a semantic differentiation scale construct. Discussing the benefits and limits of our methodological approach, we address its potential to be used in comparative studies to understand both the cultural dimension of the celebrity social imagery, as well as its dynamics over time.

Sarah Anne Dunne, University College Dublin


Since the early 2000s, allegations of sexual misconduct and outright rape have circled around African-American comic Bill Cosby. However, it is only in the last three years that they have gained traction serious enough to affect Cosby’s celebrity status. Indeed, Cosby’s well-cultivated and extensive career as a wholesome father figure both on and off screen earned him the titled of as ‘America’s Dad’; while his philanthropy and sponsorship down the years his supposed innocence for the masses. This changed in October 2014, Hannibal Buress’ gained a name as an un-official whistle-blower declaring ‘you rape people, Bill Cosby.’ By the end of 2015, Cosby’s once irreputable image was despoiled by the 50 plus women who had publicly accused him of acts of drugging and rape; since then, two clearly opposing sides – those who support Cosby and does who do not – have developed ideological stances and historical discourses to defend their position. This presentation will analyse how contemporary discussions around Cosby attempt to reaffirm his celebrity status – while others desecrate it – through analysis of data gathered from microblogging network Twitter. The selection of data depicts a two-fold attempt to protect and even martyr Cosby through his status as a successful African-American man and through the reiteration of misogynistic language and rape myths. Meanwhile, there is a notable recuperation of feminist politics and anti-rape discourse which vilifies Cosby and challenges manifestations of rape culture. Thus, this presentation will depict how new feminisms and misogyny emerge in relation to Cosby’s image.

Spring-Serenity Duvall, Salem College

Too famous to speak: Desecration of professional athletes who use fame to protest racial injustice

In 2016, Colin Kampecknick began kneeling while the U.S. national anthem played at the beginning of NFL games, sparking intense online conversations about patriotism, mass incarceration, and racial discord. This paper examines social media discourses that position celebrity athletes as too privileged to discuss politics. Celebrities have long defended their right to engage in social activism by claiming that their visibility carries a responsibility to illuminate important issues. I
conceptualize the dynamic in which fame itself is denigrated as justification for silencing stars that speak out on controversial issues. To some critics, visibility itself serves as the condition for denying celebrities’ their voice in the political arena. By silencing celebrities who challenge the status quo, audiences render fame as the grounds for desecrating celebrities. Though not anti-fans, these NFL fans are hostile to celebrities who express themselves in ways that are contrary to the fans’ own determination of who and what the celebrity should represent. Using the language of ownership, these fans express the belief that by having participated in elevating athletic stars, the fans have a stake in that star’s persona. This type of fandom is contingent on celebrities being seen and not heard and is predicated on the fans’ own ability to exert power over the characteristics of the star persona.

I discuss Rojek’s conceptualization of ‘new relations of presumed intimacy’ in connection with scholarship on visibility and social media self-representation to examine the power that audiences claim for themselves in desecrating fame and attempting to silence stars.

Yektanurşin Duyan, Mardin Artuklu University

A “Touchable” Star: The Changing of Fan-Star Relationship in Yeşilçam Period

The years 1960-74 is called the golden years of The Yeşilçam period in Turkish cinema history. In this period, the audience was a ‘spoiled’ one, who was always taken into consideration, and whose wishes were almost always granted (Kürel, 2005, p. 114). Yeşilçam cinema was a kind of cinema that was generated for the audience, and took its power from them (Ayça, 1992, p. 117, 129), as the only fund for cinema was the ticket that the audience bought. That’s why, film topics and genres were defined by the demands of the audience, and the cast of the stars was also decided by them. Actually, the audiences of this period were more like fans, because going to cinema was regarded differently from watching a movie. This action was a chain, consisting of a choice from the movie theatre, the movie and the cast. In this period, a sub-category of being a cinema fan was being a star’s fan. The audiences were watching the movies of the stars that they adored, they reached all the information that they could get about this star, trying to reach out to him/her, and get into connection. The most important means of communication between the fans and stars were film magazines. Apart from being the most important field of generation of the cinema culture in Turkey (Özyılmaz, 2014, p. 55), these magazines had an important role in shaping the fandom. In this context, the main hypothesis of this study is defined as how these film magazines were changed parasocial interaction to parasocial relationship. In the study, how the star-fan relationship was set in the most famous magazines of the years 1960-1974, Ses and Artist, will be examined.

Kirsty Fairclough, University of Salford

Purple Reign- Prince, Fandom and the search for Celebrity Authenticity

This paper will explore global music icon, Prince’s relationship to his celebrity status by exploring his multiple identities and the ways in which they were made manifest through aspects of his recorded catalogue and audio-visual personae which provide a glimpse into how Prince managed his own relationship to his fame in a contemporary and fluid media landscape. Prince’s relationship to celebrity was a complex one that has become clearer having recently hosted the first international conference on Prince’s life and legacy, Purple Reign. With this in mind, this paper will also draw upon the challenges and pleasures of engaging with a fandom in an academic and public engagement context, providing an insight how posthumously, the authentic nature of a celebrity is maintained and developed through fan communities. It will explore how through engaging with those closest to Prince, the nature of the conference shifted to more fully explore his celebrity
identity and sought to more fully represent his multi-layered celebrity persona in more holistic manner.
The paper will incorporate multiple methodologies from cultural, ethnographic, musicological and celebrity studies approaches to analysing Prince’s celebrity persona.

Harriet Fletcher, Lancaster University

“I’m Ready for My Close-Up”: The Horror of Faded Stardom in Billy Wilder’s Sunset Boulevard

This paper argues that faded stardom can be examined through the literary and cultural discourse of the Gothic tradition. Sunset Boulevard (1950) is the first overtly Gothic representation of the faded star in Hollywood film. The former silent movie actress Norma Desmond reclusively confines herself to a decaying Hollywood mansion filled with relics of her on-screen past. Consumed by her lost celebrity status, she repeats past performances and desperately awaits her big comeback.

By combining the stardom theory of Mulvey and Dyer with Gothic literary criticism, I explore the faded star as a Gothic figure because it inverts conventional notions of the gaze that romanticize the image of the female Hollywood star, making it a grotesque object of horror. I also acknowledge historical female performers who prove that this figure has always existed within a particularly Gothic discourse, such as Sarah Bernhardt and Elizabeth Siddal.

Sunset Boulevard places the degradation of celebrity at the centre of its narrative framework and forms part of a wider genre specifically concerned with the failure of female celebrity in performance culture. My paper uses this film to identify the presence of a critically unexplored Gothic tradition in the form of the faded star narrative. Sunset Boulevard is among many celebrity narratives that display Gothic characteristics. My paper therefore investigates the wider question of why the Gothic is a particularly conducive mode for expressing the pleasures and dangers of celebrity.

Jacque Lynn Foltyn, National University, La Jolla

Desecrating the Celebrity Corpse: Postmortem Performances

Celebrity is a strange gift, a form of positive deviance not managed well in societies that award it. Dead, as well as living, celebrities occupy a curious social space in the contemporary mediascape where consuming celebrity has become a critical aspect of the consumer-industrial-entertainment complex. A fascination with the changing celebrity body is a key element of that complex and can become a schadenfreude pursuit focused on flaws and metamorphoses, from the changes brought by pregnancy, aging, weight gains, and plastic surgery, to those brought by illness, accidents, and death. When major celebrities die ‘before their time,’ i.e., not of old age, not only are there the expected, ritualized mournathons, their corpses become objects of forensic investigation and carnivalesque curiosity, framed by morality tales about cause of death. Decomposing autopsy and desiccated corpse imagery (purloined, real and/or simulated) has become part of the ghoulish dead celebrity narrative and circulates digitally on social media, tabloid, and traditional news and information platforms, desecrating carefully-crafted celebrity personas and performances, transforming legacies. Audiences are needed to witness these voyeuristic spectacles and range from the mildly interested who sneak-a-quick-peek to super-fans and haters. Since the dead body is defined as ‘Other,’ the celebrity corpse is the ultimate ‘Other,’ a body with an indeterminate status that attracts and repulses; today the mortal remains of celebrities are digitally resurrected, defiled, re-killed, and exhumed in endlessly reproducible online puppet theatres and portrait galleries. Cultural values are inscribed on the dead as well as the living body, and the fascination with the
degraded celebrity corpse reveals cultural anxieties about identity, celebrity, mortality, and, perhaps, disturbing domestic and international world environments. The analysis for this paper is informed by a number of theoretical frames and a variety of celebrity examples.

Gaston Franssen, University of Amsterdam

Institutionalizing Anne Sexton: Literary Celebrity, Gender, and Popular Psychopathology

Celebrity culture has a profound influence on the representation and understanding of a mental illness. Celebrities’ struggles with, for instance, depression, anorexia, or bipolar disorder—whether revealed after a public breakdown or intentionally confessed—, offer affective, narrative, and ideological templates that shape the ‘sickscape’ of mental illness, that is, the popular representation of the disordered self. A recurrent pattern many ‘celebrity health narratives’ is the assumed relation between mental distress and creativity: psychic turmoil is taken as a sign of artistic authenticity. This is a highly gendered pattern, for psychological instability for male artists tends to be associated with perseverance and credibility, whilst female artists’ mental breakdown is often seen as a sign of failure and inherent instability.

In this presentation, I analyze the celebrity health narrative of Anne Sexton. Sexton was a bestselling ‘confessional’ poet, a major literary celebrity of the 1960s and 1970s, who famously wrote about, and struggled with, mental illness, as she suffered from depressions, nervous breakdowns and fugue states, ultimately resulting in her suicide in 1974. Her celebrity health narrative, I argue, was, so to speak, ‘institutionalized’ in a wide variety of manners by critics, readers and biographers: some critics found her hysterical and work disordered, others felt her mental distress signified poetic genius, while again others suspected that her authorial persona was simply a cunning strategy to play into audience expectations. Sexton’s fame, I will demonstrate, sheds an intriguing light on the relation between mental illness, gender, and literary celebrity culture.

Katja Friedrich, Ursula Ohliger, Ludwig-Maximilians-University

Journalistic narratives of celebrity success and failure. A qualitative analysis of German celebrity news

Journalistic narratives of celebrity rise and fall are by no means superficial, but offer advice on how to lead a good life – and how better not. News about celebrity success and failure allow for social negotiations of what constitutes a good life and what values are of importance (Sternheimer 2011). Celebrity news play a central role in these negotiations, as both celebritification (cf. Driessens 2012) and degradation are essentially mediated. To shed light on these processes, we will present a qualitative analysis of nine German lifestyle magazines from 1956 to 2014. Drawing upon the concepts of celebrity capital (Driessens 2013) and media related capital (Couldry 2012), we focus on narratives of job-related success and failure, and how they construct social status. Overall, 120 articles with focus on job-related performances are considered. The analysis reveals that celebrity success is based on five aspects: Hard work, dedication and persistence, talent and physical appearance, social support and a successful staging of the celebrity status. Against this, failure is traced back to laziness, wrong priorities, missing dedication, a lack of social support and the attempt to compensate job-related failures by excessive self-staging. These aspects are combined in various rationales how success and failure define celebrity status. Interestingly, failure increases celebrity capital (Driessens 2013) in the short term, but reduces media-related symbolic capital at the same time. The results will be discussed in the light of the theoretical concepts.
Agata Frymus, University of York

‘Love, Lust and Liz’: Elizabeth Taylor as Cleopatra in the discourse of the 1960s

The production of Cleopatra (Mankiewicz, 1963), a lavish costume drama starring Elizabeth Taylor, took over three years to complete. Apart from reinforcing Taylor’s star status, the film also marked the beginning of her highly-publicised, scandalous relationship with Richard Burton. This paper explores the ideas pretraining to whiteness and stardom in American culture through the analysis of celebrity gossip penetrating to Taylor, as it appeared on the pages of Photoplay, Picture Play and other magazines.

According to the long-standing, visual tradition of Western culture, Cleopatra is represented as a conspicuously non-African woman, whose ethnic whiteness is often heightened through juxtaposition to the racial ‘Other.’ Whilst the Egyptian queen continues to carry complex meanings, such connotations are assigned different importance, depending on the historical circumstances and audiences that analyse her. The potency of her myth lies in the fact she embodies several powerful narratives: she is not only a female emperor, but also a seductress positioned between the affections of two powerful men, Marc Anthony and Caesar; a woman in-between the Orient and Occident and a gendered, sexualised spectacle. Here, I investigate how Cleopatra capitalised on established narrative conventions, and how contemporary public discourse evaluated the film in reference to Taylor’s reputation. In examining the conflation between Taylor’s off and on-screen persona, particularly in the ways in which popular press commented on her adulterous affair with Richard Barton, I suggest that Taylor’s incarnation of Cleopatra became synonymous with seduction and immoral excess, rather than political influence.

David C. Giles, University of Winchester

The performance of authenticity by YouTube celebrities

‘Authenticity’ is frequently cited as a salient characteristic of digital celebrity, particularly for those performers whose channels have large numbers of global subscribers on YouTube (Berryman & Kavka, 2017; Smith, 2014). In this paper I discuss authenticity as a performative phenomenon, a discursive accomplishment that is produced by YouTubers through the presentation style of their videos. I focus on two case studies: the Bubzbeauty channel; and the early videos of the most popular YouTuber of all, PewDiePie. In the first instance I examine the beauty vlogger’s delicate balancing act of negotiating commercial requirements (often involving brand sponsorship) while maintaining that important sense of the ‘ordinary’ that is demanded by fans (Andò, 2016). In the second, I discuss elements of game commentary that work to establish authenticity through “fresh talk” (Goffman, 1981) and creating a sense of “liveness” that intensifies the bond of perceived intimacy by PewDiePie’s fans. Both case studies are rooted in the tradition of “broadcast talk” (Scannell, 1996), drawing on techniques developed in conversation and discourse analysis, such as “doing being ordinary” (Sacks, 1984), stake inoculation, and the generation of fresh talk that is convincingly spontaneous. I argue that these performative elements serve to construct YouTube celebrities as simultaneously ‘expert’ (if only in the art of consumption) and ‘ordinary’, maintaining an equal footing with their large audiences.

Paula Gilligan, IADT

‘Lord of the Sweat Pants’–Michael Flatley, Symbolic Violence, and Global Irish identities in the era of Brexit and Trump.
On the 21st of January 2017, Irish-American Michael Flatley’s dancers were chosen to perform at the Inauguration of Donald Trump. Flatley had first come to notice in an interval act for the Irish hosted Eurovision in 1994, Riverdance. Credited with modernising Irish dancing, he was closely identified with the economic success of Ireland before the Austerity.1 In this paper I contend that his personal status in the UK and Irish media declined with the economy-and led to him rebranding away from Irishness, towards a more global entrepreneurial persona, with a country-house lifestyle to match.2 Dogged by allegations of rape, mocked for his over-blown memoirs, in spite of taking British citizenship in 2013, he was rechristened ‘Lord of the Sweatpants’ by the UK tabloid press. That was until his rebirth at the Inauguration.

By July 2017, he had retired again, following reported brawling at his UK shows. His last ‘virtuoso’ performance was at the Fleadh Cheoil in Ennis, Co. Clare, this time of ‘authentic’ trad tunes on the flute. This paper proposes to investigate how the varying fortunes of Flatley’s celebrity status in the media reflect shifts in the branding of the artist and of Irish identities against a backdrop of resurgent far-right identities in contemporary politics. A Mephisto for the Age of Trump.

Renata Gravina, Sapienza Università di Roma

Nijinsky and the parable of life as a work of art

Vaslav Nijinsky, a Russian ballet dancer and choreographer, is known as one of the greatest male dancer of the early 20th century. His celebrity was due to his virtuous style and to his characters interpretation, always full of intensity and deep expressions. Nijinsky -graduated in 1907- quickly became a member of the Imperial Ballet of St. Petersburg. In 1909 he joined the new Ballets Russes, a company devised by the famous theater manager Sergei Diaghilev a pioneer in adapting the new musical styles of the early twentieth century to modern ballet. The figure of Nijinsky combines the falling and tragic parable of the celebrity with the historical parable of the Russian revolution. His figure is crucial because of his artistic and love relationship with Diaghilev, all dramatically ended after the October revolution. Diaghilev as a manager and Nijinsky as a dancer connected Russia and France on The Ballets Russes’s cultural project whose manifesto disrupted the aesthetics of ballet, as a part of the history of the avant-garde. Nijinsky anyway was also a singular destiny, as emerges from the pages of his diaries. After being one of the most revered and idolized celebrity in Europe and internationally known (also as a choreograph with original ballets, including i.e. L’après-midi d’un faune; Jeux and Till Eulenspiegel), he mentally collapsed. His marriage in 1913 with Romola de Pulszky caused a break with Diaghilev. Love and artistic parables fell (after the Russian revolution of 1917 Djagilev moved abroad and in 1919 Nijinsky was diagnosed with schizophrenia).

Sinem Güdüm, Marmara University

Influencer marketing and redefining fame in Social Media advertisements

Fame has never been so “reachable” as in the times of Social Media, and this is one of the reasons why ‘celebrification’ can easily turn into degradation, and loss of identity in today’s cyber realm. Celebrities had always been subjected to societal demands, and publicly shared ego conflicts which mostly lasted in loss of privacy, and tolerated immorality. However today, they share these attributes with their ‘infamous’ followers; who can also become celebrities overnight with one well-thought viral, or a scandalous podcast. At this point, it would not be wrong to question if Lacan’s “objet petit” still stands in the case of ‘celebrity culture’ when fame becomes this easily reachable. At these cyber times, as the ‘Liking’ aspect of R.Cialdini’s persuasion techniques is re-shaping, the
challenges which will be brought along with it may constitute a great shift in advertising. Now that the ‘Prosumer’ has a chance to reach fame easily, being a celebrity may also become a ‘profession’. In their article “Watching as working: The valorization of audience consciousness”, Jhally and Livant (1986:124-143) state that in times of New Media, consumers “work” by watching advertisements and are compensated for this work with content and services. This analysis surely challenges the common perception of new media technologies being regarded as gifts. Andrejevic (2002:235) adds another dimension to the above mentioned statement, and argues that new media technologies profit by encouraging consumers to perform the work of being watched. In the times of New Media, when the watcher and the watched one is the same, will advertising face a shift in regards to using celebrities for selling products? This question will tried to be answered in this article, which will be written by using a series of qualitative analysis methods.

Jamie Hakim, University of East Anglia

The Celebrity Male Nude Leak: neoliberalism and feminising the male body in times of crisis

From celebrity ‘skin’ magazines to 2014’s ‘fappening’, images of nude celebrities have long contributed to the publicity practices of the entertainment industries in official, semi-official and un-official capacities. The ‘overwhelming’ majority of these have been of cis-gendered women demonstrating the ‘highly commercial valuation and paradoxically low cultural status of the female body in Hollywood’ (Knee, 2006: 172) and the entertainment industries more generally. Recent years have seen a significant increase in the circulation of images of nude male celebrities, frequently leaked over the internet. From mega-stars such as Justin Bieber and Orlando Bloom to the cast members of reality TV shows such as Love Island (2015-) and Bromans (2017-), eroticized images of nude male celebrities have become a notable feature of celebrity culture.

This paper asks what are the governing logics of the celebrity male nude leak and what can their emergence reveal about the wider cultural dynamics of the present moment? It answers this question by using discourse analysis of leaked materials as well as interviews with publicity professionals who have been involved in one or more leaks. Building on the postfeminist argument that the female body has intensified as a site of both scrutiny and value creation under neoliberalism (Gill, 2011; Elias, Gill and Scharff, 2017), this paper argues that the rise of the celebrity male nude leak is one of a number of ways that neoliberalism has begun to feminise the male body in its relentless pursuit of new forms of capital accumulation in times of conjunctural crisis (Hakim, 2016).

Hunter Hargraves, California State University, Fullerton

“A Moment for Mariah: On Diva Time”

Over the past year, pop diva Mariah Carey reinserted herself into the American cultural imaginary through a combination of carefully branded and chaotically unscripted events: the release of her docuseries Mariah’s World and an appearance on the hit series Empire; a disastrous New Year’s Eve performance at Times Square; and the release of a viral video from her Las Vegas residency in which she appeared to dance lethargically, moved by her backup dancers as if she was a doll. These events underscore how celebrity labor, failure, and fan reception govern the enduring success of diva subject positions, even though divas generally are afforded agency in constructing their reputations. For Mariah, such readings of her celebrity performance as “lazy,” “uninspired,” and as “resting on laurels” contradict the way that her diva identity generates new ways of organizing space and time that demand scholarly attention.
Specifically, my presentation examines how performances of pop celebrity are instrumental in developing lexicons that affectively register and chronicle everyday life. Through readings of Mariah’s use of the terms “moment” and “event,” I develop a theory of “diva time” that allows for the simultaneous preservation and demystification of fame that paradoxically structures celebrity under post-Fordian regimes of productivity and flexibility. Mariah’s fluctuation between productive and unproductive time provides an insightful lens through which to trace how fans register a diva’s authenticity and sincerity as well as the techniques used to manage the diva identity through different stages (and ages) of her career.

Susan Hopkins, University of Southern Queensland, Ipswich campus

Courtney Love & Trainwreck Femininity

Few female musicians have been so consistently demarcated as a celebrity ‘trainwreck’ in popular culture texts and images, as the Hole frontwoman and actor, Courtney Love. The singer is at least as well known for her (supposedly) dysfunctional relationships, drug taking, loud and abrasive statements and behaviour, as for her role as a female rock icon of Seattle grunge and 1990s pop culture. Moreover, tabloid conspiracies around Love have been revived in recent years with the release of the documentary Cobain: Montage of Heck and the release of her multi-textual memoirs. Courtney controversies, as they currently continue to circulate through mainstream and social media, construct a celebrity narrative of provocation, dysfunction, make-over and decline. Through critical textual analysis of such negative press reports and representations, this paper examines how judgements of class and gender are applied to Courtney Love. Moreover, the misogynistic (mis)representation of Love as monstrous, failed or freakish reveals persistent anxieties and sexist stereotypes around angry, successful and powerful women. Despite the fact that Love has publicly identified as a feminist, her relationship with established ‘authentic’ feminism is also complicated – as we shall see, Love has been criticised for being both too ‘real’ (uncensored) and too ‘fake’ (made-over.) This paper suggests, the public self of Courtney Love subverts the feminine ideal of loving wife, nurturing mother and pretty sex object, recovers the radical potential of the female rock star and provokes discussion into the contradictions around construction of celebrity femininity and celebrity feminism.

Tanya Horeck, Anglia Ruskin University

Celebrity Mugshots and the Digital Celebrification of Crime

Nothing desecrates a Hollywood star or celebrity quite so efficiently as a mugshot. Take, for example, Hugh Grant’s 1995 mug shot following his dalliance with a sex worker on Sunset Boulevard, in which the formerly clean-cut British star looks sheepishly into the camera, his shoulders hunched. Exposing the stakes of our cultural investment in stars more effectively than any publicity shot ever could, the mug shot is shorthand for the fantasies of dark revelation and exposure that lurk beneath our idealisation of the famous. This paper will examine how the shift to participatory digital culture has intensified and amplified – but also commodified and normalized – the celebrity mugshot. Celebrity mugshots are now a booming business on the Internet: Pinterest pages on the topic abound, and websites such as Access Hollywood provide galleries of images of dishevelled famous people – from A listers such as Robert Downey Jr all the way down the celebrity chain to D listers such as Chris Soules of reality TV and Bachelor fame. Looking at the digital-age exhibition and circulation of the celebrity mugshot, I will explore the kinds of affective intensities that accrue to these degraded images of the star-as-criminal. In addition, I will examine how social media networks have encouraged a celebrification of crime through a consideration of
the case of Jeremy Meeks, the so-called “hot felon,” whose mugshot went viral when the Stockton Police Department posted it on Facebook. On the back of all the “likes” he received, Meeks became an internet celebrity, establishing a successful international modelling career. As I will argue, the “computer-mediated interactions” of the online mugshot industry prove Jodi Dean’s point that the “dynamic of celebrity culture reconfigures the terms through which criminality is understood” (Dean 147, 125).

Gemma Horton, University of Sheffield

An unwanted spotlight: Examining the right to privacy of celebrities against the right to freedom of expression in the United Kingdom.

It is widely acknowledged in the United Kingdom that celebrity gossip is afforded less protection than other types of speech when freedom of expression cases are brought before the courts. However, the courts have declared that celebrity gossip can be allowed if it is considered to be in the public interest. For example, it has been found in the public interest to allow celebrity gossip to be published if the celebrity has acted in a hypocritical manner, lied to the press or is considered to be a role model. The courts have often placed celebrities on a pedestal above private individuals, affording them less protection for their private lives due to their time in the public eye.

There have been numerous cases involving celebrities attempting to prevent the publication of celebrity gossip. From footballers to models, many celebrities have found themselves falling from grace with thanks to the courts favouring freedom of expression over the right to privacy. This paper argues that the courts unfairly knock the pedestal from underneath the celebrity’s footing. This paper argues that the courts have not truly adopted a public interest test in publishing celebrity gossip in some cases. On the contrary, this paper argues that there tends to be a ‘public intrigue’ in receiving celebrity gossip, but not a genuine public interest. This paper will discuss case law to explore why this position is adopted along with examining the public interest test.

Jeroen Jansen, University of Amsterdam

Publishers strategies and celebrity in the seventeenth-century Netherlands

In the Dutch Golden Age every literary publication of major importance was packed with preliminary laudatory poems. These paratextual poems provide indications about the content of the work and contain praises to the author and his work, sometimes in rather excessive terms. As publishers used to arrange these contributions, there is certainly also a strategic aim involved: they manipulate the image of the author involved. Moreover, they not only strengthen the fame of the author but also steer the interpretation of the author’s work and personality in a particular direction and exclude alternative ways of giving meaning to the data. In my paper I will discuss these means of manipulative practices. As an example I will consider the literary career of the Dutch playwright Gerbrand Bredero (1585-1618). His regular publisher supported Bredero’s publications never neglecting his commercial instinct. Some of the strategies of this publisher will be discussed, one of them being the publication of almost 30 elegies (funeral poems) immediately after the death of Bredero. It is discussed how paratexts were used to obtain the most significant impact on the celebrification of living and of deceased authors in the seventeenth-century Netherlands.

Deborah Jermyn, University of Roehampton

Barefaced: Ageing Female Celebrity and ‘No Make-Up’ Photography
As celebrity culture navigates ever more complex waters in search of signifiers of ‘authenticity’, for women celebrities, a willingness to share photographs of themselves make-up free has become a hazy marker of a certain ‘barefaced’ bravado (and indeed bravery) on the part of these stars. At one level, such images shared on Instagram and the like seem to suggest a willingness to abandon the celebrity machine, to refuse to play the glamour game, and to instead show fans what they are ‘really’ like in an act of (seeming) camaraderie with them. In practice they are of course still heavily mediated and have become part of the celebrity machine itself, increasingly even an expected component of (women’s) celebrity performance.

For older women celebrities, the stakes entailed in make-up free photography are both higher than, and of a different nature to, their younger counterparts; the images will be scrutinised to ascertain not just what they ‘really’ look like, but how ‘well’ they have aged, in an industry that shows no mercy to women perceived to be ageing ‘badly’. At the same time, such photography can in some ways work in their favour, in that it has also come to signal a certain gravitas; these images have become a marker of the emboldened ageing woman subject who no longer invests in or pursues the ‘superficial’ domain of appearances and cosmetics with the concern she did in her youth. Building on previous work I have undertaken on the 2017 Pirelli calendar (Jermyn & Jerslev, 2017), this paper explores the reception of the ‘make-up free’ ageing women stars featured there, including Uma Thurman and Julianne Moore, examining how questions of art and celebrity, ageing and gender, exploitation and resistance, intersect in such images in evocative and powerful ways.

Anne Jerslev, University of Copenhagen

Winona Ryder and the return to fame – saved by the body’s ageing

Winona Ryder (b. 1971) was one of the big young stars of the late 1980s and 1990s, her relationships with Johnny Depp and Matt Damon intensely covered by the celebrity press. But in 1991 she was arrested and convicted for shoplifting. After some years off the limelight, she returned to acting in a range of minor roles but recently, she has been hailed for her role as a mother in Netflix’s *Stranger Things*. The Ryder narrative seemingly fits in well with Rojek’s analysis in *Celebrity* (2001) of what he calls media narratives of celebrity ascent and descent which include “the mortification of the body”, “scourging, disintegration” and, finally, “redemption” (p. 80). However, I will argue that Ryder does not fit easily into this formula. First, disintegration never really took place since Ryder continued to work intermittently. Second, mortification of the body was translated into a series of Marc Jacobs ads in 2003, which restaged her deed (Lai in *Framing Celebrity*, 2006) in a fashion context; and third, public redemption wasn’t really possible, since Ryder never excused her offence. Finally, I discuss how she, today, rewrites the stereotypical image of the troubled female celebrity (Holmes and Negri, introduction, In the *Limelight* (2011)), just like she rebels against the idea of female ageing as decline and – although somewhat ambivalently - establishes her near to fifty year old female body as a counter-image to the descent narrative’s mortification of the body.

Linda Jones, Deakin University

Desecrating the Political Celebrity – A local Mayor on Twitter

In August 1997, when the Internet was in its infancy, News of the World editor offered Darryn Lyons a quarter of a million pounds for images of Princess Diana injured in a car crash. The owner of BIG Pictures sent one low-resolution image. Then Lyons got the call from his agent to inform him of Diana’s death. In shock, Lyons said he immediately withdrew the images from sale as he considered the ethical dilemma of the tragedy. Years later, the celebrity photographer who made
millions photographing celebrities, returned to Geelong in Australia. By 2013, with over one million Twitter followers, the outrageous celebrity was elected Mayor of Greater Geelong. However, in April 2016, the Victorian State Government sacked Geelong's Mohawk Mayor and his entire Council. Lyons was implicated as being part of the bullying culture, which reportedly already existed.

This paper investigates the celebritization process during Lyons' downfall and interrogates the interacting driving forces, as defined by Driessens, as mediatization, personalization and commodification. It was anticipated that unpacking these processes would define the complex relationship between Lyons' celebrity persona and his political status. It would also reveal how communications, audiences, those in power and local personalities interact in our mediatized society. Methods included in-depth interviews conducted with Lyons and his public relations officers at city hall. A careful selection of the former celebrity mayor's appearances in his electorate was chosen for examination. Reports on these events in the local and online media and Lyons' own tweets and audience reactions were examined to find if his celebrity image was desecrated.

Ana Jorge, Universidade Católica, Mercè Oliva, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Luis LM Aguiar, University of British Columbia

Leaking and offshoring: Iberian audiences react to Cristiano Ronaldo’s tax evasion

We seek to contribute to analyses of the links between celebrity culture, neoliberal values and austerity (Mendick et al., 2015b; Allen et al., 2015; Hamad, 2013) through an examination of the allegations made against Cristiano Ronaldo for evading taxes (‘Football Leaks’ in December 2016 and the fiscal investigation and prosecution during 2017), and how this news was framed and discussed by audiences in Portugal and Spain (Ronaldo was born in former and plays his football in the latter). Since Portugal and Spain have endured a severe economic crisis and austerity policies, the backdrop of this case is an ‘austerity culture,’ which justifies welfare cuts, promotes entrepreneurialism as ‘success’, and presents neoliberal policies as ‘common sense’ (Hall & O’Shea, 2013; Jensen, 2014; Jensen & Tyler, 2015; Bramall, 2013; Bramall et al., 2016; Alonso et al., 2011). This tax evasion scandal is thus an opportunity to examine the role of ‘celebrity malfeasance’ in broader social debates about fairness, transparency, solidarity, and social justice. In this case, the media seems to reclaim authority to make ‘revelations’ about the financial elite by stoking and agitating their involvement in ‘scandals’ pertaining to offshoring (Bramall, 2016; Urry, 2014). In analyzing readers’ comments in two Portuguese and Spanish newspapers’ websites and social media profiles (Van Del Bulck & Claessens, 2014; Mendick et al., 2015a), our data show views on offshoring and tax evasion implicating larger discussions and criticisms about the high earnings of football players and celebrity tax privileges in Spain, the efficiency (or lack thereof) of the fiscal and justice systems, corruption in professional football, and the role of the media institutions (agenda vs. transparency and freedom of speech).

Using the Lyons case, this study not only sets out to define political celebrity, but also analyses the current online cultural shifts in communication changes that may be impacting on the prominence of celebrity.

Lynne Joyrich, Brown University

Affronting Stardom/Confronting Sexual Harassment

Recent scandals surrounding sexual harassment and assault in Hollywood (most notably involving producer Harvey Weinstein, but also including numerous others working in the film/television industry) have certainly marked the "desecration" of the celebrity, revealing how female (as well as
some vulnerable male) celebrities have historically been "degraded" through sexual violence and harassment. The viral spread on social media of the "me too" slogan further reveals how (primarily female) publics share that sense of degradation and deploy discourses around celebrity to articulate their own sense of vulnerability and/or stories of survival. Indeed, celebrities—located at precisely the boundaries of "public" and "private," working at the intersection of libidinal and financial economies, marked as both "individuals" and "representatives," figured as both "bodies" and "voices"—provide a powerful locus for both the explosion and exposure of sexual harassment, which operates through and across those same categories (as, for example, definitions of sexual harassment/assault depend upon particular understandings of the connections or disconnections between bodily action and consciousness of consent or its refusal). Given confusions and conflations of these categories, harassment in entertainment industries has paradoxically been both presumed and disavowed, routinized and rejected, made invisible and spectacularized in ways that help to reveal the troubling dynamics of sexual violence and the "troubles" of stardom itself. This paper will explore those dynamics, considering how public discourse around these scandals may help us interrogate the problems of both celebrity and sexual harassment as well as understand the limits of current discourses to impact all harassment.

**Jilly Boyce Kay, Helen Wood, University of Leicester**

**The Business of Reality Celebrity and its ‘Illegitimate’ Cultural Labour**

This paper presents the beginnings of a project which attempts to map the organisational and industrial contours of reality celebrity against a context of what we might call ‘illegitimate cultural work’. It considers the contemporary cultural economy of what we are calling the reality-celebrity-industrial-complex, and how this seems to offer some promise of social mobility for ordinary people in a context of widening inequality. This paper considers the limited spaces through which reality television participants become cultural workers, and the intense forms of promotional labour in which they engage to extend and expand their media lives - often across less formalised sites such as nightclubs, beauty salons, and social media. It also begins to track the work of publicists and agents who broker and extract value from these activities within the constantly changing structures of the businesses involved. By revisiting earlier work on celebrity management such as *Fame Games* (Turner et al, 2000), this paper considers how the intensification of bio-political labour in the current climate, and the downgrading of this labour as ‘illegitimate’ and not ‘real’ work, are part of these new opaque business models which contribute to changing formations of classed identity and celebrity.

**Melanie Kennedy, University of Leicester**

‘trust us, Lindsay […] we knew your *Mean Girls* days were long gone’: Terry Richardson and the affective spectacle of young female celebrity

The 21st century has seen an intensification of celebrity gossip and tabloid news scrutiny of young female celebrities making the transition from child stardom to adult womanhood (Kennedy, 2017). Such transitions are replete with recognisable signifiers and language of degradation, and attendant expectations that such celebrities will be removed from their former places of value as ‘respectable’ child stars. However, there remains a lack of critical engagement in defining and conceptualising the rituals of such transitions from girlhood to adult womanhood in celebrity culture. During this period photographer Terry Richardson and his distinctive ‘amateur pornography aesthetics’ (Halligan, 2017) have become increasingly prominent in mainstream visual culture, shooting for designer fashion advertising campaigns, shooting portrait photographs for high profile
celebrities, and directing popular music videos. This paper will focus on recent photographs by Richardson of young female celebrities previously known as tweenage stars, including Lindsay Lohan, Selena Gomez, Miley Cyrus and Kylie Jenner. It will examine the role these photographs play in creating a visual language for the narrative of the child star becoming-woman, and how these images construct the spectacle of the young female celebrity in this transitional moment. Richardson’s work and his own celebrity persona have generated controversy, which has taken on recent renewed interest amidst wider debates of gendered harassment and sexual assault in mainstream media industries. Importantly, in generating feelings of angst, worry, shock, titillation, happiness and disgust, these images remind us of the very affective nature of celebrity (Redmond, 2016) and of the transition from girlhood to womanhood.

Melanie Kennedy, Kaitlynn Mendes, University of Leicester

‘Which celebrities are marching, who’s throwing the epic after party’: Representations of celebrity feminists

January 2017 saw voluminous and celebrity-focused media coverage of the Women’s Marches in major cities across the globe. Although celebrities have long played a role in activism, the increased professionalisation of activism and use of celebrity figures became particularly visible in the media coverage of these events. Although terms such as ‘celebrity feminism’ (Keller and Ringrose, 2015) have become ubiquitous within much contemporary scholarship, attempts to theorise this category of celebrity remains lacking in Celebrity Studies. Taking as its focus a range of feminist marches in 2017 including Women’s Marches around the world, the March for Women in London and the Amber Rose SlutWalk in LA, this paper will analyse the representation celebrity feminism within (celebrity) news, social media and gossip coverage. The paper will ask: how are celebrity feminists mediated? What counts as ‘authentic’ celebrity feminism, and who counts as celebrity feminists? Which celebrities face degradation and why? How is celebrity feminism evaluated by celebrity news and social media? How should we conceptualise the spaces of celebrity feminism and the use of space in rituals of authentication and degradation?

This paper is part of a bigger project which aims to develop a new theoretical model around branded activism and to understand its relationship with celebrity culture. The research emerges amidst critical feminist debates regarding the renewed popular interest in feminist identities and activism and whether we have moved beyond postfeminism (Gill, 2016), and alongside the socio-political rise of populism and the cultural attention paid to misogyny, gendered harassment and sexual abuse in the media industries.

Barry King, Auckland University of Technology

Defacement, creative mayhem and the mask of celebrity.

In the breakout performances that established her stardom, Lady Gaga was celebrated for attacking heteronormativity with images of monstrosity and inviting her fans to be Little Monsters. For Halberstam, Gaga provides a road map for creative mayhem fit for an era ” that privileges gender fluidity and the navigation of multimedia environments”. A parallel strategy of “creative mayhem” is evident in the performances of Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus. Earlier performers, such as David Bowie and Madonna, by comparison, engaged in serial rather than synchronous identity switching. In this presentation I will focus on Lady Gaga who presents a stark contrast between the serial and synchronous modes of persona production, with the “mature” Gaga seemingly abandoning creative
mayhem for a stable “show business” persona. For example appearing on Oprah as a soccer mom and as a jazz diva on Cheek to Cheek with the “legendary” Tony Bennett. For some observers Gaga’s cultural activism and the pay for play performativity that drives the commercial exploitation of her brand are not considered as posing a question of authenticity.

In this presentation, I will explore Gaga’s tactics of authenticity as a labour of negativity that despoils current images in order to recycle the mystery of a deeper truth, lending vigour to yet another cycle of commodification. Desecration, in short, has become a new purposive tactic for fame recycling.

Nete Nørgaard Kristensen, Mette Mortensen, University of Copenhagen

De-celebrification: From Famous to Infamous

This paper proposes the concept de-celebrification as a counter pole to the well-established notion of celebrification (e.g., Rojek 2001, Turner 2004, Driessens 2013a). De-celebrification is used to conceptualize cross-media representations tied to celebrities caught in grave moral transgressions or even breaches of law. To be de-celebrified, one has to have been celebrified in the first place. Celebrification concerns the media processes involved when individuals are reproduced as celebrities by acquiring celebrity status (van Krieken 2012), celebrity value (Gunter 2014), and media- or celebrity capital (Couldry 2012, Driessens 2013b). De-celebrification stands for loss of public image, status, and affirmative media visibility following, e.g., sexual misconduct, substance abuse, violent incidents or economic fraud. Accordingly, the celebrities in question no longer have the legitimacy to inhabit the positive public role or possess the formal and symbolic power formerly attached to their celebrity status.

Both celebrification and de-celebrification are coupled to certain media narratives and visual framings. Celebrification is associated with red carpet photography, PR material, celebrity selfies, etc. De-celebrification is tied to representations of court room appearances, mug shots, and memes and other satirical or critical content, which often gain broader public attention when entering into mainstream news media coverage. By introducing the concept de-celebrification, we aim to further the understanding of the transition from being famous to infamous. The paper takes its empirical point of departure in the cases of Bill Cosby, Harvey Weinstein, and Kevin Spacey to study decelebrifying media narratives and visual framings.

Pilar Lacasa, Julián de la Fuente, Sara Cortés, University of Alcalá

Identity construction among adolescent fans and celebrities’ interactions

The presentation examines both the fans and celebrity identity’s construction processes, in fans communities where interpretations of the world, values and knowledge associated with the construction of meaning when young people exchange contents and connections with others in the network (boyd and Marwick 2011, Boyd 2014). We focus on fans audiences as active agents from an individual and collective perspective, involving emotions (Turner and Stets 2005). When content is passed from one person to another it becomes reconstructed and transformed, even if through a selection. Information flows at high speeds and messages transform its content and adapt to what other people exchange over the network.

We will approach these issues through several examples coming from our own research, conducted from an ethnographic approach in real and virtual environments (Lacasa, Méndez et al. 2016). The aim of this work is to define the features defining the participation processes of young people considered as productive audiences using digital mediators (Jenkins, Itō et al. 2015). Our model will focus on analyzing the following dimensions: First, celebrities and entertainment contexts centered
around digital communities. Second, we will also look at the practices associated with diversified experiences where people live and interact, exploring where the line between virtual and real life is. Third, we will show how the above questions make sense in relation to the meaning construction processes rooted in the emotions, motives, values and knowledge that guide young people’s activities and to what extent they are related to personal and collective activities and environments.

Celia Lam, University of Nottingham Ningbo

Baseline of normality: outlining levels of acceptability in non-mainstream Australian celebrities.

On September 10 2017, former ABC presenter Yassmin Abdel-Magied, left Australia for the UK. Her social media posts emphasised a sense of adventure, calling the move a national “rite of passage”. However, the reason behind her relocation was far less banal. Several months’ prior, Abdel-Magied had published a tweet on Anzac Day connecting government asylum seeker policies to the day of remembrance. Specifically, she called attention to the need to remember those in detention campus on the islands of “…Manus, Nauru…”. After her tweet, Abdel-Magied was the target of vitriolic messages from conservative commentators, was forced to retract her comments. Her television show on the ABC was cancelled as a result.

The degradation of her public persona was manifest through a combination of media and social media comments (some from high profile personalities) that questioned her ability to ‘belong’ by challenging her ‘Australian-ness’. This challenge was generally focused upon her comments, but was often underscored by suggestions of deviance derived from her religious affiliation (as Muslim), and possibly also her ethnicity.

This paper explores the ‘deviant subtext’ in discourses surrounding Abdel-Magied’s representation in the media. It argues that the narrative works to re-enforce the normality of a European-(and Christian)-centric construction of ‘Australian-ness’. While this narrative is used to construct Yassmin Abdel-Magied as religiously and ethnically Other, it is also at work in the construction of non-European celebrities who enjoy a higher level of acceptance in Australia. Through the case studies of Abdel-Magied, Waleed Aly (a Muslim television presenter), Lee Lin Chin (an Asian news broadcaster), the form and function of the ‘deviant discourse’ in defining the normative is discussed.

Celia Lam, University of Nottingham, Jackie Raphael, Curtin University

Risky Business in Bromance

The celebrity bromance phenomenon has captured the attention of the popular press, as well as celebrity, media and cultural studies scholars. In 2014, Michael DeAngelis defined the bromance as an “emotionally intense bond between presumably straight males” (p. 1), which is neither acknowledged nor disavowed. For celebrity bromance ‘pairings’ this intensity results in a highly performative expression of combined persona. The construction of a bromance may benefit the promotion of celebrity work, and has been examined from a number of perspectives (DeAngelis, 2014; Raphael and Lam, 2017). However, the implications of bromance pairs that are deconstructed are less frequently explored. This paper aims to examine the public persona of Matt Damon in light of recent negative publicity associated with Ben Affleck. Damon and Affleck’s identities are intertwined, as they are renowned for being friends before they were celebrities and simultaneously gained the respect of the industry through their Oscar Winning film Good Will Hunting (1997). While Damon is perceived as the ‘good guy’, Affleck often attracts negative publicity. As a result, the popular press often ask Damon to comment on Affleck’s private life. This paper does not suggest that the Damon/Affleck pairing is deconstructed, however it does explore the impact that
‘attachment’ to Affleck has on Damon’s image. In particular, it argues that Damon’s ‘nice’ image enables him to withstand the negative publicity circulating around Affleck.

Megan Le Masurier, University of Sydney

The ultimate desecration? The new indie women’s magazines and the disappearance of celebrity

Women’s magazines have been the traditional home of celebrity journalism, from fashion and beauty magazines like *Vogue* to the gossip magazines like *OK* and *Heat*, and those in the middle of the women’s magazine hierarchy like *Cosmopolitan* and *Marie Claire*. The presumption is that the presence of celebrities, on covers, as profiles or as news will attract readers, whether the approach be sanctification or fabrication/desecration.

The 21st century has, however, seen a proliferation of women’s magazines that utterly ignore celebrity. They are part of a growing phenomenon of independent (indie) magazines in print, being produced in the world’s ‘creative cities’. The indies are made by the owners, have small print runs, and offer an alternative universe to the categories and editorial approaches of mainstream magazine titles.

Using a methodology of interviews with makers and textual analysis, this paper looks at the new indie women’s, feminist and gender fluid magazines and explores why and how they avoid celebrity content. Some of the magazines to be explored will be: *Mushpit* (UK), *Ladybeard* (UK), *Girls Like Us* (Amsterdam, Brussels, Stockholm), *Womankind* (Australia), *Accent* (UK), *Hysteria* (global collective), *gal-dem* (global collective), *OOMK* (UK), and *Mary Review* (US).

One dictionary definition of desecration is: ‘to violate or outrage the sacred character of (an object or place) by destructive, blasphemous, or sacrilegious action.’ Conceptually, these magazines go beyond the desecration of celebrity to the point of complete avoidance. Is creating a women’s magazine without the use of celebrity perhaps the ultimate desecration?

Katja Lee, University of Western Australia

“Boswellized from mere persons to personages”: Arthur Stringer, Mary Pickford, and the Trouble with Celebrity Profile(r)s

In 1918, MacLean’s magazine published an extensive profile of Canadian-born silent screen superstar, Mary Pickford. Spanning three issues and inclusive of 27 photographs, it was the most substantial, personal, and in-depth profile of a public figure—whether political, business, or entertainment—published by the magazine for decades. Moreover, this profile was written by no less a personality than the eminently respected (and almost famous) Canadian writer, Arthur Stringer. This was a remarkable development that not only signalled MacLean’s interest in capitalizing on the Canadian appetite for popular culture, but the rising importance and respectability of entertainment figures and entertainment journalism. This paper explores the emerging genre of celebrity profiling in the early twentieth century, and uses this particular profile to examine the role of the celebrity profiler who, while tasked with being the vehicle through which readers become intimate with the celebrity, sometimes gets in the way. In his “Our Mary” profile, Stringer writes himself into the article as not only an important intimate of Pickford (and arbiter of her value), but as a noteworthy personality in his own right: readers, in fact, learn almost as much about Stringer as they do Pickford. However, the postures Stringer strikes cannot be trusted for at the heart of this profile is a deep-seated suspicion and anxiety about the practice of profiling celebrities. Although he explicitly seeks to separate himself and his work from that genre of journalism that will “Boswelliz[e celebrities] from mere persons to personages,” he also tacitly
acknowledges the role he must play in this game.

Katja Lee, University of Western Australia, P. David Marshall, Deakin University

Honorary Degrees for Celebrities and the Case of Bill Cosby

By the end of the twentieth century, the conferring of an honorary degree on an entertainment celebrity had become an increasingly regular and routine practice, a symptom of not only how universities’ approaches to media relations have changed, but how readily the value and capital accumulated in entertainment industries can be converted into value in another field like academia. In this paper, we argue that the celebrity persona is a crucial factor in easing what Driessens has called ‘the exchange rate’ of such movements across fields of activity (2013, p. 555). As a case study we turn to Bill Cosby, a (once) popular entertainer who, as the recipient of no less than 68 honorary degrees over three decades, was a long-time favourite on the American commencement circuit. Through Cosby’s prolific career and equally prolific honors we can trace the role of persona in creating forms of value that academic institutions have found useful and productive. Cosby’s case is particularly instructive because his recent disgrace has raised crucial questions about the long-term value and nature of the honorary degree, and the relationship that it creates between an institution and the recipient. The diverse and ad hoc responses of institutions to these concerns reveals that American universities are, in general, unprepared to deal with the potential migration of scandal and the shifting value of celebrity and celebrity personas.

Suzanne Leonard, Simmons College


In 2011, when New York Congressman Anthony Weiner’s tweets of himself in his tighty whities cost him his congressional career—and made him the butt of countless jokes—few would have predicted that his sexual proclivities would, according to some pundits, ultimately deny the United States its first female president. Weiner’s relationship with his long suffering, now soon-to-be ex-wife Huma Abedin will be the focus of this presentation, which will trace the pair’s mediatized negotiations through a cycle wherein Abedin toggled between closeness and distance from her scandal-prone spouse. (Perhaps the most egregious iteration of the way that Weiner’s desacralized image sullied his wife and her closest associates was his lewd, ultimately illegal contact with an underage girl that re-opened a last minute FBI investigation into Hillary Clinton’s emails, a reprisal of suspicion that many believe contributed to Clinton’s almost wholly unexpected defeat in the American presidential election.)

Abedin’s fashionable, laconic, and seemingly always poised persona has been punctured only sporadically, most recently in Hillary Clinton’s 2017 memoir, What Happened, where she writes that when Abedin heard that the FBI was reopening the investigation, Abedin looked stricken: “‘This man is going to be the death of me,’ she said, bursting into tears.” This presentation will ask: to what extent was Weiner’s disgrace visited on his wife? How does the orbit of scandal taint, or paradoxically, inoculate a spouse, when both have such potent celebrity images of their own? Finally, how do Abedin’s other identity markers (e.g., her fashion sense, her status as a mother, her Muslim faith) contribute to her discursive construction in ways that combat or buttress her other attributions?

Ben Little, University of East Anglia

This paper presents early findings of a joint research project (with Alison Winch UEA) investigating the social, cultural and political significance of key figures in the tech industry. Focusing on the founder-CEO role played by people such as Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and similar, the project investigates the role they, and their businesses, play in public life. The project aims to explore if it is legitimate to describe these entrepreneurs, by some measures the richest group of productive capitalists ever, as being at vanguard of a new form of patriarchy marked by a post-feminist gender settlement and an unprecedented ability to accumulate wealth and economic power with little restraint or oversight.

As pressure grows on the star entrepreneurs of digital capitalism in the wake of fears about privacy, Russian use of social media to influence elections and concerns about astronomical levels of wealth, we revisit Barbrook and Cameron’s seminal essay ‘The Californian Ideology’ (1995), to examine the published material about the lives, values and activities of these men. Bringing together literature on celebrity, intersectional feminist theory and Gramscian cultural studies, this paper offers a limited case study from the wider project, looking at how business celebrities are celebrified through specialist outlets – in this case the profiles of the aforementioned tech entrepreneurs on the Bloomberg.com website. These videos and similar ideological productions legitimate the minimal accountability and loose corporate governance structures that are characteristic of the ownership regimes in Silicon Valley. I argue that it is the celebrity logics of the visionary founder-CEO that underpin this legitimation.

Moya Luckett; Bournemouth University

Pretty Wild: Celebrity and/as Failure

In documenting the immediate foreclosure of its aspiring starlets’ Hollywood dreams, E!’s 2010 reality show, Pretty Wild was unusual--even in a digital era that endlessly mines fallen stardom for cheap content. After both leads were unexpectedly arrested on camera during its first episode, the series was recalibrated around failure. With no chance of renewal, its fame-obsessed principals (Alexis Neiers and Tess Taylor) lost any chance of Kardashian-style celebrity, sacrificing control of their own images along the way. Widely seen as emblematic of the vacuous and amoral state of celebrity culture, Neiers’ and Taylor’s story inspired multiple retellings, including Nancy Jo Sales’ feature for Vanity Fair (incorporated into the show) and Sophia Coppola’s The Bling Ring, all with greater cultural cachet than E!’s show.

In this paper, I consider how Pretty Wild’s historiography of failure and its use of Hollywood settings draw on celebrity culture’s own affective regimes of transcendence and judgment to rationalise distinctions between “true” stardom and more debased forms of celebrity. In tracing ambitions that would never came to pass, Pretty Wild narrates a largely unwritten but nevertheless well-known story about failure that would not have materialised had producers known what would happen. I examine why the show was so mocked, exploring our affective response to misplaced ambitions and excessive materialism, particularly amidst widespread austerity. In the process, I explore how celebrity can itself operate as a discourse on failure, both via its relationship with stardom and as a commentary on limited professional paths to social mobility.

Alison Lutton, Somerville College, University of Oxford

JT LeRoy on screen: the re-animation of a desecrated celebrity author
In 2017, over a decade since the exposure of what might be considered the century’s first great literary scandal, the name JT LeRoy is connotative of hoaxing, artistic inauthenticity, and, above all, of the desecrated celebrity figure. LeRoy burst onto the American literary scene in the late 1990s, quickly gaining praise from reviewers for the rawness and profundity of his apparently autobiographically-imbued prose, which depicted a brutal landscape of truck stops, drugs, and teenage prostitution, and acquiring a number of high-profile celebrity fans and collaborators as his star ascended. However, LeRoy was not, in fact, one public figure but several: his writing composed by author Laura Albert; his profile masterminded by Albert in collaboration with her then partner, Jeffrey Knoop; and his public appearances made by Knoop’s niece, Savannah, decked out in a quite impressively conspicuous costume. Following the revelation of the truth surrounding LeRoy in a 2006 New York Times exposé, celebrity supporters distanced themselves, and the quality of his writing was debated anew, raising interesting questions about the valuing of literature and the nature of the celebrity author in the media age; his desecration was, apparently, absolute.

With the dust having settled on the scandal, and Albert having emerged as something of a literary celebrity in her own right, recent years have seen the release of two documentaries reflecting on LeRoy: Author: The JT LeRoy Story, directed by Jeff Feuerzeig (2016); and The Cult of JT LeRoy, directed by Marjorie Sturm (2014). This paper examines the very different, but equally recuperative, ways in which these films represent ‘LeRoy’, broadly conceived, considering how this particular manifestation of desecrated literary celebrity has given way to an afterlife which sheds light on both the possibility of artistic rebirth, and the relationship between work and author, in the contemporary period.

Camille Nadine Magsalin, De La Salle University

THE STANDARD REPACKAGED: Image, Screen Persona, and Star Production of Eugene Domingo

Standard is an idea or thing used as a measure, or model in comparative evaluations. Package, on the other hand, is a set of proposals or terms offered or agreed to as a whole. In consumer culture terms, Riesman (1980) defined “standard package” as the “collection of products and services which constitutes the basic heritage of the middle-class American. Constantly on the rise and indexed on the national standard of living, the standard package is a minimum ideal of a statistical kind, and a middle-class model of conformity. Surpassed by some, only dreamed of by others, it is an idea which encapsulates the American way of life” (197).

Two elements were left out in this idea, that is: conformity and satisfaction. For one to fully and wholly conform, he must be satisfied from what he is getting or benefitting. In this case, a “standard package” is for a select few.

Eugena "Eugene" Roxas Domingo is a Filipino film and theater performing artist, entertainer and host. She has performed in lead and supporting parts and in different kinds of the film business. She was prevalently known as side-kick of the Philippines Queen of Comedy, Ai-Ai delas Alas until the point that she was propelled on her initially lead part in Kimmy Dora: Kambal sa Kiyeme (2009). This research focuses on the embodiment of the actress therefore creating her own “turn”. From Rojek (2001) classification of celebrities to local scholars’ studies on the Philippines’ Superstar, the study pursue to release a new “breed” of Filipino celebrity in the form of Eugene Domingo.

Carina Mansey, City, University of London

The Saint of Chefs and the Savoy Scandal
Georges August Escoffier was and still is worshiped in the food and beverage industry. The son of a blacksmith, born in 1846, in a small village close to Nice in France, Escoffier truly earned his status as an achieved celebrity. He revolutionised the very culture of the culinary: inventing the kitchen brigade system, challenging the structure of dining and creating recipes that remain just as popular as they were when he introduced them. We owe to Escoffier, along with his famous colleague, friend and accomplice, César Ritz, our experiences of the modern hospitality industry. Yet, this chef is perhaps not as saintly as he might appear.

This paper will investigate the scandal that took place in 1898, at the Savoy Hotel in England’s capital, which involved the core management team, Escoffier and Ritz, being dismissed for theft. It will map out how, at a time when the press were pioneering techniques of popular journalism, but before the commercialisation of aid offered by cultural intermediaries and the concept of image management, one of the biggest scandals in the history of the hospitality industry was covered up. It will also develop a narrative that examines the ideological importance of avoiding the degradation of certain reputations at such a time in history. In order to achieve this, ideas concerning celebrity influence, power and corruption will be critically evaluated alongside Weberian theory on the subject of status and politics.

Stevie Marsden, University of Leicester

“I didn’t know you could read”: Questioning the legitimacy of Kim Kardashian’s status as a literary and cultural intermediary

In February 2017, Kim Kardashian announced that she would be starting a book club with Chrissy Teigen, and celebrity hairstylist Jen Atkin. The news was met with equal measures of derision, confusion and excitement. While fans exclaimed on Twitter that they had ‘never wanted to be apart [sic] of a book club so bad’, others questioned Kardashian’s literacy with a number of Twitter users asking Kardashian if she could in fact read. Media coverage of the announcement was equally torn between enthusiasm for a new ‘celebrity book club’ and interrogations of Kardashian, Teigen and Atkin’s competence as readers and their intellectual prowess.

Such celebrity endorsement of literature through online spaces is becoming an increasingly prominent feature of literary culture, but the reactions to Kardashian’s announcement brought to the fore issues surrounding her literacy, cultural legitimacy and gender. This paper will consider the reactions to Kardashian’s Book Club and explore how this episode illustrates the perceived illegitimacy of celebrities who are usually associated with “lowlbrow culture” engaging with and discussing literature – an activity that has traditionally been seen as a middlebrow endeavour. The reactions to Kardashian’s Book Club not only reflect issues surrounding the status of celebrities as cultural intermediaries, but also highlighted historical principles which questioned the intelligence and capabilities of women readers. This paper, therefore, will position Kim Kardashian’s Book Club within the wider, historical context of women readers and book clubs, whilst considering the prestige, or lack thereof, of celebrities who try to be literary cultural intermediaries.

P David Marshall, Deakin University

Denouementonument: Fame, Celebrity and the Monumental Instability of Contemporary Culture

In a variety of ways, monuments are exemplary of some sort of enduring influence. Their placement insures their visibility. Their dedication by leaders within the particular community is a guarantor that they possess the gravitas of cultural value. Often the material of their construction is designed to reach for perpetuity. When monuments are dedicated to individuals, it is a cultural collective
willing for the celebrated to live in glory forever. They are objects of fame, not that different from how architecture claims space and renown, how a developer names streets to perpetuate the names of important people to him or her, or how a very rich person attempts to produce a legacy through getting a higher education institution, medical or public building sponsored to a point that their name defines the space. They are celebrated sign systems of value and, at the very least, they are markers of claiming the stability of meaning, the stability of formations of cultural power and an attempt to paint - whenever they are made - as if they have been there forever.

This paper looks at how and why these emblems of celebration disappear and lose their fame, glory and recognition and tries to go beyond the post-Charlottesville dismantling of Confederate monuments in the United States to identify something larger at play. From understanding the meaning of monuments as structures of fame and celebrity, it makes the claim that the current moment can be described as one filled with a certain instability derived from a change in the very notion of individuality/collective/subjectivity and its relation to time and space; this turbulence is producing a particular vulnerability to monuments themselves as they may or may not represent the current moment or particular cultural fractions. Through a wider conceptual study of monuments, this paper and presentation explores our particular relationship to time and identity with the idea and practice of what I call denouementonument: the taking down of monuments and their regular desecration is symptomatic of our time and our peculiar formation of public identity that denies previous forms/objects that were constructed to embody and represent us as peoples and individuals.

Jessica Martin, University of Leicester.

Jack Monroe and Negotiating Authenticity as an Austerity Celebrity

This paper will examine Jack Monroe’s position as an “austerity celebrity” whose fame is intrinsically linked to austerity policy. Jack Monroe is a food blogger, author and activist who came to prominence in 2012 when a post on her blog entitled “Hunger Hurts” went viral, garnering over 16,000 hits and being shared widely via Facebook and Twitter. The post detailed Monroe’s experience of poverty whilst caring for her young son and relying on housing benefit and child tax credits. Monroe has been labelled “the face of modern poverty” (Guardian, 23rd July 2013) and “Britain’s austerity celebrity” (New York Times, 14th January 2014), which indicates both her cultural impact and her explicit engagement with austerity culture.

This paper details a critical discourse analysis of both Jack’s blog and of British newspaper coverage between 2012 and 2016 which provides insight into the phenomenon of the austerity celebrity, with a particular focus on the domesticity expertise Monroe represents. In particular, the paper will explore the paradoxical demand for authenticity as a welfare recipient as Monroe becomes increasingly famous and successful, and her constant negotiation of both ordinariness and celebrity in a media landscape that attempts to desecrate her celebrity by undermining her authenticity. The paper will also explore Monroe’s position as an explicitly political, anti-austerity celebrity spokesperson and how this represents a re-affirmation of the political nature of the domestic sphere during austerity and of an activity (cooking) previously seen as private and apolitical.

Hannah McCann, Australian National University, Clare Southerton, University of Melbourne

Repetitions of Desire: Queer Reading in One Direction Fan Culture

Boy band fan culture is frequently understood in terms of the teaching and transmission of heteronormative desire to a predominately teenage female fan base. The fans of former boy band
One Direction have been singled out as “extreme”, with fan behaviors often couched in terms of the obsessive and hysterical, especially in light of their continued activity following the band’s hiatus in 2015. Their passion and fandom practices have been largely understood, particularly in popular discourse, as rooted in a longing for heterosexual intimacy with the individual band members. This heteronormative framing misses the complex ways that intimacy and longing play out in these arenas. Discourse and ‘shipping’ surrounding the relationship between One Direction members Harry Styles and Louis Tomlinson (referred to by the portmanteau “Larry”) reveals that much of the fan sub-group engage in queer reading strategies to explicitly imagine and interrupt heterosexual narratives of band members and their music. Data drawn from digital ethnographic research conducted on Twitter and analysis of fan-produced images and text that circulate on the platform, this paper examines the way Larry shipping practices have created a space in which new and unexpected queer desires are constituted, including a fascination with mundane intimacies, erotic readings of gay male desire, compersion, and adoration of the feminine and submissive. We argue that Larries rework the trope of the hysterical fangirl, repositioning fangirls as experts and actively rejecting the notion that they are the passive recipients of culture.

Joanna McIntyre, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

‘I’m old and bitter and fat’: Nadia Almada, transnormativity, and the rise and fall of a transgender celebrity

At the forefront of increasing media engagement with transgender subjectivities are transgender celebrities; that is, unique celebrities whose public personas are bound to their transgender identities. To explore the distinctive nature and potential fragility of transgender celebrity, this paper analyses the rise and fall of the prototype of contemporary transgender celebrities: Nadia Almada. When Almada won Big Brother UK in 2004 it marked a turning point in transgender celebritification. Far from joining the ranks of Big Brother celetoids, Almada became a bona fide celebrity and the most prominent trans person in the UK. Nevertheless, when she participated in Ultimate Big Brother in 2010 her popularity suddenly plummeted; she became the target of transphobic derision and subsequently faded into obscurity. This paper examines the socio-cultural mechanisms via which Almada became a beloved transgender celebrity and rapidly lost that celebrity, particularly through the lens of transnormativity. Transnormativity is a structural ideology entwined with neoliberalism that enables only particular transgender subjectivities to be deemed culturally intelligible and ‘authentic’ while consequently subjugating others. A number of scholars have identified transnormativity’s relatively recent manifestation as well as its problematics (Johnson 2016; Vipond 2015; Mosquera Ramallo 2015; LeBlanc 2010). This paper applies transnormativity in the analysis of transgender celebrities and retrospectively in relation to Almada’s celebrity career. I consider the ways Almada adhered to and resisted the strictures of the then nascent transnormative model. In doing so, I also contemplate the ways in which Almada herself, as a vanguard, influenced the contemporary construction of transgender celebrity.

Mark McKenna

Sylvester Stallone: Analogue Actor/Digital Celebrity

Mark Gallagher suggests that ‘Sylvester Stallone has been widely understood as the embodiment of 1980s Hollywood action cinema and of Reagan-era masculinity’ (Gallagher, 97:2014). For a star whose identity has been so defined by a particular period, and inexorably linked to notions of youthful masculinity, how Sylvester Stallone negotiates the realities of ageing and the impact this
has on the roles available to him, and his ability to endure the physical requirements of these roles has been the subject of much academic interest (Tasker, 2014, Donnar, 2017). However, less visible, but no less valuable is an economic reading of the star and an examination of the ways in which the veteran actor has sought to extend his celebrity in a contemporary global digital marketplace. Though iconic, outside of Stallone’s signature characters of Rocky and Rambo, Stallone’s films are rarely considered successful domestically. Nevertheless, the star has remained visible; active as television producer, performer, and public speaker, and can increasingly be seen harnessing the power of social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to publicise new projects and to capitalise on earlier screen successes. However, what might on the surface appear to be the futile attempts of an ageing star to retain relevance in a global marketplace, is revealed to be more complex when we consider Stallone’s recent economic successes in the Asian film markets. In China’s highly profitable, but usually impenetrable marketplace, Stallone’s films are consistently among the 34 selected from the global film industry. This paper will consider Stallone’s continued economic capital and the ways in which he manages and extends his celebrity global image.

Kate McNicholas Smith, Lancaster University

Miley Cyrus: pop performance as queer feminist desecration

In 2013, a series of ‘raunchy’ performances saw pop performer Miley Cyrus mediated through a transformation narrative from wholesome child-star to degraded and degrading celebrity role model. Mobilising concerns around young women and ‘sexualisation’, Miley emerged in a range of discussions as a convergent signifier of sexualised media content and the girl-at-risk. From feminist critiques of objectification and sexualisation, to talk shows and opinion pieces that variously decried Miley as exploited, disgusting, out of control and/or ‘crazy’, Miley emerged as cause for concern. In a well publicised 2015 survey, Miley was voted worst celebrity role model to Kate Middleton’s best.

As Miley is repeatedly invoked and made sense of through these debates, she comes to function as the desecrated bad object of young femininity. This paper, however, attempts to resist the sense-making strategies that fix Miley in this role and argue that this contested media figure exceeds the frames through which she is read, troubling the sexualisation thesis in the provocations of her creative practice. Arguing that the dominant narratives of Miley as degraded are selective ones, I consider a broader range of images and performances that constitute the Miley Cyrus archive. In doing so, this paper proposes a reading of performative provocation, suggesting that what constitutes Miley as bad role model might in fact reveal a productive politics of desecration that mobilises an existing sensibility of queer feminist struggle. In this discussion, Miley emerges as disruptive, albeit contradictory, figure that troubles the terms of the role model debate.

Sreya Mitra, American University of Sharjah

Trolled, Body-Shamed and Slut-Shamed: Examining the predicament of the contemporary Bollywood female star and social media engagement

For connoisseurs of popular Hindi cinema, or Bollywood as it is more commonly known, the star is the focal point of their cinematic experience. As Neepa Majumdar has discussed, the Hindi film star occupies a role similar to that of genre in Hollywood cinema, dominating almost all realms of the cinematic idiom, from its economic structuring to its textual and narrative conventions (Majumdar 2009). Despite recent changes in the Indian mediascape, the Bollywood stars’ centrality remains undiminished. With the increasing synergy between film, television, and digital media, the Hindi
film star now straddles multiple platforms, effortlessly essaying the varied roles of a movie idol, a television personality, a social media participant and a transmedia celebrity. However as the stars engage with social media, often conflating their ‘reel’ and ‘real’ personas, discourses of both stardom and fandom become complicated. No longer regarded as simply objects of adulation and veneration, stars are now often chastised and publicly ridiculed for their actions on social media. This shift in the star-fan dynamics becomes even more problematic in the case of the female star, who is often body-shamed and trolled on social media platforms. This paper examines the changing notions of contemporary Bollywood stardom, particularly with respect to female stars’ engagement with social media and their subsequent desecration. As the female star attempts to navigate her resignification as a transmedia celebrity, her public humiliation reveals the problematic underpinnings and fissures of contemporary Bollywood stardom and the inevitable conflict between tradition and modernity.

Brandy Monk-Payton, Fordham University

Of Tabloids and Tableau Vivants: Kanye West’s Art of Infamy

In February 2016, Kanye West released his seventh solo studio album The Life of Pablo, an enigmatic sonic tour de force by a cultural icon known for his outrageous antics and caustic public persona. In particular, West made headlines with the music video for the single “Famous” that featured anatomically correct nude wax figures of various stars in a state of slumber together including himself, his wife Kim Kardashian, Caitlyn Jenner, Bill Cosby, Taylor Swift, and then-U.S. presidential nominee Donald Trump. Referencing American realist painter Vincent Desiderio’s tableau vivant “Sleep,” the controversial music video comments on tabloid discourses of celebrity and the promiscuity of “being known.” Here, the production of notoriety is articulated through the obscenity of prosthetic exposure.

This presentation explores what I term the “art of infamy” at the intersection of mediated visibility and visuality. West’s acts of disreputability that circulate within popular media culture cultivate what he terms his anti-celebrity. At the same time, he has become increasingly preoccupied with the art world, from modern architecture to avant-garde fashion. Taken together, the design of the “Famous” music video as an illicit star fantasy serves as a performance artwork that stages celebrity image desecration. I provide an analysis of the piece to elucidate both spectacular and banal techniques of publicity within the current attention economy that promote negative affect. In this way, West offers up new ways to think about the aesthetics of fame and the boundaries of taste between celebrity glamour and defilement.

Francesca Moretti, Sapienza Università di Roma

Beyoncé on Instagram. How the pop star perform herself without marketing authenticity

Beyoncé Knowles is currently one of the most influential and powerful celebrity in the entertainment industry. However, it’s interesting to notice that her celebrification strategy (Rojek, 2001) seem to differ strongly from other mainstream pop-stars, in fact, except from her highly followed music performances, she is essentially media mute. During the last three years, Beyoncé communication has been mostly visual, she hasn’t done any interview or Tv show appearance to promote her latest two albums, and yet, her level of stardom has never been so high. Her main channel of communication is her Instagram page where she publishes highly glamorous pictures - with scant captions – that doesn’t have the aim to perform intimacy and authenticity. Her narrative is based solely on her front-stage behavior (Goffman, 1959); she showcases the extraordinariness of her condition, without explaining herself and without playing in being
relatable. Beyoncé has branded herself, in a more traditional way, as a beyond all mortal type of celebrity (Morin, 1960) where her public persona embodies a sort of pagan black goodness. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to study how Beyoncé communicate herself by analyzing, through a semiotic approach, the set of pictures that the singer has released on February 2017 in order to announce her second pregnancy. Not only those are highly symbolic images but they also seem to confirm the idea, that celebrity use social networks to connect with their audience but at the same time, and almost in a paradoxical way, to maintain their status quo.

Fallen Like a House of Cards?

Sabrina Moro, Nottingham Trent University

Kevin Spacey’s Celebrity Image Amidst Sexual Assault Allegations

What role do fictional characters play in rituals of celebrification and degradation? In this paper, I will compare Robin Wright’s and Kevin Spacey’s respective celebrity image, and explore the disparate ways in which the fictional characters they portray in *House of Cards* allow them to negotiate their public persona. Indeed, Claire Underwood and Frank Underwood are characters whose trajectories generate as much interest as the actors’ personal lives. For example, Robin Wright’s activism – tackling rape as a weapon of war in the Demogratic Republic of Congo – is discussed in light of her fictional counterpart’s dedication to fight sexual assault in the US military. Similarly, Frank Underwood has intervened into the realms of contemporary politics on numerous occasions, the most recent instance being his 2016 presidential campaign in South California. More than mere marketing strategies, these examples illustrate the ways in which actors rely on the cultural value the fictional character they embody generate for their celebrity image. However, the recent sexual assault allegations against Kevin Spacey introduce a point of rupture for the actor. Netflix sanctions meant to dissociate their brand from the actor has led to the fragmentation of Spacey’s persona. The actor can no longer rely on Frank Underwood’s fame and capacity to generate cultural capital. Spacey’s Oscar winning portrayal of Lester Burnham in *American Beauty* is now invoked as a way to cement his new public image as a sexual predator. As this story unfolds, this paper will explore the role of fictional characters in celebrity desecration.

Jonathan Murray, University of Edinburgh

Mayday, Mayday: Theorising Grace Jones onscreen

Grace Jones’ careers as model, muse, musician and performance artist have attracted substantial amounts of both popular and academic critical attention. Far less discussed, however, is her work as a screen performer. But Jones has amassed no fewer than 20 substantive screen acting credits between her 1973 film debut in Blaxploitation feature Gordon’s War and her collaboration with director Sophie Fiennes on the 2017 documentary Grace Jones: Bloodlight and Bami. This paper examines the reasons why, and ways in which, filmmakers have cast Jones in movies ranging from James Bond film A View to a Kill (1985), seminal swords-and-sandals feature Conan the Destroyer (1984), and Eddie Murphy star vehicle Boomerang (1992). Almost all of Jones’ credits are associated with a range of populist (and often, critically disparaged) film genres. This paper argues, however, that Jones’ screen career should be understood in ways analogous to those commonly applied within discussion of her better-known (and far more prestigious) collaborations with fine artists and designers such as Jean-Paul Goude, Keith Haring and Andy Warhol. Jones’ self-conscious status as a protean signifier of a variety of discourses circulating around late-twentieth and early-twenty-first-century ideas of gendered, racial and sexual identities is typically engaged with at substantive length in the films that she has starred in. While those texts are unlikely to
assume canonical status within cinema history, they nevertheless constitute an important component part of one of the most distinctive and influential individual engagements with the concept and practice of celebrity in the post-1970 period.

Diane Negra, University College Dublin

**Ivanka Trump and the New Plutocratic (Post)feminism**

Using Ivanka Trump as a case study I want to investigate the nature and functions of a new plutocratic (post)feminism and assess its value to current hegemonies of class and capital particularly the regressive adulation of the wealthy. In this paper I examine what kinds of fantasies Trump focalizes and her use value to a political administration seeking to effect a separation from democratic habits, norms and values.

Serenity, transcendence and composure are the performative keynotes of Trump’s celebrity; these are to be experienced as a relief from precarity and she is exonerated from appearing simply a rich dilettante because she combines the appearance of these qualities with entrepreneurial “hustle.” Ivanka Trump’s relentless poise is important as a contrast to the bloviating, choleric style of Donald Trump and those around him.

I want to suggest that public absorption and fascination with Ivanka Trump is importantly tied to the pressing question of what women’s relationship to crony capitalism is. In an era in which capitalism is increasingly in disrepute, should women be moral counterweights and figures of opposition to it or full and enthusiastic participants, “leaning in” to get their piece of the pie? Ivanka Trump, it seems to me, is trying to be both. She personifies on the one hand women’s traditional moral obligation to stand apart from markets – to segregate themselves from the most aggressive forms of capitalism. Simultaneously though and with great meticulousness about how she is presented, she also epitomizes dynastic privilege and capitalist zeal.

Sofia Nika, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

**‘I love to hate you’: Greek audiences deconstructing Greek celebrities**

During the past few years Greek audiences are using their social media - in particular Twitter - in order to criticise Greek celebrities, predominantly television personalities. They indulge regularly in ‘mock/hate live tweeting’ and take pleasure in participating in debates surrounding Greek television personalities and the programmes they are presenting. In many instances Greek audiences tend to exhibit a kind of ‘cannibalistic’ behaviour towards Greek celebrities. More specifically, the celebrity discourses that are articulated in their tweets are full of disapproval and condemnation for them.

Drawing on the findings of an ethnographical study of Greek audiences using Twitter to comment Greek television personalities, this paper will demonstrate that their attitude constitutes a paradigm of ‘performative anti-fandom’. Then, it will examine the role of proximity (symbolical and spatial) as a decisive factor in the relationship between Greek audiences and Greek celebrities. As it will be shown, Greek audiences are constantly questioning and challenging Greek celebrities’ celebrity status. On the contrary, they are more positive when it comes to transnational celebrities as they deem their celebrity status to be ‘authentic’. Furthermore, it will be argued that Greek audiences’ strained relationship with Greek celebrities reflects the structural idiosyncrasies of the Greek celebrity system as well the differences between the Greek and global celebrity culture, and is indicative of an underlying scepticism and criticism within the Greek society about the rather contested concept of ‘celebrity’ and its meanings that have intensified after the recent economic crisis.
**Trajectories of desecration and sanctification of celebrities and celebrity politicians**

In this paper we propose a model of desecration and sanctification of celebrity based on Glaser’s and Strauss’ concept of biographical trajectory combined with narrative analysis. In microsociology trajectory is understood as a process of losing control over one’s social identity caused by powerful and overwhelming external forces (e.g. terminal illness). In the realm of celebrity, concept of trajectory could be applied to describe processes and mechanisms of stripping celebrities of power over their public personas. The trajectory potential accumulates through events we call focal points. Typical focal points in celebrity world are: scandals (legal, sexual, financial or inauthenticity scandals), biographical events and career periods such as divorces, or unsuccessful terms in office (for celebrity politicians).

Public identities of celebrities are oversimplified to the point they are embodiments of deep narrative archetypes used by media in their stories. Because of this feature of celebrities personas, perceptual change caused by focal points often leads to semiotic reversal of the archetypal character ‘played’ by celebrity in media narratives. In terms of narrative analysis trajectories force celebrities to become shadows of narrative archetypes previously ascribed to their personas. Most often this process leads to desecration of celebrity but some types of focal points e.g. ‘honorable death’ or terminal illness cause inverted process of sanctification of celebrity personas. Our paper classifies and describes various types of desecration and sanctification trajectories and focal points based on analysis of numerous cases of Polish and international celebrities and celebrity politicians.

**“Comedian, masturbator”: Revisiting the authenticity of Louis C.K. in light of his sexual misconduct scandal**

On November 9, 2017, The New York Times published a story outlining accusations from five women that comedian Louis C.K. had used his industry status to coerce them into watching him masturbate. The accusations, and C.K.’s subsequent confirmation and confession, had immediate ramifications to his career with his new film I Love You, Daddy dropped by its distributors, television appearances cancelled, and C.K. dropped by his network, touring agent, management, and publicist. The revelation sits uncomfortably alongside C.K.’s public/performance persona and body of often confessional stage and television work. Vox’s Todd VanDerWeff wrote that attempting to separate C.K.’s persona and suddenly revealed private self was impossible, as “with an artist like Louis C.K., who seems unable to stop himself from blurt out his every thought, the Venn diagram intersection between art and artist is very nearly a circle.”

At the 2014 Celebrity Studies conference, I delivered a paper on the role and value of authenticity in C.K’s persona. Now, with the authentic currency of C.K.’s work suddenly devalued through its close alignment with the scandal, I will revisit C.K.’s public persona in light of its current state. In this paper, I consider what role the illusion of authenticity in celebrity persona plays when that illusion is revealed as possibly cloaking a much darker private self. Drawing on online reaction to the C.K. scandal, I question the nature of the performed authentic, and whether constant celebrity self-revelation can continue to be valued once its deceptive nature becomes apparent.

**Interrogating the Nigerian Public Perceptions of Celebrity Advocacy on Women’s Rights**

*Rosemary Oyinlola Popoola, Covenant University, Nigeria*
Celebrity advocacy in Nigeria has been engaged by development institutions, states, businesses and non-state actors on a myriad of social issues including poverty, health, famine, environmental challenges, and others. One of the goals of celebrity advocacy is to create awareness on women’s rights and influence decision makers to make and enforce laws that will protect those rights; yet, celebrity advocacy remains highly controversial. While numerous studies have examined public perceptions and effectiveness of celebrity advocacy as a tool for social change in the developed countries, there is paucity of research on the topic in the case of Nigeria. Consequently, this study sought to provide theoretical and empirical insights into the public perceptions and effectiveness of celebrity advocacy as a tool for promoting and protecting women’s rights in the country. Using a thematic review model, the study employed a mixed method design augmented by a structured questionnaire, focus group discussions, and interview guide to elicit information from a convenience sample drawn from residents of Lagos and Ogun states in Nigeria. The study found that while celebrity advocacy can lead to promotion (awareness), it often does not lead to protection (enforcement and change in the status) of women’s rights. It further revealed a lot of public skepticism on celebrity advocacy, as many respondents considered most celebrity individuals as attention seekers and complicated personalities who join the women’s rights movement to gain public sympathy and increase their popularity. The study therefore recommends among others a multifaceted and integrated approach to promote the cause.

Annelot Prins, Freie Universität

From Awkward Teen Girl to Aryan Goddess Meme: Taylor Swift and White Womanhood

Before they were forced to move to the dark web, the neo-Nazi and white supremacist website The Daily Stormer published 24 articles about Taylor Swift. In these articles, Swift is presented as an Aryan Goddess and covert Nazi, "red pilling" America into getting ready for a white future. The Daily Stormer was not the first to notice Swift's "Aryan spirit". In 2013, American teen Emily Pattinson started creating memes with pictures of Swift and quotes by Adolf Hitler on Pinterest. The memes went viral, and led to the creation of a Facebook group called "Taylor Swift for a Fascist Europe" that had over 27,000 followers before it was taken offline.

At first glance, this appropriation of Swift's persona might be interpreted as one-sided fan practices from an undesired audience. I however argue that Swift is not merely "object" of these activities, but reacts to them in ambivalent ways in her music. Swift's star text invites and channels her alt-right fans, and facilitates a white-supremacist reading, yet at the same time escapes consequences, for instance potential political desecration of her stardom.

In this paper I analyze how Swift's articulations of white womanhood, and especially her use of irony and nostalgia, interact with the grammar of contemporary fascism. I argue Swift's investment in white discourses makes possible and solidifies a blind spot to the anchored nature of racial hierarchy in the US, while simultaneously speaking directly to white supremacist audiences. Through an analysis of the co-constitutive practices of the Hitler/Swift memes and Taylor Swift videos, I show how a particular sense of white superiority is continually made to feel natural again in contemporary popular culture.

Melanie Ramdarshan Bold, Nick Canty, University College London

Tiny Hamster disrupts the book publishing industry, and other stories: the rise of the micro-celebrity author

The book publishing industry has a history of being infused with celebrity culture. From autobiographies and biographies (usually popular during the Christmas period) to publishing
imprints (Lena Dunham has her own imprint, Lenny Books, at PenguinRandomHouse) to celebrities writing novels (Tom Hank’s collection of short stories, *Uncommon Type*, was recently published to much fanfare but received poor reviews) and children’s books (British comedian David Walliams’ children’s novels were amongst the top ten bestselling books of 2016): celebrity culture is a prevalent part of book publishing today. Celebrities, notoriously, earn large advance payments for their writing, whether it is fiction, non-fiction, or even ghostwritten: this has caused discontent amongst traditional authors, many of whom earn below minimum wage for their own writing. The emergence of social technologies has meant that there is a new generation of celebrities: micro-celebrities that are building audiences on social platforms such as Youtube and Instagram and capitalising on the enduring popularity of traditional print media. This is disrupting the traditional book publishing industry even further and demonstrates that social technologies have the potential to democratise traditional structures by allowing anyone to become a celebrity and develop large audiences. This paper will analyse a corpus of titles written by micro-celebrities and published in the UK. It will explore patterns and anomalies and thus introduce a typology of micro-celebrities in the book publishing industry. Finally, this paper will explore the extent to which this new generation of celebrity is desecrating this traditional sector, and the notion of celebrity.

*Sean Redmond, Deakin University*

**David Bowie: Starring in Cameo**

In this talk I will explore the way David Bowie performs in and through the role of the film and television fiction cameo. I will suggest that he brings the complexity of his shifting star image to each cameo performance, drawing on competing artistic traditions as he does so. I will make use of the parameters of posing and mimicry, self-reflexivity and cultish subversion, and the shifting ground of modernism and postmodernism to show how Bowie’s cameo performances are not singular or consistent but refer to the specificities of the text in question, the other authors and actors involved, and to the multi-grain nature of his star self. When Bowie embodies a cameo role, a series of intersecting performance registers are in play that suggest he is always in cameo.

The questions that will frame my reading of his cameo performances are, which David Bowie is being brought into view? How is the text using him, and why? How does David Bowie starring in cameo help us better understand stardom and celebrity more generally?

*Tessa Reed, King’s College London*

**If You Had My Love: Jennifer Lopez, the Virginity Movement, and America’s Sweetheart’s Fall From Grace**

This paper will explore the shifting public opinion of Jennifer Lopez through her star text. Lopez is one of America’s biggest Latina stars, and I argue that her stardom hinges on the virgin-whore dichotomy. Traditionally, Latina womanhood situates itself within three versions of womanhood - La Virgen, La Malinche, or La Llorona (the latter two of which signify the whore). Throughout her career, Lopez has fluctuated between these identities, yet never successfully embodied more than one at any time. Her star text appears trapped in this rigid binary. Through an analysis of her career trajectory, this paper will consider how her star text shifted from a virginal ideal to that of a dangerous Latina seductress. In doing so, I will acknowledge the impact the virginity movement in America had on her transition. This paper will examine how *Selena* (Nava, 1997), and the press coverage surrounding the film, originally constructed Lopez as one of Hollywood’s new All-American ingénues. In this context,
Lopez’s stardom relied on her ethnic ambiguity and cross-over appeal. However, I will explore how it was the emergence of Lopez’s musical career (one of which aligned itself with “blackness” and an urban appeal) as well as her many failed public relationships that eventually “othered” her. With regard to her relationship with Ben Affleck, the media started portraying Lopez as the exotic other—a woman whose hypersexuality “duped” an innocent American man. As a result, Lopez became more racially sexualised and coded as a corruptive woman in the media.

*Peter Rehberg, Institute for Cultural Inquiry*

**Eurovision’s Failed Celebrities**

The Eurovision Song Contest is famous for producing celebrities that have a very short shelf life. Except for two famous exceptions – Abba and Celine Dion – during its more than 60 years, Eurovision produced next to zero stars. While the production of the one-hit-wonder, or the failed celebrity, is something that Eurovision today also shares with casting shows like Pop Idol, the guaranteed failure to create an impact beyond the evening of the final, in the case of Eurovision, is embedded within the context of European culture, history, and politics.

From a hegemonic perspective of Anglo-American pop, Eurovision always was a cheap copy of the original. Continental pop goes under the rubric of “Eurotrash,” for which Eurovision provides a popular arena. This hierarchy of pop standards perpetuates itself within Eurovision: If Eurovision is already a copy of Anglo-American pop, this process is further distinguished between western and eastern Europe. After the eastward extension of Eurovision in the 1990s, at Eurovision the East became a copy of the west, and thus a copy of a copy.

The lack of originality thus produced at Eurovision has often been redeemed as “camp” – especially after Eurovision’s coming-out as a gay event in the late 1990s, when the transgender performer Dana International won the contest for Israel. However, the aesthetic unreliability of Eurovision is not just celebrated as counter-cultural value but also an occasion for its mocking, degrading, and desecrating. But when does Eurovision become an object of affection and when does it become an object of ridicule? How does love and hate intersect in the attachment to Eurovision? I want to draw the attention to the intimacy of these contradictory responses to Eurovision that cannot be resolved through a generalized concept of camp as a standard reaction to unsuccessful pop cultural articulations, but often also entail an element of Schadenfreude.

*Heli Reimann, Sibelius Academy, University of Arts, Helsinki and Tallinn University*

**Soviet era celebrities: the starlight of Estonian pop singer Jaak Joala on Soviet estrada arenas**

‘I didn’t do anything to break through in Russia...I was like I was...a shy cultured guy from the Baltics with an Onegin-like attitude.’ This was how Jaak Joala (1950-2014) reflected upon the beginning of his stardom on Soviet estrada stages. His stardom began with performances on Soviet Central Television, which at the end of 1970s was searching for new estrada-artists all over the Soviet Union. The first Estonian singer to achieve popularity was Jaak Joala, whose musical talent, romantic nature and handsome appearance made him a pop-idol, a real celebrity all over the Soviet Union.

This presentation will discover, on the one hand, the role of the Soviet media empire and cultural administration in Joala’s fame, and on the other hand, it will focus on the personal qualities and musical skills of Joala. I will argue that Joala’s artistic image responded to the needs and expectations of Soviet audiences – he was romantic, charismatic, talented, western-like and good-looking.
The discussion relies on the recent documentary on Estonian television ‘Raudse eesriide jumalused’ (Deities behind the iron curtain) where musicians, producers and critics reflect upon the breakthrough of Estonian singers, and on the biographies of Jaak Joala.

Timothy Robeers, Hilde Van den Bulck, University of Antwerp

‘Hypocritical Investor’ or Hollywood ‘Do-Gooder’? Media and Audiences negotiating Leonardo DiCaprio’s legitimate stance as Green Celebrity Activist

This contribution analyses online media coverage and audience reactions to Leonardo DiCaprio’s involvement in the fully electrical racing series Formula E, as an inroad to discuss the complex balance between fame and infamy in relationship to a celebrity’s legitimate standing as a (environmental) activist. It starts from the idea of celebrity as continually (re)articulated construct, resulting from (negotiated) relationships between players in the celebrity apparatus: the person wanting to (re)gain fame, the celebrity entourage, the media and audiences. It focuses on how media and audiences’ articulation of fame and infamy weighs various aspects of the celebrity persona. Empirically the contribution provides a qualitative, inductive framing analysis of online media coverage (#118 articles) and audience reactions (612) regarding Leonardo DiCaprio involvement in Formula E from a range of news sources (celebrity gossip, lifestyle, environment, general news, automotive, (motor)sport and technology websites) during three two-month periods in 2013, 2015 and 2017, with each period corresponding to a development in DiCaprio’s involvement in Formula E (co-founding a Formula E team, becoming chairman of sustainability committee, attending the first New York ePrix respectively). Framing analysis was based on Gamson & Modigliani’s (1989) framing devices (word choice, metaphors, cliché’s and depictions) and Entman’s (1993) reasoning devices (issue definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, treatment recommendation).

Media coverage of Leonardo DiCaprio’s involvement with Formula E is dominated by frames relating to the notion of sustainable commodities to benefit heavily polluted cities, presenting DiCaprio as successful Hollywood star whose activism is legitimized by his long-time commitment to environmental causes. These frames are found in 2013, 2015 and 2017. However, 2017 coverage also provides frames that focus on DiCaprio’s personal health and private life, indicating decreasing newsworthiness of DiCaprio’s sustainability efforts. Online audience reactions partly replicate these frames but also create counter-frames, focusing on the failing role of electric vehicles in environmental sustainability with DiCaprio’s sustainability efforts in Formula E being both challenged (‘hypocritical investor’) and defended (‘do-gooder’). Audiences identify DiCaprio’s conflict of corporate interest and failure to reduce his own carbon footprint. By highlighting these contradictions, audiences use what, in principle, should be a positive part (activism) of the celebrity’s image, to reinforce criticism of more contentious aspects (private life).

Cornel Sandvoss, University of Huddersfield

What’s wrong with Jeremy Corbyn? Political Celebrity, Fandom and the Public Sphere

The electoral success of anti-establishment political movements from Brexit and the election of Reality TV celebrity Donal Trump as US president to the rise of populist movements across Europe has been closely intertwined with the personalisation of politics and political celebrity as observed by, among others, Corner and Pels (2003) and Stanyer (2012). In contrast to political celebrity figures on the Right such as, alongside Trump, Farage, Berlusconi, or Johnson which often operate in the intersection of political and popular communication, British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has garnered an enthusiastic fan base and supporters’ movement in the form of Momentum.
This paper examines the celebrity of Jeremey Corbyn and its political and cultural consequences through a multi-method study of the textuality through which his public persona is constructed as well as of the readings and reception of this persona by Corbyn fans. Combining emergent literature on political fandom (Wilson 2011, Jones 2012; Ouellette 2012; Sandvoss 2012, 2013; Jungherr 2012) with key approaches in celebrity studies, the paper argues that Corbyn’s celebrity and political success is conventional and in line with the wider rise of populism: his celebrity is constituted through constructions of authenticity, while his fandom is maintained through an emphasis on the self and a rejection of the perceived Other that is a common of populist political fandom on the Right.

Jeff Scheible, King’s College

“Risk’s Gaga Feminism”

Laura Poitras controversially decided to re-edit her 2017 documentary Risk about Julian Assange after its Cannes premiere to include narration from her production diaries, voicing ambivalent feelings about Assange and foregrounding the problematic sexual politics of powerful men in the information security community. In this presentation, I aim to unpack how these broader debates about gender politics get displaced by a memorable sequence in the film: when Lady Gaga visits Assange in London, interviewing him in his makeshift bedroom in the Ecuadorian Embassy. Beyond offering comic relief from a film otherwise characterized by a “discourse of sobriety,” Gaga’s presence draws attention to Assange’s own celebrity status and entourage (perhaps most notably including his rumoured relationship with Pamela Anderson), raising questions continuous with the rest of the film’s curiosity about the unsettling contradictions between Assange’s management of his public persona and his messages about freedom of information. Drawing on Jack Halberstam’s “Gaga feminism,” I analyse the ways this sequence, not explicitly acknowledging Gaga’s ties to WikiLeaks, writes over the fact that Bradley Manning exfiltrated the “largest data spillage in American history” by uploading information onto a “Lady Gaga” CD, while lip-synching to the performer’s “Telephone.” Manning’s use of Gaga—both as a cover-up and a queer source of empowerment—is suggestive of the multi-directional, mutually constitutive flows between WikiLeaks, mainstream media, and celebrity culture. I further tease out these dynamics by considering “Telephone Remake,” a 2010 viral video where American soldiers perform a choreographed rendition of Gaga’s and Beyoncé’s hit song.

Anna Seidl, University of Amsterdam

Falling Stars: Ageing and Dance

The (classical) dance world has traditionally been shaped around stars. They function as signifiers for a symbolic space and the fairy-tale of eternal youth. Dance is one of the very few artistic fields where age leads to exclusion. When stars reach the traditional age limit of 40, their career and status ends often abruptly.

Yet, lately there appears to be a change. Especially, stars continue to dance on. This implies a desecration of their former status of untouchable and aloof celebrity. Nevertheless, they have received increased broad attention both from the media and the public. New aesthetic values such as authenticity, intensity and experience emerge from this desecration.

Based on the assumption that aesthetic standards – especially of the western dance scene – mirror cultural ideals of consumer-orientated identities, I will argue that the increased interest in dance and age implies both an act of desecration, where the conventional frame of the celebrity status becomes subverted, as well as an attempt to expand celebrity culture into the realm of the third age. The
central social function of those ‘third agers’ is to demonstrate that abandoning their stardom does not necessary need to generate ‘fallen stars’. It enables the configuration of new contexts and resources for creating new identities and lifestyles of later life. Based on several case studies, I will show how different aspirational and promotional strategies in the dance field are being used, in the context of desecration and celebrification, to support and facilitate a shift from ageing as a trajectory of decline towards a vision of older age that promotes diversity, flexibility and agency.

Michael Serazio, Boston College

**Making and Managing Meritocratic Heroes: The Production of Celebrity Capital in the Sports Media Industries**

Sports stardom is increasingly unique in the postmodern firmament. Even as reality TV has inundated the celebrity landscape with those whom the historian Daniel Boorstin might have termed, “human pseudo-events,” sport still foregrounds personal achievement as the rationale for our reverence – perhaps given the visible crucible of physical toil necessitated. In that, sports fandom also validates celebrity in neoliberal terms, as the reward for meritocratic ascendance and affirms all sorts of assorted myths of democratic capitalism. And, yet, sports celebrity is equally crafted by an elaborate (off-the-field, behind-the-scenes) professional apparatus and managed across a fluid contemporary media-scape. This paper offers a production-side study of that process, drawing upon 42 hours of interviews with 57 high-profile leaders involved in American sports media and journalism as well as those in the business and marketing of sports who articulate their experiences and perspectives on this front. The paper begins by historicizing the economic logic of sports star-promotion and its symbiotic relationship with media and corporate interests, as well as contextualizing sports’ aforementioned meritocratic mythmaking. It then delves deeply into the “production practices and representational conventions” that inform and define sports image-making in the digital age. These include both longstanding criteria and techniques for accentuating the personalities of sports celebrities, post-Beckham and Jordan (e.g., lifestyle branding, pop culture synergies), as well as more recent and unique developments – from the high-fashion aesthetic transformation of professional athletes (e.g., Russell Westbrook) to the exploitation of social media opportunities to market authenticity, cultivate para-social attachments among fans, and diversify “personal brand” revenue streams.

Valentina Signorelli, University of Westminster

**Famous Last Words - A Comparative Focus on Resignation Speeches to Trace Contemporary European Instability: The Case of David Cameron and Matteo Renzi**

In 2016, the unexpected result of two referenda promoted by the governing coalition made their popular leaders resign. British Prime Minister David Cameron quit after the “Leave” campaign won over the Brexit vote. A few months later, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi resigned as well, following the negative outcome of the Italian Constitutional referendum. Only a few hours after the results were made public, several TV channels and newspaper websites broadcasted their resignation speeches in real time. This moment marked the political fall of both leaders, decreed the beginning of a transition in power in their respective democracies and contributed to threatening the stability of the European Union. In order to understand the complex implications behind what some might call only “a few words”, this paper provides a comparative insight on both Cameron and Renzi’s resignation ceremony as key moments of tracing their downgrade and media shaming, from being high representatives of the democratic power to living again as ordinary people. Combining
speech-writing and screenwriting tools in conjunction with media and reception studies, this paper investigates the following questions: (i) in which ways do resignation speech mark the exact moment of the fall of an institutional representative? (ii) What is the significance of speechwriting in the contemporary mediascape to preserve political stability? And finally, (iii) what can resignation speeches tell us about the future of European leadership?

**Guillaume Sirois, Saint Paul University**

**The ups and downs of the curator: Power and celebrity in the visual art world**

Celebrity culture is increasingly pervasive in the visual art sector (Walker, 2003), as it largely influences what is produced and presented to the public. Nowadays, it is not only artists who become celebrities in the global art world (Becker, 2008) but also certain other key actors including curators, critics, art dealers, and collectors. Indeed, all these individuals regularly appear on the global art circuit and meet at preview events, openings, and parties that are covered abundantly by art magazines and special-interest websites. However, celebrity in the art world is always an unstable position that requires constant reinforcement. This dynamic is captured by several rankings of the most influential people in the art world that are issued annually by widely read publications (Quemin, 2013). Taking the example of the curator, often perceived as the quintessential figure of power in the visual arts world, this paper examines the movements (up and down) of famous curators over time within these rankings. It shows how world-renowned biennials have become sites where superstar curators are created (Sick & Schieren, 2011). As the public face of these manifestations, the curator often overshadows artists included in the exhibition. However, this fame is not necessarily enduring since the structure of these events imposes a new curator every second year. Therefore, such an engagement is a unique occasion for a curator to make enough noise in the global art world to secure another curating opportunity. Such a dynamic nurtures a logic of provocation, which is constitutive of the art world (Heinich, 1998).

**Cindy Smith**

**Radical Loneliness and a Little Masculinity: Kristen Stewart’s Ideological Resonance in Illiberal America**

This paper offers a reading of Kristen Stewart as a particularly potent American icon imbued with resistant ideological resonance for an increasingly illiberal nation. Relying upon Sianne Ngai’s interrogation of the aesthetic category *interesting*, this paper will show that what is *interesting* about Stewart is a kind of radical affect in response to Trump era excess.

If the interesting marks a tension between wonder and reason, increasing in direct proportion to the acuteness of that tension, the feeling that underpins it seems to lie somewhere between an object-oriented desire and an object-indifferent affect (Ngai 133).

In Kelly Reichardt’s 2016 film, *Certain Women*, the vignette starring Kristen Stewart and Lily Gladstone can be interpreted as an allegory embodying the relationship between movie stars and their audience that signals an impasse between identification and desire. Desire here begins as in classic cinema: as object-oriented; Gladstone wants Stewart, who does not want her. Stewart’s response radically reconfigures this relation, as she neither feeds nor repudiates the attention of her fan, but is always already in a state of retreat and indifference to it. Conversely, Stewart’s acting style, criticized for being “underwhelming” strikes the perfect pitch for the character Beth, who mirrors Stewart’s persona of the underwhelmed star who doesn’t really
want to be here, who is literally in the middle of backing out of her appearance during the performance. By acknowledging, in interviews, that she cannot merely throw on empathy for a performance, Stewart ‘breaks character’ as an actor in favor of a claim to a more resistant position. It is in the singular moment when Stewart’s acting style meets Stewart’s IDGF public persona (culminating in her take-down of Trump on SNL—“I’m like so gay dude.”) when Stewart and her fans can take pleasure in “raising a fist” (Harris) to Trump.

Nathan E. Smith, Columbia University.

Built, Not Bought: Vin Diesel and the Engineered Identities of a Digital Diva, Dungeon Master, and Mechanized Movie Star

Few movie stars signify the 21st-century like Mark Sinclair, better known as Vin Diesel. The ambiguity of his ethnic background and mystery of his sexual orientation have led Diesel to a varied filmography and intense relationship with audiences. The coding of his identity, both on-screen and off, has also provided complicated fodder for scholarly writing. My paper seeks to intervene in the direction of the Diesel discourse. Writing by scholars like Jane Park defines Diesel by his sense of “virtual race,” “the idea of racial and ethnic identity as an ornamental product that can be marketed and consumed, put on and taken off” (Park 186). Such dialogue assumes that Diesel’s identities are removed from role to role, that our understanding of him as a black-coded man in the Riddick films does not impact our acceptance of him as ethnic white in Knockaround Guys or Saving Private Ryan. These understandings crash into each other along a racetrack of identity, our engagement with one film colliding into another. Yes, Diesel’s identity could be described as virtual or digital: metaphorically due to his avatar-like ambiguity, literally because of his constant social media presence. I would instead like to consider Diesel’s identity – racially, sexually, and otherwise – less virtual (and thus removable) and more mechanical, a series of interlocking parts that operate in communion with one another. Three tensions define Diesel’s identity most: tensions within, between differing racial and sexual identities; second, tensions between his on-screen and off-screen personas; third, tensions between Diesel and spectators.

Lindsay Steenberg, Oxford Brookes University

We Can Rebuild him. We have the Technology: Celebrity Fitness Regimes and The Discourses of Violence

Focused on the process of celebrity fitness regimes, this paper investigates the role of fitness training (and the personal trainer) as key contributor to the personae of film stars. Often becoming celebrities in their own right, the trainer has become a force for guaranteeing the authenticity of a performer in the face of ubiquitous digital effects. I argue that the way the media frames the training regimes of the celebrity body (particularly but not exclusively the male body) relies on discourses of violence through fight-based training programmes such as boot camps, boxing, and martial arts. This paper unpacks the violence of these training regimes, linking it to an intense fetishization of managed risk – in spaces such as survivalist reality television, no holds barred combat sports and the intense bodily transformations of stars such as Christian Bale, Matthew McConaughey, Renee Zellweger and Charlize Theron. Furthermore, the managed risk of the training routine builds itself on deeply nostalgic notions of historical and working class bodies at work. Using the hyper-visible physicality of films such as 300, this paper argues that the gender politics of ‘behind the scenes’ fitness programmes conflate violence with physical training in order to produce the ‘perfect’ nostalgic sculptural body of the action star.
Desecrating the ‘It Girl’

In Hollywood Babylon, Kenneth Anger claimed that Clara Bow, Hollywood’s “It Girl,” had sex with the entire football squad of the University of Southern California. This story still circulates in 21st century culture, and while Anger’s claim regarding Paramount’s biggest female star in the 1920s might been the most startling act of desecrating Clara Bow’s celebrity, it certainly was not the first. Neither was it the most sustained move to change her status from celebrity to ordinary. In fact, it might be argued that the desecration of Bow’s celebrity started almost as soon as she achieved star status, rooted as it was in the problem of her strongly asserted working class affiliation and how focus on her “ordinariness” upset the balance with her “extraordinariness” (Dyer). This, I will argue, threatened the commercial management not just of Bow’s stardom, but also the entire Hollywood star system and the cultural meaning it sought to promulgate, especially as focused on constructing glamorous female stars who also needed to be respectable models of celebrity to middle-class audiences.

This paper focuses on the cultural and discursive implications of the desecration of Clara Bow in the late 1920s, a process led by newspaper coverage but apparently aided and abetted by Bow herself, who regularly transgressed the boundaries of sexual discretion and ‘good taste’ even as her public behaviors and comments cemented the perception that she was compulsively and self-destructively authentic. In my exploration, I will focus, not only on newspaper coverage of Bow as a primary element driving this narrative of desecration, but also show how viewers reacted (in fan mail) as well as the role of fan magazine discourse. In this exploration, I seek to show the interplay between discourses offering radically different treatment of the star and her scandals and the role of Bow’s authenticity as a key strategy that figured in her desecration but also, paradoxically, in her come back from “the desecrated” –a return to the screen (however briefly) in the early 1930s at Fox studio.

Anthea Taylor, University of Sydney

“Steve is twice the Aussie icon you will ever be”: Germaine Greer, The Crocodile Hunter’s Death, and Misogynistic Hate Speech

In September 2006, Australia’s most iconic feminist, Germaine Greer, wrote an article in response to the death of celebrity wildlife presenter, Steve Irwin. In the Guardian piece, entitled ‘That sort of self-delusion is what it takes to be a real Aussie larrikin’, Greer concluded: ‘The animal world has finally taken its revenge on Irwin’. For thousands of Australian readers, Greer’s public response to the untimely demise of a purported national ‘hero’ represented a symbolic assault not just on the crocodile hunter’s grieving family but on the nation itself. Following the article’s appearance, Greer’s agents – Gillon Aitken Associates, based in the UK – received copious amounts of hate mail directed towards the controversial celebrity feminist; totalling around 2000, these emails are contained in the newly acquired Greer archive at the University of Melbourne, and provide important insights into affective responses to this polarising figure. Tightly policing the boundaries of what constitutes ‘Australian-ness’ as well as mobilising problematic assumptions about the correct way of publicly doing femininity, these letters call into question Greer’s authority to speak publicly not just about this matter but about any issue at all. In so doing, these emails – which include threats of sexual violence – offer an earlier example of the kind of vitriolic, misogynistic hate speech that is now commonly directed towards vocal women in the mediasphere (especially online). Against the representation of Irwin as model Australian, Greer is dismissed not just as a ‘bad’ woman but as a ‘bad’ citizen. Placing these responses to Greer’s comments in the context of
increased hate speech towards public women, this paper considers both the kind of ‘Greer’ and the kind of ‘Irwin’ being discursively constructed in these emails, and how deeply nationalistic, misogynistic discourses were deployed in these attempts to marginalise and silence Greer and to mourn and celebrate the ‘Crocodile hunter’.

Sally Totman, Deakin University

Mapping the Celebrity Bell Curve: the swinging gender narrative in explorers of Arabia

Two of the most influential 20th century explorers of the Middle East were T.E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell. Lawrence and Bell became celebrated long after their premature deaths (Bell in 1926 from an apparent accidental drug overdose aged 57; Lawrence in 1935 in a motorcycle accident aged 46).

Lawrence was a British military officer, archaeologist, diplomat and writer and gained some renown during his lifetime but it wasn’t until his life was immortalised in the 1962 film Lawrence of Arabia, based on his 1926 autobiography The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, that he found world-wide celebrity. The Oscar-winning film made Lawrence a household name and cemented his place in history as a heroic explorer of the 20th century. However more recent films have somewhat desecrated this reputation and focussed less on his diplomatic work during WWI and more on his homosexuality and apparent masochistic tendencies.

Unlike Lawrence, Bell who was also a British explorer, diplomat, writer and archaeologist of the same period was largely ignored in the years immediately following her death despite her hugely influential role in establishing the modern states of Iraq and Jordan. Bell’s celebrity remained confined to those interested in Middle East history until very recently when she was ‘re-discovered’ through Nicole Kidman’s portrayal of her life in the 2015 film Queen of the Desert and then a 2016 documentary Letters from Baghdad based on her writings.

This paper explores how Lawrence and Bell’s legacies have evolved over the 80+ years since their deaths and how Hollywood has shaped and re-shaped the narrative around these two historic explorers of Arabia.

Bethany Usher, Newcastle University

“When journalists attack”: the deconstruction of celebrity as a mechanism for social control

THIS paper explores one of the longest sustained discourses of celebrity news – “attack journalism” – and some of its manifestations from 18th Century newspapers to the current day. It argues that it emerged as a result of celebrity journalism’s earliest functions - the formation and circulation of models of self-identity - and its purpose is to diminish engagement with public figures perceived as a threat to the political or social agendas of newspapers. Through examples ranging from David Bowie to Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire, Thomas Paine and Ed Miliband to footballer Raheem Sterling, it demonstrates journalists have sustained this discourse with remarkable linguistic and structural similarity for more than 200 years. Examining this area of celebrity news offers insights into how celebritisation of news agendas and the celebrification of individuals can work together as mechanisms for social control. This paper uses a theoretical framework and methodologies drawn from journalism and cultural studies to analyse historical and contemporary news and argues that when journalist’s attack, they can alter a celebrity’s public image with significant social and political consequences.

Hilde Van den Bulck, Aron Hyzen, University of Antwerp
Of Lizards and Men: Infowars’ Alex Jones and the Articulation of Fandom and Anti-Fandom in the Celebrity - Populism Nexus

This contribution analyses the complex interaction between fame and infamy, fandom and anti-fandom through the nexus between (populist) politics and celebrity, taking as a case in point US radio show host and ‘most paranoid man in America’ Alex Jones and his infowars.com. It looks at the success of Jones’ multimedia business and his contested celebrity status as based in a mix of government criticism, conspiracy theories and pseudo-science-meets-popular-culture phantasy, and in his connection to Donald Trump’s campaign and populism. It analyses how Jones’ ‘message’ and success generates as much love as hate, and relates this to the specific political, cultural and social context of contemporary US society, while at the same time being part of a global populist movement. Finally, it weighs the role and impact of the celebrity and mediated populist spectacle, that is Alex Jones and Infowars, against deeper issues that make people lose faith in government, traditional institutions and mainstream media. This should help us to evaluate similarities and differences in the characteristics of fandom and anti-fandom, love and hate towards a celebrity.

Ana María Velasco Molpeceres, Universidad de Valladolid

The evolution of the celebrities in Spain: the role of the media (from Hola magazine to Cuore)

The objective of this work is to study two publications of Spain and the evolution that the concept of celebrity has had in the country. The magazine Hola (which has different international editions, such as the famous Hello) emerged in 1944 in the dictatorship of Franco and approached the private life of kings and nobles. Later it was including intimacies of famous people of the cinema and of the television but always treating them with care and respect. However, since the 21st century the celebrities transgressed their traditional roles (with phenomena such as Big Brother and other realities) and expanded the issues to which the media could approach (selling exclusives, making montages and talking openly about sex and scary issues). The paparazzi also broke the aura of the celebrities and allowed the public to approach the most secret and shameful moments. Hola magazine added to that phenomenon, although it is still the most respectful publication with celebs. To follow the tendencies of degradation and popularization of the celebrities, in Spain was born the magazine Cuore (2006-) that collects the most imperfect side of the famous people: their #fails, their ridiculous moments, their frauds and scandals. Hola and Cuore are two very different magazines that collect the two moments of fame today: from celebrification to degradation. That's the reason why we think it's interesting to study the evolution of the celebrities in Spain and the role of the media in the celebrities culture.

Toni Velikova, University of Edinburgh

Ashes to Ashes: David Bowie and the Spectacle of Celebrity Death

The death of British rock legend and cultural pantheon David Bowie on 10 January 2016 resonated with fans, journalists and scholars of popular music on a global scale. Bowie passed away two days after the release of his final record Blackstar, which (as many subsequently realised) depicted his expectation of death. In response to Bowie’s death, UK media entered a trend of commodifying and spectacularising Bowie’s image and persona – a trend that Bowie himself effectively predicted in Blackstar. Known to toy with the concept of death in his previous reincarnations, Bowie often commodified and metaphorically destroyed his stage personas (Ziggy Stardust, The Thin White Duke, etc.) in a spectacularised way. Ultimately, this postmodern existence followed him in death and his commodified image led to the creation of the posthumous, hyperreal, desecrated Bowie.
This paper explores the issues and discourses around the spectacle and the spectacular society in postmodern culture and society in the context of celebrity death. It uses Baudrillard’s concept of the hyperreality and theories of the commodification of celebrity body. It also uses Debord’s discourse of the spectacle and the spectacular society to identify the representative discourse in select media coverage on Bowie’s death. The paper aims to initiate a conversation into the more complex discourses of celebrity construction, the dissolve of celebrity identity and mortality of the celebrity persona. Its findings relate to a broader consideration of the importance of metanarratives and how these relate to the context of the celebrity death.

Lucy Watson, University of Sydney

Identifying with desecration: LGBT responses to celebrity meltdown

In 1986, Richard Dyer wrote that Judy Garland’s “special relationship to suffering” (Dyer, 2004 [1986], p. 138) through her broken relationships, and struggles with addiction and weight, resonated with gay men as “in some way representing the situation and experience of being gay in a homophobic society” (p. 149). Sean Redmond (2006), drawing on Dyer’s work, notes that the isolated or alienated celebrity exists in a realm of exclusion familiar to the marginalised audience, and this connection allows for a productive interaction between the marginalised audience and the star (p. 41). In 2018, society is far less homophobic than it was while Judy Garland was still alive, yet the relationship of LGBT people to celebrities who ‘suffer’ is arguably still manifest in the way LGBT people respond to celebrity, including the likes of Rihanna, Britney Spears, and Miley Cyrus. This paper will explore the responses from LGBT Australians to celebrity meltdowns and scandals, considering the ways in which they may identify with the desecrated celebrity, and how this might fit into a broader, historical picture of a queer cultural identity, drawing on Dyer’s earlier work. The research for this paper is based on a broader qualitative study into LGBT responses to celebrity media, via focus groups, interviews and thematic textual analysis of responses.

Ellen Watts, University of London

‘I really love to hate other celebrities!’ How Emma Watson’s legitimacy as a political representative is constructed through anti-celebrity comparisons.

To be perceived as a legitimate political actor requires making accepted claims to represent others (Saward, 2010). When are representative claims made by celebrities accepted, and what can this tell us about normative perceptions of both celebrity and of what political representatives should be like? I will address this question taking Emma Watson as a case study. Watson, best known for her role as Hermione Granger in the eight Harry Potter films, has combined multiple forms of feminist activism since becoming a UN Women goodwill ambassador in 2014. This includes founding Our Shared Shelf, a feminist book group and discussion forum. Through interviews with members, I will ask whether and why Watson is perceived to be a legitimate representative. I will argue that Watson is positively evaluated through two main forms of implicit comparison to ‘other celebrities’. Watson is perceived as a suitable representative due to her comparative ‘seriousness’, assessed through her links to formal political institutions and her ‘appropriate’ behaviour. These comparisons reveal a broad anti-celebrity sentiment; Watson is evaluated positively not because she is a celebrity, but because she is perceived to be ‘not like the others’. Her strong links to political institutions and elected representatives is valued because celebrity is viewed with suspicion. Combined with her high cultural capital, Watson’s institutional links also distance her from celebrities deemed to intervene in politics in the ‘wrong way’. She is therefore accepted as a representative even by non-
fans, as citizens negotiate discomfort around associating with ‘celebrity activism’ through comparisons which denigrate celebrity.

Brigitte Weingart, University of Cologne

“I made that bitch famous”: Auto-Gossip and Reputation Management

In Star Studies, it has often been assumed that it is the collective interest in a public persona’s private life that turns him or her into a ‘star’. This connection can certainly be considered as a main reason for the intimate relations between celebrity and gossip. As a form of collective hermeneutics directed at the discrepancies between somebody’s public appearance and private (often considered, real’) personality, gossip has a natural tendency towards desecration: Although accreditation may be its initial drive, an affinity with scandal and popular outrage forms a major part of this slippery form of communication.

In contemporary celebrity culture, not only have the sites (including websites) for gossip about famous and infamous people multiplied – the digitally enhanced access to celebrity discourse also makes its longstanding tradition as an arena for public intimacy glaringly visible. This also seems to make it harder for the objects of gossip to ignore (or not even ignore) this traditionally belittled genre of activity. The presentation therefore looks into two forms of stars and celebrities reacting to the rumours, speculations and unofficial information circulating about them: firstly, the production of what could be termed ‘auto-gossip’, namely celebrities’ presentations of their ‘private’ selves in social media; secondly, reflections on celebrity culture in general and on the impact of gossip and rumours on one’s own reputation in particular that have emerged as a trend in contemporary music-videos. The aim of this investigation is to reassess the function of gossip as a medium of negotiation of social norms under conditions of participatory culture.

Mark Wheeler, London Metropolitan University

‘Celebrity ‘Outsider’ Politicians in the Digital Realm: Donald Trump’s 2016 US Presidential campaign and first year in office

Celebrity politicians are having a profound impact upon the practice of politics in the 21st century. With the adoption of social media platforms, celebrity and image candidates have deployed new strategies for attracting constituents. Taken together, the proliferation of celebrity politics and the ubiquity of digital platforms have fostered a unique atmosphere in the contemporary political moment, wherein ‘outsider’ candidates leverage their fame online to launch themselves into the public spotlight. This presentation considers the digital presence of the reactionary populist US Republican President Donald Trump during his US Presidential General Election campaign and within office to understand how political celebrities construct their brand to negotiate their positions as political outsiders.

Trump presented an un-reconstructed form of masculinity in which he rallied against the elites and special interests, while maximising his own personal and financial attributes to build up reciprocal relations with his online audiences who ‘enjoyed’ his reactionary populism. Consequently, it was the maverick billionaire capitalist, who had never stood for any other political office, that presented himself as the ‘anti-establishment’ candidate by engaging in dubious sexual politics in denigrating the Fox Television news presenter Megyn Kelly and ultimately attacking his female Democratic Presidential nominee – ‘Crooked’ Hilary Clinton who he described as that ‘nasty woman’. Therefore, through such ‘authenticity’ he was able to ‘occupy’ a digital space in which he defined a simplistic and ultimately Manichean conception of political division that has continued to define his Presidency.
Deviant noise: Real-life delinquent celebrities and the politics of sound in Spanish film

Several popular Spanish films in the late 1970s and early 1980s explored the experience of the juvenile delinquent living on the margins of the city. Known retrospectively as *cine quinqui*, several of the genre’s protagonists—Juan José Moreno Cuenca (‘El Vaquilla’), José Luis Fernández Eguía (‘El Pirri’) and Jose Antonio Valdelomar (‘El Mini’) chief among them—were in fact delinquents in real life, whose onscreen antics often re-enacted crimes that they had committed in real life. The non-professional actors earned a huge teenage following and became celebrities in their own right, frequently appearing in Spanish media in interviews where they would stress that they had learnt from their mistakes and become reformed characters. In particular, their voices—their distinctive, ‘throaty’ grain, defiant delivery and their slang—were central to the affective charge of the genre. Through direct sound dialogue (a recent innovation in Spanish film) and voiceover, this paper explores how the voice serves to bear witness to their own marginal experience, thereby bearing out Felman’s and Laub’s assertion that the ‘testimony is a “speech act” that occasions beneficial change’ (1992: 204). At the same time, it argues how the synchronised sound design of the quinqui film literally ‘gave voice’ to a marginalised group that was hitherto voiceless, while also contributing to their status as transgressive. The paper more broadly seeks to explore how the politics of sound both enriches and complicates our understanding of celebrity in Spain, and its complex relationship to criminality and deviance during the Spanish transition to democracy.

A Venus in Marble and Bakelite: Ava Gardner and One Touch of Venus (1948)

*One Touch of Venus* (Seiter, 1948) is a musical comedy starring Ava Gardner as an ancient statue of Venus brought to life in a department store. The film’s release coincided with a late-1940s peak in usage of the terms ‘goddess’ and ‘Venus’ in the fan and trade press, and chimed with contemporary discourses of the ‘war goddess’, a figure closely aligned with the femme fatale of film noir. One newspaper described Gardner as undergoing ‘the goddess build-up’ for the role. Exploring the film’s promotion and reception, Felleman and Saltzberg’s work on Gardner, and 1940s writing on celebrity divinisation, I discuss how Universal-International’s campaign exploited the star’s rising profile, including the Bakelite figurine of the star distributed to exhibitors, and beauty contest tie-ins where fans could measure themselves up against star and sculpture alike. This Bakelite Venus mediates between the marble fantasy of Gardner’s ‘Anatolian Venus’, the authorship of the star, and the enveloping myth of screen stardom. But Hollywood pedestals are built to crumble, and the constructed ideals of classical beauty are here also exposed as a commodified travesty in marble, flesh and Bakelite. While Gardner was ‘built-up’ as a goddess, like her peers Rita Hayworth and Maureen O’Hara, this patriarchal construct of female beauty was also repressive and disempowering. Indeed, in 1945 O’Hara took to the press to challenge her objectification by Hollywood as a ‘cold piece of marble statuary’. This paper explores the ‘goddess build-up’ and its enduring divinising, and desecrating, connotations, which still resonate in celebrity culture today.

Who owns the future? The visions of Mark Zuckerberg
Who owns the data that constitutes ‘platform capitalism’ (Srnicek, 2016)? And what are these men going to do with the money? More specifically how are they using the money to forge a new future? Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk envision the colonisation of space through funding their space travel programmes; Peter Thiel and other ‘preppers’ are building underground bunkers and filling them with guns and food to plan for the apocalypse. And Mark Zuckerberg wants to ‘change the world’ through connecting people via Facebook. This forms part of a project tentatively called ‘The New Patriarchs’, which looks at the ways that CEOs of tech companies in Silicon Valley curate their public lives via social media. The focus on a new patriarchy is a means to locate the political economy of the tech industry within a critique of white supremacist patriarchy and global capital.

This paper offers a textual analysis of Mark Zuckerberg’s Facebook wall. On his wall, his life as father and husband is shared through photographs, videos and text. Simultaneously new Facebook features are showcased, as well as Zuckerberg’s philanthropic ventures and his engagement with American politics. The paper argues that this PR exercise (for both him and Facebook which are portrayed as inextricably linked – a kind of ‘Zuckerberg-Facebook assemblage’) functions to represent Facebook as enabling an empowered ‘community’, rather than being an instrument of data accumulation. In particular, Zuckerberg’s affective paternalism is also a means to recoup and obfuscate patriarchal power structures. Zuckerberg’s Facebook wall constructs an intimate paternalism in relation to his domestic sphere, but also in relation to his followers, and this works to legitimate his global neoliberal paternalism. The ways in which he is portrayed through signifiers of an emotional fatherhood work to gloss his power as the second richest man in the world – wealth and power generated by data accumulation.

Hannah Yelin, Oxford Brookes University

“Doing” Celebrity: reflexive performance, distancing and self-elevation

This paper uses the self-representation of popstar, Grace Jones to put forward the idea of ‘doing’ celebrity: those moments which cast celebrity as a deliberate constructed performance, rather than (or as well as) an ontological state. This paper reveals Jones’ embrace of performativity over authenticity as something that is situated as being part of a wider art practice: a move which makes claim to the status of creative agent and author of the star image, seeking a level of cultural value otherwise often denied to the desecrated figure of the female popstar celebrity.

In her ironically titled memoir, I’ll Never Write my Memoirs, Jones sets herself apart from the derogatory (and gendered) mass of generalised celebrity. Her memoir is thus both an intervention in the discourse about celebrity and a claim to a higher degree of integrity and purpose than her celebrity peers. Rather than seeking to rehabilitate the debased, desecrated category of female celebrity, Jones seeks to elevate herself beyond it, demanding to be taken seriously amongst a white, male creative elite including Andy Warhol, David Bowie, Bertolt Brecht and Piet Mondrian.

This exercise in pop-stardom as performance art presents Jones as having a critical stance which understands, takes into account and surpasses traditional pop-stardom through self-reflexivity. She distances herself from popular conceptions of the pop-star-as-puppet through making a critical exercise of the self-conscious performance of celebrity status. This ‘doing’ carves space for Jones as a pioneering creative icon and woman of colour, but at the same time reasserts the denigrations levelled at female celebrity.

Matt Yockey, University of Toledo

Trickstered: Bill Cosby and the Politics of Race in American Comedy

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During a stand-up routine in October 2014, comedian Hannibal Buress riffed on Bill Cosby as having “the fuckin’ smuggest, old black man fuckin’ persona that I hate.” Buress challenged Cosby’s self-appointed position as a moral compass for black America by bluntly calling him a rapist (echoing allegations made against the comedy legend for decades). The bit was posted online and in a few days went viral. The resulting flood of women who came forward to substantiate Buress’s claims brought to the surface tensions within the African American community regarding the value of Cosby as an icon of black success. On the one hand, Spelman College quietly eliminated its Cosby endowed professorship; on the other, Keshia Knight Pulliam, who played one of Cosby’s daughters on The Cosby Show, appeared at his side during his criminal trial.

This paper will consider Bill Cosby’s radically altered celebrity status in terms of the trickster figure long associated with African American culture, an ambiguous figure who can be regarded as a hero in his ability to outwit adversaries or, just as likely, an amoral agent of chaos. I will argue that Buress’s charges against Cosby gained traction in large part because he essentially identified Cosby as a trickster, a huckster who duped much of America (white and black) into accepting his claims to moral authority. Such claims, I will argue, have been implicitly predicated on his denial of blackness (in appealing to white audiences with routines about the “universal” experiences of childhood and parenthood) and a consequent assertion of his ideal blackness. Thus, I will examine how the substantial discourse on the internet and social media by African Americans regarding the veracity of the allegations is as much about what it might mean to be African American without Bill Cosby’s iconicity intact as it is about Cosby himself.

Lorraine York, McMaster University

Unseemly: Affect, Gender, New Media and the Denunciation of 21st-Century Fame Hunger

This paper addresses the conference theme “Desecrating Celebrity” by analyzing the denunciation of 21st-century celebrities who are deemed overly desirous of fame, and the connections between that denunciation and celebrities’ gender, performed public affects, and participation in new media. This project grows out of my theorizing of reluctant celebrity as a condition of sustaining simultaneously positive and negative reactions to one’s celebrity status while acting in a way that suggests apparent compliance. If reluctant celebrity is, as I argue, a public affect that socially privileged celebrity subjects such as straight, white, male, A-list celebrities are more likely to be able to perform with impunity, then the flip-side of reluctant celebrity, and the condition which inversely constructs it, is a feminized, “unseemly” eagerness for celebrity. I argue that social disapproval of the desire for fame is more likely to reach intense levels when a woman or a non-gender-conforming person embraces a new medium as a means of increasing their social visibility. Building on existing studies of female celebrity and social disapproval (Holmes and Negra; Doyle on the female celebrity “trainwreck” figure; Petersen, Tyler and Bennett on female celebrity and excess), my study adds new media as a crucial site at which gender and affect intersect and give rise to public disapprobation. I will pursue this argument with reference to a number of twenty-first-century celebrities deemed fame-hungry: Paris Hilton, Miley Cyrus, the Kardashian family, Tila Tequila and Kate Gosselin.

Anna Zsubori, University of Leicester

Authentic Disney celebrity heroines and the representation of gender and race in Disney Princesses

Approaching Disney Princesses, applying literature on the media representation of gender, race, multiculturalism (Kellner, 2011), and celebrities (Gauntlett, 2008), coupled with textual analysis of
Disney animations, it is possible to view these characters as a gendered, multicultural group of fictional celebrities.

Some scholars claim that Disney animations represent gender and race stereotypically (Goldman, 2013) and therefore impact children negatively (Giroux & Pollock, 2010). Further to this, while celebrity studies scholars account for the fact that celebrities do not have to be ‘real humans’ (Giles, 2013), they nevertheless tend to neglect to consider Disney Princesses as celebrities.

This paper goes beyond the ‘effects’ models and asserts that children are able to override stereotypical gender behavioural patterns in their interactions with media texts (Wohlwend, 2012a; 2012b). By applying multimodal textual analyses about Disney Princesses’ representations, the paper also illustrates that Disney, with multiculturalism as its ‘buzzword’ (Kiyomi, 2000), in the process of introducing to the franchise a new generation of credible, independent and racially diverse Princesses (Whelan, 2015), constructed a new class of contemporary animated celebrities.

This analysis shows that Disney Princesses can productively be viewed as celebrities that are both ‘objects of desire’ (Giles, 2013) and signifiers of their (multi)culture (Jiwani, 2004). Furthermore, by acknowledging both the ever-fading line between ‘real-life’ and ‘virtual-life’ celebrities and Princesses, for example considering Diana, Princess of Wales as a Disney Princess (Craven, 2002), and princesshood itself as a type of celebrity (Kennedy, forthcoming), this paper argues that Disney Princesses are authentic multicultural celebrities.
Panels

ABSTRACTS
(in order of the programme)
CELEBRITY AND RELIGION, CELEBRITY AS RELIGIOUS

There is no doubt that "fame" in the broad sense has always been an element of great importance within the religion, where there is a rich, complex and articulated hierarchy of representative figures, both collective and individual, which have many traits in common with the "celebrities" of the secular world. Indeed, it is often the latter who assumes and/or transposes modes of celebration and devotional rites from the religious sphere. Today, however, it is fundamental to consider the role of the media in ceremonies of consecration as well as in the parallel rituals of degradation that often invest the celebrities, whose fortunes are not predestined but carefully handled. If this "title" was in the past reserved to personalities of the world of entertainment, nowadays it can be applied to a political man or even to a Pope. So, the case of Pope Francis, the undisputed current pop icon, is paradigmatic in this sense. The panel intends to explore this delicate and interesting territory, starting from a collective research just concluded, named Il racconto di Francesco, edited by Anna Maria Lorusso and Paolo Peverini (Luiss Press 2017).

Isabella Pezzini, Bianca Terracciano, Sapienza Università di Roma

The Pope-celebrity and the role of cinema

This part of the research focuses on the analysis of some movies and/or sequences of films considered as exemplary interpretations of the process of constitution and medial recognition of certain figures of religious as "celebrities". Cinema, especially in the case of art film, takes the role of a substantial reflection, at times visionary, about the phenomena we are studying, helping us to understand its thickness also in relation to the various moments of history and development of media. Let’s think about the sequence "The Princess Domitilla" in the movie Roma (1972) by Federico Fellini, in which the connection between sacralization and desacralization is widely and provocatively explored, through the hyper-Baroque imaginary of a fashion show/identitary event of religious fashion happened in the heart of "Black nobility". The director, however, already in the Dolce Vita (1960) filmed the role of the media – especially of the tabloids, with the famous paparazzi and the first television – in the construction of massive "fanaticism", as much secular as religious. Or let’s take as an example the movie by Nanni Moretti called Habemus Papam (2011), a controversial "anticipation" of an apparently unpredictable and desacralizing event – such as the resignation of a pope, and more generally an "inner vision", however fantastic, of a world apparently impenetrable to the secular issues that vice versa characterize world-famous celebrities. In the end we have to mention the TV series by Paolo Sorrentino, The Young Pope (2016), where the Pope's issue as a celebrity is explicitly dealt with and theorized at various levels, starting with the protagonist's choice, Jude Law, who emphasizes this theme.

Simona Romani, Paolo Peverini, LUISS Guido Carli

Pope Francis: the representation of a celebrity between actions and narratives

The growing popularity of Pope Francis is attested by many indicators. Exceptional figures are the total number and growth rate of Twitter account followers (over 40 million) and Instagram (over 5 million). Polls conducted worldwide certify his popularity and positive image. All these evidences show the impact of the Pontiff on different audiences, an impact we believe can be explained by the distinctive features of this Pope's celebrity and the mode of his media representation. This presentation introduces dialogical self theory (Hermans and Gieser, 2012) to study the Pope's active positioning as part of social, cultural or societal forms of relationships and the role of the
Secretariat for Communication (SPC) - the dicastery of the Roman Curia with authority over all communications offices of the Holy See and the Vatican City State – in merging different positions to create new voices, representing relevant attractive solutions from the perspective of specific audiences.

The main positions of Pope Francis – based on his daily acts and his personal story – are introduced and discussed.

Then, the active role of SPC in the narrative reconfiguration of some of these positions for different audiences in order to witness the meaning of the pontificate and the "message" of the Holy Father is considered.

We therefore propose to investigate the singularity of Francis as a celebrity by trying to identify its distinctive features and by looking at them with two necessarily interrelated plans: the Pope's story and actions and the narrative of the pontificate.

Anna Maria Lorusso, Università di Bologna

**Popularity and populism**

Numerous political and social experiences are now crossed by the modes of populism, and there are those who have very clearly associated this sociopolitical category with Francis papacy. What we find with Pope Francis is in my opinion a special form of populism (non-destructive and non-aggressive) that I would call "rhetoric of the people". A form of popularity that does not disdain the media, which extensively personalizes the institutional role that embodies and prefers forms of constant reinvention of code and astonishment. A popularity, in short, that feeds itself on the desire to be the center of attention to establish a direct contact with the people, that see its consecration in a charismatic contact, im-mediate, with the people. Francis embodies the extraordinary and he is, at the same time, ordinary: this is the synthesis of his "pop success" – a strong manifestation of the contact between high and low, sacredness and desacralization.

I will therefore look at various examples of this way of managing his identity, from tweets to some unusual gestures with which he has radically reinterpreted his role, reflecting in particular from a semiotic perspective on the categories of charisma, immediacy, representativity.

**THE PURSUIT OF FAME AT ALL COSTS: IDENTITY WORK AMONG YOUNG CELEBRITIES AND CONSUMERS**

Celebrity presents particular pitfalls and potential degradations for young people who consume, embody, and aspire to fame. International in scope and ranging in methodology from critical analysis of star stories to ethnographic research, this panel points to new directions in scholarship on how young people negotiate cycles of fame. First, Dahlén addresses the question of when and how Magnus Carlsen was transformed into a celebrity and how his struggle, rewards, financial wealth and new status as a celebrity is depicted in the popular press. Second, Bels and Van den Bulck focus on ethnographic research that illuminates how celebrities serve as positive and negative role models in preteen identity work and how preteens see fame as a relevant and attainable aspect of their identity work. Finally, Lacasa, de la Fuente, and Cortés report findings from ethnographic research that shows how social networks and creative participation are transforming political activity among young people.

Annebeth Bels, Hilde Van den Bulck, University of Antwerp

**Social Media Celebrities as Salient Resource for Preteens’ Identity Work**
Focusing on the social interactions of preteens in Flanders (the Northern, Flemish speaking part of Belgium), this paper explores the meanings and functions of the notion of celebrity and of types of celebrities, in particular vloggers, in preteen girls’ and boys’ identity making. Theoretically, the paper combines insights from two complementary domains. From celebrity studies, it takes insights into the position of celebrities as commodities and ‘ambassadors’ of consumerism and at celebrity as it relates to notions of identity as makeable and as performance. It combines this with insights from the sociology of adolescence, focusing on children in their preteen years (9-13), the last stretch of young childhood, on the cusp of adolescence. At this age, children start striving for autonomy from their parents, which increases the importance of other sources such as classmates and friends but also celebrities for validation and as points of reference. Empirical data were collected through ethnography, combining a five-month participatory observation with in-depth interviews and videos produced by 15 preteens (7 boys, 8 girls) in after school care. Results reveal the layers of relevance of celebrity within these boys’ and girls’ processes of identity work. Observations show how celebrities serve as positive but also as negative role models, as earlier work suggest, even at this early life stage. More importantly, results show that web 2.0 and the self-made nature of popular vloggers makes preteens see ‘celebrity’ as a more attainable status, and thus a part of their identity work.

Pilar Lacasa, Julián de la Fuente-Prieto, Sara Cortés, University of Alcalá

Adolescents as cultural activists: Remixing celebrities in fandom communities

This presentation explores the practices of a group of teenage girls committed to a fan community organized around musical celebrities (Duffett, 2014; Barron, 2014; Marshall, 2014). We consider them as activists in the context of popular culture (Jenkins, 1992/2013), since they built it collectively when participating with other fans through various processes including the remix (Navas, Gallagher, & Burrough, 2015). We define ‘activism’, borrowing the words of (Robinson, Rundell, & Rundell, 1994), in relation to the culture that stands between creative and critical practices (Duvall, 2010). This is understood in relation to a social commitment, and in this sense we speak of citizenship (Hartley, 2010). Fan practices are understood as a form of political behaviour, in the sense that they are close to what (Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison, & Weigel, 2009) defined some years ago as participatory culture. This research is part of a larger project using an ethnographic methodological perspective to examine teen activities in a participatory culture framework. Participants are young people aged between eight and fourteen using mobile phones and tablets as ubiquitous mediators. In this paper, we look at five girls participating in the One Direction and Magcon fandom communities, combining the use of several social networks including Twitter, Instagram, Vine and Wattpad. We contrast our results with other studies by looking at the extent to which remixes contribute to online conversations that foster a shared interest in public affairs and at how remixes and multimodal productions without a personal author promote collective commitment.

Stephanie Patrick, University of Ottawa.

Desecrating Disney: The 2007 Celebrity Photo Hacks and Crisis in American Hegemonic Femininity

From Annette Funicello to Britney Spears to Zendaya, Disney has long fostered and profited from young female celebrity. These young women are expected to perform ‘perfection,’ serving as idols (and ideals) of American hegemonic femininity to the girls who look up to them.
What happens when Disney girls fail in this endeavor? How do they hold up to relentless scrutiny? Who profits when their perfect images are desecrated?

2007 marks a significant point in celebrity culture: one of American hegemonic femininity in crisis. It was the year that Paris Hilton went to jail while Kim Kardashian shot to fame through her own sex tape scandal and reality television dynasty. 2007 was also the year that Britney Spears was photographed shaving her signature locks as the final step in her public battle with mental illness. 2007 marks the beginning of the global economic crisis and the rise of social media. That same year, one of the first celebrity photo hacks occurred, with Disney stars Vanessa Hudgens and Lindsay Lohan as prominent victims.

This paper uses feminist materialist discourse analysis to examine the economic and social implications of the news reporting on that hacking incident. I contextualize female Disney stardom in relation to crisis, American idealism, and corporatism. I analyze the reporting in regards to if and how frames of ‘personal responsibility’ are employed in discussions of new technology at the time of its emergence, as well as if and how these young women are framed as Disney commodities rather than autonomous (sexual) subjects.

**CELEBRITIES IN BRAZILIAN FAVELAS: CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP THROUGH FAME**

Brazil is a country marked by its social inequalities. We comprehend social inequalities as assymetries created because of bad income distribution and lack of government and private investment in social programs. It was on Luís Inácio Lula da Silva's administration in 2003 with social programs such as Bolsa Família (Family Grant) that we had a reduction of 13% in social inequality; based on IPEA (Institute of Applied Economic Research) this helped 28 million brazilians to leave extreme poverty and 36 million to become middle class. The question is that a big share of this new citizenship status happened throughout consumption goods.

Thus based on this complex social reality we propose to debate processes of celebritification of poor people who live in favelas, using media, social media and apps as its channel of communication. We understand this celebritification of subaltern people as processes involving precarious citizenship, symbolic disputes and ostentation of goods in media environments.

*Thiago Soares, UFPE*

**Performance and cultural citizenship: Methodological scripts for favela celebrities in Brazil**

Faced with the lack of citizenship comprehension in our brazilian society (Where we belong? What kind of rights do we have? Where can we get information about it? and Who represents my interests?), subaltern subjects in Brazil have more feedback for all these questions throughout private consumption of goods and media than by abstract rules of democracy or collective participation in public spaces. Thus we see the growth of the celebritification processes inside the favelas as a new form of agency of "cultural citizenship" (Canclini, 2009). To be a citizen is not only about recognized rights by the state for people born in a specific territory but social and cultural practices giving meaning to the sense of belonging as well (Canclini, 2005, p. 35).

To establish a connection between celebritification and cultural citizenship we see consumption practices of capitalist societies as strong places of configuration of parcial citizenship, performative and craving corporealities., thus putting in the centre of the debate class, gender and race aspects. The premise is to think the methodology of performative scripts (Taylor, 2013), theoretical and analytical possibilites to debate favelas celebrities emerging in Brazil. The performance creates the methodological lenses in which allows us researchers to reflect bodies and actions as metaphors. "Civic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnicity and sexual identity for example, are
performatized on a daily basis in public spheres. To understand these items as performance suggests that performance can work as an epistemology" (Taylor, 2013, p. 27).

_Fabiana Moraes, UFPE_

**Poverty and celebrification in everyday life: negotiation and confrontation of the new deprived and famous on Instagram**

In a nation of unstable and historically hurt citizenship to be someone is directly connected to the concept of being seen. As DaMatta (1979) observes, celebrities in Brazil are treated as an out-of-this-world person; in this case, this "magical quality" in Weber terms, give visibility access and the idea of social growth, a phenomena considered limited in the context of countries that deal with big inequality issues. Thus, as Herschmann and Pereira (2003) explain, "the anonymity is interpreted by less privileged population groups as an act of violence, another way to highlight its lack of citizenship". Based on this we bring an analysis about users of social media Instagram (800 million active users monthly). We are talking about people who achieved visibility amongst "normal people"; they have thousands of followers to whom they perform their everyday lives. The question is, by serving as lifestyle role models - like canon famous people - some of them start an erasure of its own deprived reality (combined with oppression) showing happiness without retouches with trips, parties, gifts, pool etc). Meanwhile there's people who highlight its own poverty just to be seen, like Cauã Pablo (@cauakardashian), with almost 300 thousand followers on Instagram. We can say the appearance of people with a deprived background, different lifestyle, bodies and discourses until now not absorbed within legitimized spaces into celebrities economy is one of the strongest ways of desmistification and reorganization of this environment. Poverty is a way to hurt the pattern, the framework, the perfect images: with it, the controlled and fetished world of fame finds its limit and new ways to feed itself. Thus, to analyze its forms of media erasure or, in the opposite, its emphasis, help us to think how social inequalities and its complexities are reproduced in these self representation platforms.

_Camila Monteiro, University of Huddersfield_

**The whitening process to mainstream: Funk celebrities and the white approach to reach larger audiences**

Anitta and Ludmilla have something in common other than being household names in the pop music scene in Brazil: they got rid of the MC (masters of ceremonies) in front of their names which is a tradition within funk singers. If you open Brazil's top 50 on Spotify, more than 10 songs will be from MCs and the majority of them are white, a notable contrast considering the favelas are heavily a black community; 72% of people who live there are black (Meirelles and Athayde, 2014). Plastic surgeries, new hair (usually blonde), different clothes (now they have brands and are usually publicity for some major labels), less explicit lyrics, collaboration with famous artists are the main characteristics of this rite of passage. This is the constant discourse of all funk acts that make the mainstream transition successfully: they need this legitimization and confirmation that they belong to a place that constantly erase their existence because they are poor and black. The whitening process happens even if they don't want to because when we live in a racist and classicist society, the power of the sense of belonging, the constant try to fit in and finally achieving that is stronger than their roots. In a country like Brazil with different cultures, colours and accents, it's difficult to talk about interracial coexistence and its problems. Sovik, in her book "Here no one is white" (2009) reflects that in Brazil based on the concept of affection, which is thoroughly connected to our identity. She discusses the constant silence and invisibility of brazilian whiteness problem. The
importance to discuss the whiteness issue in Brazil is historically complicated, once again remembering the lack of knowledge of heritage and the amount of different colonization we had. The constant marginalization and demonization of poorness and blackness comes before the taste and sound issue with funk music. To understand these problems better we divided them into four categories: The origin (black and marginalized), The image (sexualized and popular), The content (explicit and sexist) and The music (mix of characteristic sounds heavily influenced by American black culture).

CHALLENGING AUTHENTICITY IN CELEBRITY ACTIVISM: STRATEGIES OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL AUTHORITY

The aim of this panel is to analyse the workings and strategies of different kinds of celebrity activism and advocacy in national as well as international contexts. Central to an understanding of celebrity activism as well as advocacy is the notion of authenticity (Dyer) and authority. These three case studies Medina, Jenny McCarthy/Mauritson and Emma Watson thus analyse the different strategies necessary to uphold this authenticity and how the activism and advocacy can either enforce or challenge it. The authority of the celebrity is constantly negotiated either as a moral authority (Cashmore) through celebritization (Driessens) or as an obligation (Chouliaraki) when issues of health, equality and refugees are addressed in a public debate. This panel contributes to the understanding of how celebrities can address and negotiate cultural and political issues using different kinds of strategies to maintain their cultural and political authority.

Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University, Denmark.

The celebrity branded activist campaign: a case study of the Danish pop-singer Medina’s Mevation* project

One of the cornerstones of the industry around celebrity activism is the paring of the celebrity with a cause that fits the celebrity’s personal brand and history so as to create an authentic narrative of personal involvement in the cause (Chouliaraki 2012a, Brockington 2014, pp. 97–100). This paper analyses the case of the Danish pop-singer Medina’s Mevation project, which draws the on the singer’s personal brand in a collaboration with one of Denmark’s largest humanitarian organisations DanChurchAid. This case can be viewed as a nexus of a number of the trends within humanitarian communication and activism: Celebrity branding (Richey and Ponte 2011), everyday humanitarianism (Chouliaraki 2012b) and the interconnection of advocacy, humanitarianism and voluntourism (Mostafanezhad and Hannam 2014, Christiansen 2017). In 2016 Medina launched the Mevation project, which aims to engage a younger constituency of potential humanitarian activists in debate and reflection about the plight of refugees (Medina in: Medina i Kakuma lejren 2017). The project is anchored in the activism of Medina herself as a refugee activist, in her social media profile (as well as a particular Mevation Instagram profile), a Mevation branded fashion line – co-created and modelled by Medina herself, and voluntourist trips for young people to refugee-camps (Folkekirkens Nødhjælp 2017a, 2017b, Mevation 2017, Medina in: Mevation - tøjkollektion 2017). As such, this constitutes an interesting case of activism, which on the one hand challenges the political status quo and Danish refugee policy, while at the same time embracing consumerism and hyper femininity as an integral part of the Medina pop-star brand.

Katrine Meldgaard, University of Southern Denmark

“Bombing the idea of the state as a health authority to pieces”: celebrity and antivaccination advocacy
In this presentation, I will examine celebrity anti-vaccination advocacy and its relationships to renegotiations of health-related knowledge hierarchies in Denmark and the US. In recent years, US-based actress and model Jenny McCarthy and Danish blogger and author of the popular book Kernesund Familie – sådan! Ninka-Bernadette Mauritson have each received much media attention in their respective countries for their advocacy against the recommended MMR vaccine, which they believe has caused their sons to develop autism. While McCarthy and Mauritson have been both criticized and ridiculed by journalistic and medical establishments for their anti-vaccination advocacy, there is in this criticism also often a recognition (fear?) of their power: Mauritson and McCarthy are regularly cited as playing a key role in the decline in vaccination frequencies over the last decade, and in 2014, a column in the national newspaper Information accused Mauritson of “bombing the idea of the [Danish] state as a health authority to pieces”. In these cases, celebrity advocacy of alternative health practices is thus not imagined to exist in a pop-culture vacuum, but rather to directly impact the authority of institutionalized health guidelines, and, by extension, public health. Via a close reading of Jenny McCarthy and Ninka- Bernadette Mauritson’s advocacy and its reception in two very different national contexts, this presentation will explore the questions they each raise about the complicated relationship between celebrity bodies and ordinary bodies, as well as about celebrity advocacy and its relationship to institutionalized governmental authority.

Helle Kannik Haastrup, University of Copenhagen

The Celebrity as Activist and Cultural Critic: Emma Watson’s Feminist Book Club & The Handmaids Tale

This paper presents a case study analysing the Emma Watson’s feminist book club ‘Our Shared Shelf’ and the presentation of the book of the month – The Handmaids Tale - on her social media profiles Instagram and Facebook. The focus is on Watson’s representation of the novel on her social media profiles, her interview with Atwood and the ‘Our Shared Shelf’ platform. The ‘Our Shared Shelf’ book club was founded following to the launch of the UNWomen campaign HeForShe with Emma Watson as ambassador. The theoretical perspectives informing this analysis include: the concept of celebrity activism (Chouiliraki 2012, Brockington + Henson 2015, Tsaliki et al 2014, Wheeler 2013, Corner and Pels 2003), analysis of the workings of celebrity book clubs in digital media culture (Collins 2010) and theories of post-feminist media representations (Gill 2007, Rowe 1995). Additionally I propose a distinction between two different kinds of cultural (and political) authority exerted by Watson’s star brand: 1) Authority through star image: The star image as celebrity capital and the usage of the attention economy (Dyer 1979, Driessens 2015, Marwick 2015) in which the star excerts a kind of moral authority (Casmore 2006, Wheeler 2012). 2) Authority by proxy: the re-interpretation of Bourdieu’s concept of the cultural intermediary as a function (Bourdieu 1984, Maguire and Matthews 2014) that is what I propose to call’expertise by proxy’ gaining authority through consulting authors and experts. This distinction makes it possible to discuss the implications when a celebrity takes on the role of a cultural critic.

DAVID BOWIE: CELEBRITY DESECRATION, FLUIDITY AND CRITIQUE

This panel contrasts David Bowie’s oeuvre from Diamond Dogs (1974) to Blackstar (2016) to critique celebrity culture: its assumptions, embodiments, hauntological implications, vacillations and putrefactions. The panel explicates Bowie’s career analysing its meanings and the social mediatisation of his fan culture in three parts: decay, hauntology and critique.

Ian Dixon investigates the gap between ‘celebritization’ and ‘celebrification’ by exemplifying Bowie’s deliberate destruction of Ziggy Stardust for Halloween Jack. Dixon parallels the thematic
concerns of desecration, degradation and putrefying sexualities in *Diamond Dogs* (1974) to contest Garfinkel’s (1957) polemic between degradation and accreditation. The paper asks how Bowie’s pluralistic destruction of celebrity actually cemented his fame.

At the other extreme of Bowie’s career, Lisa Perrott considers the hauntological and transformational fervour in Bowie’s destruction of fame during his final years. By 2013 Bowie’s ‘repository of ghosts’ had amassed notoriety through music and transmedia and desecrating Bowie’s celebrity to uncanny effect as Derrida illustrates. For Perrot, the mega-star’s final two albums, *Blackstar* and *The Next Day*, exploit an ‘apparitional absent-presence’ with the capacity to haunt beyond the grave.

Toija Cinque examines Schickel’s (2000) notion of interlocking celebrity fantasies: the ‘dream of autonomy’ and the ‘dream of intimate… connection’ which conjoins texts and bodies as components in codified and non-unified fashion. There is, Cinque suggests, a fluidity in celebrity desecration moving ‘back and forth’ on the altar of public culture where ‘streams of entertainment capital’ provide a new melodramatic imagination (Beer and Penfold-Mounce, 2009). Moving beyond deviance to sophisticated embodiments, Bowie’s celebrity desecration questions and critiques the evolving social mediatisation in fan imagination.

The panel forms an evolving network of Bowie at the interface of fandom and desecration.

*Toija Cinque, Deakin University/SAE Institute*

**David Bowie: Desecration and Desire in the Social Mediasphere**

Richard Schickel gestures that there are two interlocking fantasies embedded in the life of a celebrity. On the one hand is the ‘dream of autonomy’ whereby the celebrity lives a life uncompromised by obligation. On the other, however, is the familiar ‘dream of intimate, almost familiar connection’ (Schickel, 2000: 255). An important narrative here is around the affective role that celebrities play in the public sphere; the argument being that there is a mutual relationship between the capacious-term celebrity, together with their associated textual objects including ‘gossip’, and the receptive individual. Indeed, the intricate dialectic of culture conjoins and remerges texts and bodies as components in a code that suggests a wide range of messages. In a highly focused cultural analysis of celebrity desecration that brings to the surface the wider social struggles in which a number might feel themselves to have a stake, the contested meanings of the ‘roles’ for celebrities are made salient in ritualised forms of public debate, and frequently characterised in recurring rhetorical devices, figures of speech or emotive words about a star (love, real love, hate), that move back and forth on the stage of public culture. Commentary via social media offers up representations of emulation and derision, connects people to each other, and operates within and across the streams of entertainment capital wherein the circulation of public commentary produces a new melodramatic imagination (Beer and Penfold-Mounce, 2009). This presentation traces out instances of straying from conventional forms of embodiment often coded as deviant and pathologised to look at music’s star performer, David Bowie, who has purposefully embodied forms of desecration to then question the nature of public commentary/reaction within the digital social spaces of Bowie fandom.

*Ian Dixon, Deakin University*

**Fame, Rotting on the Slimy Thoroughfare: David Bowie’s Desecrating Celebritization between ‘Diamond Dogs’ and ‘Blackstar’**.

Between ‘celebritization’ and ‘celebrification’ lies a gap where fame ‘plays’ with its own precarious status. David Bowie took risked just such a gap by destroying *Ziggy Stardust* (1973) in favour of his
Amero-centric Aladinsane and nihilistic Halloween Jack (1974). In parallel, Bowie’s fascination with desecration, degradation and putrefaction in Diamond Dogs risked his burgeoning celebrity status. Overt and covert celebrations of such non-mainstream subject matter – including his flirtation with marginalised sexualities – destabilised his incremental rise to mega-stardom but (after the desecration of the 1980s) also marked his re-‘celebritization’ forty years later with Blackstar. Thus initiating his ‘celebrification’ beyond the grave, Bowie sealed his legacy with the words: ‘Everybody knows me now’ (Bowie, 2016).

This paper problematises Garfinkel’s (1957) notion that: ‘degradation is the opposite to accreditation ceremonies’ by suggesting a hybridisation of binary extremes. In Diamond Dogs and Blackstar, such accreditation was achieved by reference to public degradation celebrated in the ‘rotting’ sexualities inherited from William Burroughs along with ‘cut ups’. The paper considers Shelton Waldrep’s perceptions of Bowie’s homosexual referencing, which threatens, but does not destroy the seat of his fame. The paper combines theory from gender politics, history and literary studies detailing celebrity self-assassination and audience tolerance to ‘abject’ material. It examines sex as degradation, fall and rebirth in the mediascape and Bowie’s concentration on such imagery as sacrifice, crucifixion and pestilence. Indeed, the creation of ‘Hunger City’ and his character Halloween Jack reinvented his public persona and performative self for fluid re-‘celebritization’. This self-initiated deconstruction process reveals the exigencies of fame by skating close to the edge of desecration. The paper asks how celebrity status risks annihilation when reinventing itself. Thus, the ‘slimy thoroughfare’ of fame is analysed at its most precarious: potentially backsliding into oblivion.

Lisa Perrott, University of Waikato

David Bowie, Hauntology and Uncanny Celebrity.

David Bowie’s transformational engagement with celebrity was complexly entwined with his long and creative affair with hauntology. During the five decades he spent stretching the possibilities of hauntology as an artform, he prepared the cultural bed for audience members to engage with hauntological media. By 2013 he had done the necessary spadework and had collected a repository of ghosts with which to unleash a sophisticated desecration of celebrity. The transmedial artworks produced in conjunction with his albums The Next Day and Blackstar forced audience members to experience an uncanny engagement with celebrity, and with death as performance art. This uncanny audience engagement is promoted by the apparitional absent-presence of spectres from the past, as well as by a prescient sense of being haunted by a lost future.

Drawing on theories of hauntology developed by Jacques Derrida (1994) and Mark Fisher (2014), this paper examines the transmedial work produced during (and after) Bowie’s last four years of life, demonstrating how he activated and extended the theory of hauntology, thus opening the way for a critical and estranged engagement with celebrity. I will also examine the way in which Bowie’s celebrity ghosts continued to haunt beyond his death, with the posthumous release of the music video for No Plan (Tom Hingston, 2017) and with Bowie’s (Phillip Jeffries’) apparitional absent-presence as a ‘Tin Machine’ in Twin Peaks: The Return (David Lynch, 2017).

DESECRATING ITALIAN CELEBRITIES. SCANDALS, FAME MIGRATIONS AND MEDIA EFFECTS

The panel theme focuses on the processes of celebrity desecration at work in popular Italian culture with the help of three prime examples: reality tv and the circulation of celebrities in this genre, starting from the return of old TV characters up to the presence of celebrities coming from the web, the tv series 1992, that tells the story of Tangentopoli and the end of the so-called ‘Prima
Repubblica', in which it is a whole class to undergo a process of 'removal from a place of value', and 'Il caso Tortora', a media trial that shocked Italy's public opinion. Two proposals directly deal with episodes of degradation, involving both TV series and chronicle and showing how the fall of political and TV celebrities has been managed by Italian media. The third proposal focuses on reality TV, offering an overview about the transmedia process of rising and falling of celebrities. The panel thus permits, through specific case studies, an overall consideration of the role of media in the process of value attribution and removal.

Silvia Vacirca, Sapienza Università di Roma

"Il caso Tortora": assuming the celebrity's guilt

On Friday, June 17th 1983, the face of Portobello, Enzo Tortora, is put under arrest for drug trafficking and mafia crimes. With these words, on Tg2, that day, Italy followed the tv images displaying the famous anchorman being arrested. The role played by media, which circulated not verified news and espoused almost unanimously the 'guilt hypothesis', in the shaping of court cases and public perception of the facts was relevant. 'Il Caso Tortora' was an impressive example of spectacular justice. In the light of the scholar Steven Connor's words, that "It is the destiny and function of the celebrity to be exposed to scandal and absurdity and to bear its mark forever" (Connor 2005: 4), this paper intends to focus on the media construction of the 'guilty narrative', in order to underline the possible presence of pre-conditions that could have favoured the destruction of his public persona and the ways through which his 'presumption of guilt' could be linked to his status as TV celebrity.

Antonella Mascio, Università di Bologna


Milan early Nineties. The city became famous in media news thanks to the "Mani Pulite" investigation, led by a pool of magistrates and attorneys who became quite well known at the time; this will mark in Italy the passage from the first to the second Republic. Alongside the legal issues that shook public opinion, the media land social practices of the degradation of a political body emerged with force: the public questioning of an entire system mostly focusing on some well knowns names, tied to the major political parties of that historic period. The 1992 and 1993 TV series (Italy, 2015 - 2017, Wildside, in collaboration with Sky and LA7) are dedicated to the events that emerged from those investigations and which led to the scandal called Tangentopoli. 1992 and 1993 reveal the story of the degradation of political celebrities, against background of the degradation of the city of Milan, a symbol of the Made in Italy success in of the 1980s. Our analysis explores the way in which degradation and delegitimization processes are told in the series. Our lines of analysis concern the following questions: what are the narrative strategies that underline the shift from positive to negative celebrity, not only for individuals, but for an entire political and economic system? How was the social value of political celebrity transformed during Tangentopoli? How much did the media system participate in this narration? Is it possible to find a sense of nostalgia during the degradation process? Is it possible to speak of real "ceremonies of degradation"?

Rachel Haworth, University of Hull

Legacies of Scandal in the Celebritization Process: The Case of Mina, Italian Popular Music Diva
Mina is a prolific Italian pop singer who rose to fame in the late 1950s. She was particularly dominant from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s but remains popular even today, despite retiring from television appearances and live performances in 1974 and 1978 respectively. Whilst Mina’s celebrity status in Italy is predicated first and foremost on her status as a popular music star, her celebritization has involved different mediums, including live and recorded music, television (as performer and programme host), and films. In 1963, one specific medium was to irrevocably shape Mina’s celebrity status for the rest of her career: that of personal scandal. This was the year in which Mina announced her relationship with married actor Corrado Pani and gave birth to a son outside of wedlock (shocking behaviour in the context of 1960s’ Italy where divorce and abortion were illegal). This paper takes Mina’s celebrity as a case study to examine the legacies of scandal within the celebritization process. After presenting an overview of Mina’s celebrity scandal, the paper traces the ways in which this medium shaped and continues to inform the meanings of Mina as star in post-war Italy. It focuses specifically on the ways in which the idea of ‘Mina as mother’, scandalous and otherwise, circulates as one of the features of Mina’s contemporary star image. The paper thus tracks the impact of scandal on the creation, circulation, and significance of celebrity in contemporary society.

CELEBRITIES IN THE HIGHEST SPHERES: DEGRADATION, CELEBRIFICATION, AND DESACRALIZATION OF SAINTS, POPES, AND ANGELS.

This panel explores the relation of celebrity and/to religion in popular media narratives, including television series, comics, and animated cartoons. We will examine celebrity as a process constructed by media rituals and production contexts, tracing the intersections between local and global figurations. We will discuss how media rituals may degrade and/or make celebrities out of sacred figures, such as saints and Popes, by building representations that popularize such figures, transform their social identities, and turn them into media cult objects. The panel will also explore the inverse, that is how media production and distribution contexts use religious references to elevate and concurrently trivialize celebrity status by endowing pop culture celebrity incarnations with sacralizing attributes and commercial potential.

Paola Bonifazio, University of Texas

‘Maria Goretti Superstar: Female Sainthood, Celebrity, and Fandom’

The story of Saint Maria Goretti was published in Famiglia Cristiana in the form of a fotoromanzo in 1960. The first episode appeared in the same issue as did an interview with Sandro Serenelli, the girl’s murderer, who was then 76 and living in a convent. Serenelli was Maria’s greatest fan, and his change of faith was one of the proofs necessary for her canonization, which occurred in 1950, with her mother, brothers, and sisters present, for the first time in the history of the Church. The latter had much interest in raising people’s awe towards the young girl brutally murdered for resisting attempted rape to preserve her virginity at a time when changing social mores and economic structures helped modernize gender roles and sexual conduct. As written ironically in the feminist magazine Heresies (1985), the story of Goretti’s life sent ‘messages to young girls and their mothers regarding sex, child molestation, rape, incest and the defense of virginity and the Faith’. Her fame persists today to the point that, in Italy, being like Maria Goretti means to endure chastity to one death (figuratively speaking and ironically too).

In this paper, I will explore the media rituals that have transformed, from the 1950s to the present, the young saint into a transnational ‘cult’ figure (in both religious and media terms) but also into an object of ridicule. I argue that audiences have played a major role in Maria Goretti’s raise to
sainthood as well as in her desecration in popular culture, to the pleasure and dismay of ‘The Power That Be’.

**Giancarlo Lombardi, College of Staten Island, CUNY Graduate Center**

**‘Holy Celebrity: The Young Pope’**

This paper seeks to discuss the intersection between the sacred and celebrity culture through an analysis of the roles played by corporeality and belief in The Young Pope. Paolo Sorrentino’s series grounds its narrative on a pontiff who stages his own rebellion against a system he now dominates by calling for renewed ascetic reflection. Here, a crisis of belief is tied to a body whose excessive visibility bespeaks its essential vulnerability. Thus, Pope Pius XIII surprises his followers by refusing to show them his face and body, which will only be revealed through their internal renewal of faith. In essence, though, an intradiegetic withdrawal of the body is countered by a televisual narrative that pivots on the actual fetishization of that very body which is constantly on display for the viewer, that of a very recognizable Jude Law, whose appearance is charged with the same narcissistic overtones that connote the personality of a Pope who wishes to ground his celebrity status on his absence. Absence is presence in a world where sacred and profane collide, diegetically inscribing that very collision on a body alternately clothed in Renaissance garb or laid bare before a camera that bespeaks its (super)human status, that which perfectly captures the corporeal yet evanescent essence of celebrity.

**Nicoletta Marini-Maio, Dickinson College, Ellen Nerenberg, Wesleyan Universit**

**‘The Winx Club: Angelic Celebrities, Pastoral Edutainment.’**

The animated series *Winx Club* (Rai, 2004—), produced in Italy, distributed in more than 150 countries, and the first European series to be commissioned by Netflix US (*WOW - World of Winx*, 2016—), depends upon a number of factors for success, chief among which is the series’ ability to reconcile popular celebrity with social Catholicism. The young protagonists of the *Winx Club*, five teen fairies, incarnate specific pop music celebrities (viz., Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez, Beyoncé Knowles, Pink, Lucy Liu and Cameron Diaz), but the transformation that takes them from a terrestrial to an ethereal, or “angelified” magical state, trivializes the celebrity models, imbuing them with social, moral, and ethical aspirations. The fairies’ sparkling features evoke religious iconography of ecstatic female virgins as well as the “luminosity” of the postfeminist girl (Angela McRobbie 2008), revealing her as salvific agent. The Winx’ narrative program and the economic and local values to which it refers (i.e., social Catholicism applied to the region where the production company is located), actualize a project of “pastoral edutainment,” achieving a complex reconciliation of cultural, ethical, ideological, commercial, stylistic, and pedagogical aspects, and showing close ties to Italian and regional emplacements. This “pastoral edutainment” finds correspondence to another figure, an actual priest, Don Lamberto Pigini, who financed and helped found Rainbow, Srl, the creative agency that produces the TV series and titanic merchandising empire. This presentation traces the sacralization of celebrity of religious authority and the desacralization of pop celebrity.

**HISTORICAL FIGURES BETWEEN ACCREDITATION AND DEGRADATION**

This panel proposal is submitted by three members of the recently born scholarly network, *Italian Research Network in Celebrity Culture*. 
The suggested panel deals with historical figures whose celebrity was marked in the past by their contentious reputation and refusal to "normalize" their identities: Marie Antoinette, Oscar Wilde, and Bob Dylan. It is precisely the persistence of their controversial status that renders them still palatable today, due to body politics (Marie Antoinette's fashion statements), costume and behavior (Oscar Wilde's), and use of public discourse (Bob Dylan's questioning of the Nobel's authority as a social accreditation ceremony). The panel encompasses three historical periods: the Ancien Régime, Modernity, and post modernity. It aims at uncovering old trends and ancient roots underneath the new cultural engines gearing the contemporary cult of celebrity.

Sara Pesce, Università di Bologna

Luxury Pays. Marie Antoinette Queen of Fashion

In the “celebrified” society of the new millennium, marked by the dissemination of the means of public acclaim (Cashmore 2006, van Kreiken 2012), the feminine, when associated to widespread recognition, is often made the target of a collective criticism that depreciatively calls attention to leisure and its commodification. This is particularly evident in the Hollywood milieu, marked by a preoccupation with "distinction", as Sofia Coppola's Marie Antoinette (2006) reveals. We may consider the last queen of France as a metaphor of the Hollywood Star, and its degenerative development, based on two main qualities of her characterization: her disputable cult of luxury and her astonishing fashion statements. Take, for example, MA's radical use of clothes and hairdos, capable of removing the public's attention from the King (Weber 2006). Reverberating negative perceptions of celebrity, these qualities construct a subversive text inside a film whose overall design is normative and celebrative. Hollywood's representations of MA uncover a set of “degenerate pleasures” associated to fame – obsessive preoccupation with clothing, cosmetics, luxury items, aesthetic surgery – enticing and disputable at the same time. A queen vilified as the personification of the evils of monarchy and exalted as a pinnacle of fashion and beauty, MA reveals how this kind of criticism has historical roots dating back to critical pamphlets and deprecating imaginary addressed to the Ancien Régime. At the same time, it exposes our contemporary cult of celebrity as a mode of consumption in which the popularization of high fashion brands (i.e Vogue magazine) plays a pivotal role (Thomas 2015).

Fabio Cleto, Università di Bergamo

Notorious: Oscar Wilde, the queer “it” and the grammar of celebrity

This paper addresses Oscar Wilde’s self-crafted image as a prototype of twentieth-century controversial celebrity. His 1887 short story, The Sphinx Without a Secret, provides a desecrating metanarrative, staging the dialectics of revelation and denial which structures the grammar of celebrity, and defining the very aesthetics of Wilde’s much debated fame. As he dandified his persona in his revival of the Lord Brummell tradition, embracing its subversive fashion statement and effeminacy, Wilde placed the cornerstone for his rise to celebrity status. A few years later, in 1895, the Wilde trials both crushed him as a human being and shaped his life into the rise-and-fall pattern that would later become a typical narrative structure of star biography, thus fulfilling his wildest ambitions to notoriety. Just like the charm of his 1887 Sphinx, Wilde’s “it” was grounded on the semiotic excess of the queer enigma: The trials metamorphosed the elusive lure of the queer unstable sign into a cognitive device that helped policing identity borders. In telling the story of queer identification, in providing visual recognisability to the modern homosexual, Wilde’s parable of disgrace enacts the morphological and syntactic rules that shape cultural iconicity, and
exemplifies the extent to which desecration may be regarded as one of the very conditions – rather than just a contradiction or loss of – celebrity.

Lucio Spaziante, Università di Bologna

Bob Dylan as an anti-celebrity Nobel Prize laureate

In a world dominated by “social media celebrities”, Bob Dylan, voice of American music tradition, was an archaeological and resisting object. Thanks to the controversial Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016 he is now credited with the role of celebrity. If by the "Sixties generation" Dylan was seen as a spokesman, at the same time he refused and denied this same political role, retreating and exposing himself only through the artistic expression. He accepted media rituals (concerts, movies, music videos, even commercials), but interpreting them through a repeat attitude of denigration (think of his terrible interviews). The Nobel Prize for Literature, received for a popular music career, becomes the ultimate stage of an identitarian scene. Instead of "celebrating" this success, he remained inexplicably silent, denying himself to the Academy and sending Patti Smith to withdraw the prize in his favour, sending only an audio acceptance speech. Bob Dylan's refusal to "normalize" his identity - judged by many to be arrogant and assuming - virtually questioned the same Nobel authority as a social accreditation ceremony. The Dylan icon has enough discursive force to reverse the usual poles of this strategic relationship. His contradictory and nonconformist attitudes tend to delegitimize those who represent themselves as instances of appreciation and celebration. His denial and refusal attitudes put in crisis, not only from today, institutions with which he enters into relationships, or the rituals he is participating in. It’s an interesting case in which some of the general mechanisms governing the forms of celebrity emerge.

FAME AND CELEBRITY STUDIES’ HISTORICAL TURN - 1: THE INVESTIGATION OF REPUTATION, RENOWN, RUMOUR AND SCANDAL (ANTIQUITY, MEDIEVAL, AND RENAISSANCE PERIODS)

P David Marshall, Deakin University

Panel Introduction

In his 2012 book, Celebrity and Society, Robert Van Krieken lamented the lack of historical dimensions in celebrity-related research. Others have critiqued the limitations of Fred Inglis’ A short history of Celebrity which in its title acknowledges its constrictions in terms of analysis. This critique has some validity; but it overlooks patterns of historical research that have been emerging in related disciplines over the last 15 years. Of greatest prominence is the historical work that has emerged in literary studies (for example, Hardie 2012), 19th century studies and celebrity formation (in particular, Berenson and Giloi, 2010 and Mole 2007, 2012 among many others who have looked at Byron and others in particular in the early to late 19th century). Perhaps part of the reason for this limitation is how celebrity is conceptualized: is it as Antoine Lilti so cleverly argues in The Invention of Celebrity (2017) a feature of modernity and dependent on a certain constitution of individuality and subjectivity as well as media? This panel is devoted to working through the historical turn towards the study of fame and celebrity in recent scholarship and provides a gateway to other researchers into this research. It builds from a new project and a new series that the panellists are collectively and collaboratively advancing called The Cultural History of Fame, a project that investigates through 6 edited volumes, 6 periods of
time from Antiquity to the Contemporary in 8 parallel-themed chapters in each volumes. Our panel is composed of the General Editor of the Series, the Volume Editors and a respondent. Thematically, the panellists will present on the direction of their volumes. Given the theme of this year’s Celebrity Studies’ conference, some of that discussion will be devoted to scandal and certainly the historically/religiously derived term of desecration. As fame definitionally has organised Western culture’s notion of notoriety for millennia, the panellists will deal with the themes within each era. In Panel 1 of Fame and Celebrity Studies’ Historical Turn, we will focus on the Antiquity, Medieval, and Renaissance eras through three presentations Enlightenment, Revolution and Contemporary) that are at the core of the concept of fame: reputation, renown and its related and historically twinned more negative sides – rumour and scandal. It is hoped that the panel and the Cultural History of Fame project will assist Celebrity Studies in its further future integration of the historical dimensions of fame and celebrity.

Charles Hedrick, UC Santa Cruz

Antiquity and its organization of fame/celebrity: the tension of reputation and scandal

How Western culture conceptualizes both fame and infamy emerge from Greek and Roman cultural histories and the way in which they situated forms of cultural value in people, objects/monuments and events. This presentation maps this formation of value and the way that boundaries were articulated through different examples that were somehow passed on through records/writings, but some form of unstable word-of-mouth communication originally to generate both the way that both reputation and scandal were memorialized in these ancient and seen-to-be foundational cultures for our understanding of fame/celebrity and renown and infamy. Examples drawn from specific Roman periods including those of Nero and Caligula will serve as some of the ways that metaphors of desecration have emerged in Western culture.

Gianni Guastella, Università di Siena

From Rumour to Glory: the Personification of Fame in the Middle Ages.

Ancient literary personifications of Fama seem to be primarily aimed at giving shape to the idea of a ‘word of mouth’ that is diffused along a chain, putting rapid and unreliable information into circulation. Suffice it to recall Virgil’s monstrous figure of Fama in Book 4 of the Aeneis, a paradoxical messenger who also represents the mechanism by which information is collected and spread. The most important symbolic representation of the Fama personage seems to have originated in the Middle Ages, when a figurative model was invented, aimed at representing the source of the renown and reputation that famous men enjoy after death. The invention of such a personification is closely linked to the ‘worldly’ conception of Glory that seems to have been at its origin. Fama-Glory generally appears in triumphal settings, in strict relation to reflections on the value of memory among posterity.

Arnoud Visser, Utrecht University

The Renaissance of Fame

To illustrate the rich potential of a more sustained historical turn in celebrity studies this paper will explore a transitional moment in the history of fame. It focuses on the Renaissance (c.1350-1650), when Europe saw a crucial shift in the production, spread and appreciation of fame and its counterpart infamy. After reviewing key cultural historical trends in this scholarly field, this paper
will offer a case study devoted to Renaissance conceptualizations of fame. Medieval theologians had long considered the pursuit of fame dangerously unchristian. In the context of the humanist Republic of Letters several generations of intellectuals developed a new appreciation of fame. Proceeding from classical views of glory, they promoted the quest for fame as a positive drive, as a spur to excellence and a reward for true virtue. Yet this positive perspective also met with strong moral objections from within the Republic of Letters, revealing a deep ambivalence about the ethical repercussions of the phenomenon. By tracing how humanist authors such as Petrarch, Alberti and Erasmus reconceptualized fame, both in positive and negative ways, this paper will illuminate the dynamics of these debates.

**FAME AND CELEBRITY STUDIES’ HISTORICAL TURN - 2: THE FORMATIONS OF CELEBRITIZATION AND CELEBRIFICATION? INVESTIGATION OF PUBLIC INDIVIDUALITY AND SCANDAL IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT, REVOLUTION AND CONTEMPORARY ERAS.**

This represents the second panel in the exploration of the cultural historical turn in fame and celebrity studies. Many researchers have identified the foundation of celebrity culture is linked to industrialization, the development of the mass media and the formation of a loosely coherent conception of the public sphere. This panel, in its exploration of celebrity and fame from the age of enlightenment to the 21st century, debates these tropes of celebrity culture and investigates through examples of both affirming fame and where scandal takes apart the apparent public power of fame, advances our historical understanding of the terms of celebritization and celebrification with historical nuance. Through three presentations connected to specific eras – the Age of Enlightenment, followed by the Age of Revolutions and concluding with the Contemporary Age – the panel provides a significant and valued site for discussion and debate about the value of history in understanding our conceptualization of public individuality.

*Eva Giloi, Rutgers University-Newark*

**Twilight of the Gods, Dawn of the Heroes: Celebrity, Charisma and Hero-Worship as Paths to Power in the Age of Revolution**

The long nineteenth century is known as the Age of Revolution for good reason. Along with a revolving door of political revolutions, the steady development of the industrial, media, urban and consumer revolutions shook traditional authority and opened a space for alternate sources of authority. Celebrity, hero-worship and charisma filled the gaps left by traditional power sources as they were challenged in their right to rule, leading to the most potent revolution of all: the rise of followers and fans as the ultimate source of power. From the moment the Romantic poet Lord Byron used his cultural fame and social charisma to lead revolutionary forces in the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s, the fate of traditional power holders was sealed: princes, clergy, respectable notables all had to compete with a steady stream of charismatic outsiders who wanted to lead the people and build utopian worlds. These shifts in legitimacy led to a profound degeneration and desecration of traditional authority; but the new charismatic figures were immune to the power of scandal themselves. Byron was rejected in his homeland for his decadent poetry and scandalous sexual liaisons, while other would-be charismatic leaders had to prove their chosen status by presenting themselves as being above human frailty. This paper traces the struggle over authority in the long nineteenth century, in particular how competing power brokers, both traditional and revolutionary, sought to attract followers, how they worked to reinforce their own power and desecrate the legitimacy of the other side, and how they used media – spectacle, performance, rumor and scandal – to draw a wide power base in the public.
The Contemporary History of the Notorious in the 20th and 21st century

This presentation attempts to cover the cultural history of fame and celebrity for the last 100 years. Within this framework, it focuses on the increasing mediatization of contemporary life and how this defined an established celebrity culture. Fame, by the third decade of the twentieth century had elaborated, interconnected and complex systems of representation through film, publishing, the various versions of the press, and radio. Within this representative system, notoriety- whether in the form of scandal or in the form of popular and valued visibility – was and still remains a site of negotiated boundaries. This paper will attempt to explain how the 20th and 21st century have produced some recognizable patterns of fame and will also discuss and debate where and how the borderlines of celebrity, fame, scandal and rumour have provided some of the most interesting shared narratives of our times. It will conclude with speculation on how 20th century fame has been further modulated and transformed by the era of online celebrity and its different constitution of influence and scandal.

POLITICAL UNIONS: THE CELEBRIFICATION OF THE BRITISH-AMERICAN SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

This panel seeks to interrogate the importance of celebrity and celebrity coupledom to the ‘special relationship’ that has structured, on and off, British and American political relations since President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill’s ‘friendship that saved the world’. Starting with the conservative 1980s and Thatcher and Reagan who are remembered as a close and effective partnership, through the Blair and Bush years of the new millennium when political ‘opposites’ came together over war, up to the most recent pairing of the apparent populist and popular figures of Farage and Trump, each of the papers here will consider the ways that coupledom, intimacy and identification between the two politicians under investigation structure the media representation and celebrification of the ‘close alliance’ of the UK and US as combined leaders of the hegemonic ‘Western world’. As a panel, we trace the historical trajectory of the celebrity coupledom of the British and American leaders from its apparent sanctified heights and powers of Thatcher-Reagan through its degradation during the Bush-Blair bromance and its near demise at the hands of the Trump-Farage unholy populist union.

Shelley Cobb, University of Southampton

“Political Soulmates”: Reagan, Thatcher, and the Powerful Chemistry of Celebrity Coupledom

According to No 10, in a phone conversation between President-elect Donald Trump and Prime Minister Theresa May, Trump “talked about enjoying the same relationship Reagan and Thatcher did”. Notwithstanding Nigel Farage’s intervention into this potential relationship, Trump and May have set themselves a high bar. Though Thatcher and Reagan’s ‘special relationship’ has been reassessed as a ‘difficult relationship’ (Aldous) since both of their deaths, their apparent chemistry and closeness in both politics and personal life powerfully haunts all the subsequent relationships, or non-relationships, between the leaders of the UK and the US. This paper argues that it is necessary to understand Thatcher and Reagan as a celebrity political couple, one in which each of
their identities as a celebrity politician (Street) is ‘bound up in discourses of [the] companionship’ (Cobb & Ewen) they had with each other. As a platonic celebrity couple Reagan and Thatcher presented a political and personal chemistry with erotic (both hetero and homo) undertones, exemplified by their most famous quotes about each other: Reagan said of Thatcher that she was “the best man in England”, and she said he was “the second most important man in my life”. This closeness was significantly memorialized when Thatcher gave a recorded eulogy at Reagan’s state funeral and escorted Nancy Reagan on the plane from Washington to the President’s ‘private’ funeral in California. Though both have been analyzed as individual celebrity politicians (particularly Reagan), and their political ‘special relationship’ has been duly scrutinized in the context of the Cold War (especially compared to Roosevelt and Churchill), as well as their combined push for neoliberal economics, they have yet to be considered as a kind of celebrity pseudo-couple, whose powerful personal chemistry (Nochimson) and power on the world stage of politics in the 80s continues to set a template for Anglo-American political relations in the 21st century.

Hannah Hamad, Cardiff University

“I Will Be With You, Whatever”: Blair and Bush’s Baghdadi Bromance

On 6th July 2016 the long awaited report detailing the findings of the Chilcot Inquiry into the role of the United Kingdom in the war waged on Iraq by coalition forces between 2003 and 2011 was finally published. Of the 2.6 million words that comprise the report, six words stood above all others, as one short phrase rose to discursive prominence in news media reportage of the inquiry’s findings: “I will be with you, whatever.” These words, attributed to the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair, come from a memo sent by Blair to US President George W. Bush on 28th July 2002 in which he promised to back his plan for war. The romantic connotations to which this wording lent itself proved instantly irresistible to satirists, commentators, culture jammers and memesters spanning the spectrum of the online mediascape, such as one Twitter user, operating with the handle ‘Call Me Ishmael’, whose response to the publication of the report referred to the memo as a “valentine”, and to Blair and Bush’s relationship as “a bromance which will live in infamy”. This paper thus interrogates the mediation of the transatlantic ‘special relationship’ between Tony Blair and George W. Bush, through the lens of “bromance”, a discursive formation of mediated masculine intimacy that attained considerable currency over the course of the 2000s, arguably peaking towards the end of that decade – and thus coinciding with the end of the Blair-Bush era – with the emergence, popularity and success in the UK and the US of a cluster of so-called ‘bromantic comedy’ films, of the kind typified by John Hamburg’s I Love You Man in 2009. And it asks what is at stake in mediating the political, economic and military alliance between these two Anglophone nations through the irreverence of this topical gender discourse of masculine intimacy.

Neil Ewen, University of Winchester

“An unholy alliance”: Trump and Farage’s Celebrity Populism

If Reagan and Thatcher’s special relationship was such that they can be characterized as political soulmates or as a celebrity couple, and Bush and Blair’s relationship can be seen as a Bromance, we might wish to consider Donald Trump and Nigel Farage’s “ unholy alliance” (Cadwalladr 2017) as a peculiar manifestation of the global populist turn: both in terms of political style (Moffitt 2016) and, ideologically, as a retreat towards authoritarianism (Muller 2016) and unreconstructed masculinity (Faludi 2007).
This paper examines the symbioses of their relationship – spanning two countries with long, shared histories, but very different political cultures – and the dialectical tensions inherent in the strategy of members of a millionaire class self-identifying, and basing their celebrity personas, around notions of being “men-of-the-people”.

Taking as a starting point Farage’s homoerotic summary of Trump’s final debate with Hillary Clinton (“He looked like a big gorilla prowling the set. He is a big alpha male – that’s who he is” [Mahdawi 2016]), this paper scrutinizes the cultural reaction to the now infamous photograph of Trump and Farage shaking hands in one of Trump Tower’s gold-plated elevators in the wake of the US election (described by the Guardian’s art critic Jonathan Jones as being “somewhere between a Martin Scorsese film and a scene from the heyday of the Third Reich” [Jones 2016]), and considers the myriad ways in which Trump and Farage provide scaffolding for each other’s celebrity and power.

GIRL MELTDOWN: GIRLS, SCANDAL AND CELEBRITY

Idealised incarnations of perfect girlhood, living the postfeminist dream of powerful femininity are, according to Sarah Projansky, part of an increasingly visible presence of girls in the global mediascape, as girls become targets of our curiosity, prurience, hope and anxiety. Girls then function in a similar way to celebrities, operating as public spectacles that screen the varied affects of contemporary life, and celebrity girls are at the apex of the system. Our panel interrogates a series of cases in which the constraints of celebrity girlhood become visible. What happens when girls continue to produce these idealised images, so they perform spectacular, celebritised girlhood, but do so in ways that challenge the very system that produces the image? How are girls framed as celebrities in the context of sexual and political scandal? Finally, how do questions of risk and exploitation associated with girlhood performance resonate historically in the postwar cinematic context?

Fiona Handyside, University of Exeter

Becoming the ‘anti-girl’: Shopping and Scandal in Contemporary Hollywood

How does a girl who steals the celebrity/designer clothes that make up her performance undercut the notions of perfection that celebrity girlhood embodies? I will examine the case of The Bling Ring, a group of teenage girls and one teen boy who broke into celebrity homes and stole their clothes, jewellery and shoes, drawing on contemporary media accounts and Nancy Jo Sales book, before discussing Sofia Coppola’s 2013 film The Bling Ring. Coppola’s film enacts a complex position in relation to these events, offering us the visual and emotional experience of being part in the gang as they ‘go shopping’, but also remaining outside of its orbit, offering retrospective narration, the unravelling of the group, and even, on the DVD extras, allowing one of the victims (Paris Hilton) the opportunity to say how upsetting she found the experience. Drawing on Neil Ewen’s notion of the ‘anti-couple’, the celebrity couple that unravels and thus offers us a glimpse of how contingent and mediatised all celebrity relations are, I will argue that Coppola creates the ‘anti-girl’: the girl who pushes the idealised performance of powerful yet fashionable femininity to a breaking point where its contradictions become untenable. Here, the girl as figure of opprobrium and scandal hides the larger scandals that lie behind the circulation of goods and bodies in Hollywood. While she ruptures the uneasy compromise between narcissistic individualism and feminine identity in postfeminist culture, she shores up the system that insists girls’ power resides in their ability to become image.

Danielle Hipkins, University of Exeter
Surviving Berlusconi from the Margins: Scandalous girls becoming women in the Italian media

This paper examines the specificity of national discourses around young women who gain visibility and notoriety at the intersection of politics and sex. Taking my analysis of the debates about the former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi’s sexual encounters with young women around 2008 as its departure point (Hipkins, 2011), the paper draws upon a more detailed reading of popular press to identify a series of nodal points that characterize the stories told about these women, in particular Noemi Letizia and Karima El Mahroug, and their afterlives as celebrities. The resonance of this period in the Italian psyche is evident in Oscar-winning director Paolo Sorrentino’s forthcoming film (Loro/Them) about the period of scandals. At the same time some of the reactions to the Italian women involved in the Weinstein case suggest that such patterns of response are deeply engrained. Juxtaposing the arc of media discourse with subsequent filmic examinations of the Berlusconi phenomenon, I will ask to what extent these flashpoints around gender relations characterize the Italian context in particular, and how they remain in dialogue with broader transnational trends. I argue that in the Italian context questions of marginal social identity, from regional to racial otherness, and marginalized social behaviour (sex work) intersect particularly forcefully with broader tendencies to scapegoat young women as sexually ‘at risk’ and vulnerable to/greedy for consumerism. At the same time they are shown to be liable to redemption through motherhood, thereby disavowing generational misunderstanding about questions of sexual and gender behaviour.

Catherine O’Rawe, Bristol University

Girls, Stardom, and the Danger of Film Acting in Post-war Italy

In a 1966 interview with Robert Bresson, debating the use of non-actors in cinema, Jean-Luc Godard announced that non-professionals who came into contact with cinema have finished badly: ‘the girls became whores’. Taking this idea of the girl non-professional as a someone who is particularly at risk in cinema, this paper examines the interactions between actors and non-actors, and the dynamics of stardom and anti-stardom in post-war Italian cinema. Italian neorealism’s influential use of non-professionals ‘taken from the streets’ has a particular resonance for girls: I will draw upon the case of Carmela Sazio, a peasant girl from Southern Italy who appeared in Roberto Rossellini’s neorealist classic Paisà (1946). Carmela, ‘rescued’ from extreme poverty by Rossellini, supposedly became a prostitute after he declined to support her after the film. While Carmela, ‘the first victim of neorealism’, as Rossellini’s collaborator Massimo Mida described her, may be an extreme case of the threat posed to girls by the film industry, I contextualise her, and other cases, in relation to critical discourses around the non-professional at the time, and around the emerging stars of Italian cinema, girls who were discovered via beauty contests, such as Sophia Loren. The bodily authenticity of the non-professional girl, while it reinvigorated Italian cinema, both neorealist and not, was also seen by critics and professionals as a threat to the film industry, as a dangerous innovation that put at risk the star system itself. In tracing these complex dynamics, I identify questions of the agency, exploitation and vulnerability of the girl who encounters the celebrity system, questions that are still pertinent and unresolved in global cinema today.

“NO PLACE FOR SISSIES”: CELEBRITY AND THE AGING FEMALE BODY

Bette Davis famously remarked that “old age ain’t no place for sissies.” This is especially true for female celebrities “of a certain age,” who, in a youth-obsessed culture, routinely become targets of public ridicule and contempt when their physical attractiveness, sex appeal, and femininity begin to
lose purchase in male dominated industries and professions. Feminist and queer interventions have, in certain instances, successfully challenged ageist, sexist stereotypes. However, the discursive framing of ageing women in positions of power and visibility remains potentially precarious, humiliating, and fraught with contradiction. This panel seeks to make sense of these contradictions in contexts that highlight both the desacralization of celebrity that older women represent and spaces of resistance that challenge heteronormative images of dowdy, frail, asexual grandmas with images of strong, vibrant, sexy women who acquire power and beauty by embracing the ageing process.

Georges-Claude Guilbert, Université Le Havre Normandie

Age, Gender and Politics: the uncommon case of Brigitte Macron

Although the twenty-four-year difference between Donald Trump and Melania Trump has attracted little media attention, mainstream and tabloid media around the world have been making much of the twenty-four-year difference between French president Emmanuel Macron and Brigitte Macron —because she is the older partner. This paper will examine how this disparity has given rise to a fascinating phenomenon of simultaneous celebritification and degradation pursuant to which the vilification of Brigitte Macron has increased in tandem with her growing fame. Although people scream Brigitte Macron’s name with delight when she appears at various events, she has been the target of outrageously sexist and ageist abuse both in the media and on social networks. This presentation will discuss Mrs. Macron’s friendship with a tabloid mogul, her arrangements with fashion designers and the rumors about her husband’s sexuality, all of which interact with the vast operations of desecration that target her. It will also examine the malaise caused in France by this sexy grandmother people call a cougar, who wears very short skirts.

Brenda R. Weber, Indiana University

Flipping the Scripts on Gender, Sexuality, and Aging: Grace and Frankie and Orgasms on Demand

It is perhaps no coincidence that the Netflix series Grace and Frankie uses feminist themes to center its tale of the single 70-year-old-woman. The couple at the center of Grace and Frankie (Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin) have decades-long public lives as trailblazing feminists, and they continue to be strong political forces for progressive rights. They thus resonate as politically charged celebrities, who import not just humor but liberalism and LGBT gravitas. Grace and Frankie’s moment of origination occurs when their long-term husbands leave them to marry each other, in turn, somehow necessitating that the uptight Grace and the new-age Frankie move in together in a “San Diego marriage.” But Grace and Frankie’s greatest moment of feminist provocation occurs when they team together to create and market vibrators for older women, speaking in explicit terms about drying vaginal walls and delicate clitoral tissues and thus shocking their children, their former husbands, and one presumes an international audience not quite sure what to do with elderly women (and stars) who aren’t sweet, grandmotherly, or asexual. Indeed, if Grace and Frankie are models for a form of agentive, activist, and assertive woman, what is perhaps most telling is that sex and the single woman’s right to sex are still the center of her means for emancipation, sexuality still the central vector for charting female empowerment. Fonda and Tomlin open a space for thinking about celebrities, women, activism and the desacralizing space of grandmothers, who want orgasms on their own terms.
KEYNOTES SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Lucy Bolton is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at Queen Mary University of London, and is on the editorial boards of the journals Film-Philosophy and the Iris Murdoch Review. Her main areas of research are film philosophy and film stardom, and increasingly the relationship between the two. She is the author of Film and Female Consciousness: Irigaray, Cinema and Thinking Women (Palgrave, 2011; 2015), and the co-editor of Lasting Screen Stars: Images the Fade and Personas that Endure (Palgrave, 2016), which won the BAFTSS award for best edited collection in 2017. Recent publications include the special double issue of the journal Film, Fashion & Consumption, #Marilyneverday, on the enduring cultural iconicity of Marilyn Monroe, and a special issue of the Iris Murdoch Review, on Iris Murdoch and Visual Culture. She has recently published articles and book chapters on Melanie Griffith, Vivien Leigh, and women in the films of Clint Eastwood. She is editing a special issue of the journal Film-Philosophy on philosophy and film stardom, co-editing a book on Globalised Screen Ethics, in which she is writing about Carol Morley’s film Dreams of a Life, and planning a book chapter on the sinister shoe as worn by the criminal female in Marnie. She is currently writing a book on contemporary cinema and the philosophy of Iris Murdoch to be published next year.

Misha Kavka is Associate Professor of Media and Communication at the University of Auckland. She is the author of Reality Television, Affect and Intimacy (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) and Reality TV (Edinburgh U,P 2012), and has published widely on gender, celebrity and affect in relation to film, television and media technologies.


Among Pramod K Nayar’s recent works are Bhopal's Ecological Gothic (2017), The Extreme in Contemporary Culture (2017), Human Rights and Literature (2016), besides essays on graphic auto/biography, genomic cultures, colonial discourse and others in Biography, a/b: Auto/biography Studies, Asiatic, South Asia, and others. His work on celebrity cultures have appeared in Seeing Stars (2007), The Blackwell Companion to Celebrity, and the journal Celebrity Studies. He received the Award for best researcher in Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences from the President of India on May 2, 2018.

Martin Shingler is Senior Lecturer in Radio & Film Studies at the University of Sunderland. In addition to publishing numerous essays on Bette Davis, he is the co-editor of the BFI Film Stars series and the author of Star Studies: A Critical Guide (2012) and When Warners Brought Broadway to Hollywood, 1923-39 (2018).
PARALLEL SESSIONS SPEAKERS’ SHORT BIOGRAPHIES

Lawrencia Agyepong is a lecturer at the Department of Communication Studies of Ghana Institute of Journalism. Her current research interest centres around the relationship between celebrity political endorsement, and political communication. She is also interest in all aspects of celebrity politics, political marketing, celebrity and cultural studies.

Akriti Rastogi is a PhD candidate at the Cinema Studies Department of the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her current study in progress is titled Bollywoodization 2.0: Design Thinking in the Age of “Cinema Effects”. She has previously worked as a radio broadcast producer at the All India Radio, New Delhi.

Neil Alperstein, PhD, is academic director of the Emerging Media graduate program at Loyola University Maryland. His books include Advertising in Everyday Life, and his chapter, The Impact of Social Media on Imaginary Social Relationships with Celebrities was published in the Routledge Companion to Advertising and Promotional Culture.

Ben Aslinger is Associate Professor and Chair of English and Media Studies at Bentley University. Co-edited books include Locating Emerging Media and Gaming Globally: Production, Play, and Place. His work appears in Queer Love in Film and Television, Routledge Companion to Gender and Media, and LGBT Identity and Online New Media.

Emilio Audissino (University of Southampton) holds one PhD in History of Visual and Performing Arts from the University of Pisa, Italy, and one PhD in Film Studies from the University of Southampton, UK. He specialises in Hollywood and Italian cinema, and his interests are film analysis, film style and technique, comedy, horror, and film sound and music.

Caroline Bainbridge is Professor of Culture and Psychoanalysis at the University of Roehampton. She has authored The Cinema of Lars von Trier (2007) and A Feminine Cinematics (2008), co-edited Television and Psychoanalysis (2013) and Media and the Inner World (2014), and is Film Editor of The International Journal of Psychoanalysis.

Anita Biressi is Professor of Media and Society at the University of Roehampton. She is the co-author with Heather Nunn of Class and Contemporary British Culture (2013 Palgrave Macmillan). Her research interests include gender and news media, reality TV and popular factual programming, cultural studies and social class.

Giovanni Boccia Artieri, PhD, is a full Professor of Sociology of Digital Media and Internet Studies at the University Carlo Bo of Urbino and vice-director of LaRiCa (Research Laboratory in Advanced Communication). His research interests deal with the relationship between media, society and identity, languages and expressive forms of modernity at large.

Elisabetta Zurovac has a PhD in Sociology of Communication earned at the University Carlo Bo of Urbino. She is currently researching as a Post Doc at the University of Sassari. Her research interests focus on the relationship between new media and self narratives, referring to the mobile network society, screen culture and social media appropriations.

Arrigo Bonifacio, PhD candidate in History of Europe at the Sapienza University of Rome. After graduating in International and Diplomatic Sciences at the University of Trieste he completed a
Master in Diplomatic Sciences at the Italian Society for International Organisation of Rome (SIOI). A historian of international relations, his research interests mainly focus on Italian foreign policy, borderlands and border issues, principally with regard to the Italian-Yugoslav border area.

Dr. Nandana Bose is currently working on a BFI monograph on Bollywood stardom. She has published in such journals as *Cinema Journal, Celebrity Studies, Velvet Light Trap, Studies in South Asian Film and Media, Feminist Media Studies* and anthologies as *Figurations in Indian Film,* and *Silencing Cinema: Censorship around the World.*

Anita Brady lectures in Media Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, NZ. Her recent publications include *Mediating Sexual Citizenship: Neoliberal Subjectivities in Television Culture* (Brady, Burns and Davies, Routledge, 2017), and “‘Caitlyn Jenner Likes Ted Cruz But the Feeling May Not Be Mutual’: Trans Pedagogy and *I Am Cait*” (*European Journal of Cultural Studies,* 2017).

Stefano Brilli earned his PhD in Communication Studies at the University of Urbino in 2016 and collaborates with the Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies of the same university. He is also a Postdoctoral Fellow at IUAV – University of Venice. His main research interest is celebrity in contemporary digital culture and in particular the relationship between visibility and ridicule in social media.

Safa Canalp earned his BA degree in sociology from Bogazici University and graduated from Istanbul Technical University’s MIAM - Center for Advanced Studies in Music with an MSc degree in musicology. He is currently a PhD candidate at Humboldt University of Berlin’s musicology department, and his doctoral research focuses on Turkey’s independent music scene and subculture.

Francesca Cantore, Ph.D. student in Music and visual arts at Sapienza University of Rome, is currently working on a thesis on the figure of Alberto Sordi titled *Film, Italianess, Popular Culture. The construction of Alberto Sordi's public image and his economical function in Italian cinema.* Her main field of interest is cultural studies applied to the Italian cinema.

Giulia Muggeo is doing her PhD at the University of Turin, her thesis is about Walter Chiari and the Italian media system of the 1950s. Her main research interests are the Italian Cinema of 1950s and 1960s and the Italian post-war media system, seen and analyzed through the study of its main protagonists.

Lucía Caro-Castaño holds a PhD in Advertising and Public Relations from the University of Cadiz with the thesis "The mosaic identity as a subjectivity mode characteristic of social networking sites." She has researched on analyzing how identity is constructed in the context of social networking sites and how users are engaging in new cultural practices as micro-celebrity and personal branding. She has taught at the University of Seville and currently belongs to the Department of Marketing and Communication at the University of Cadiz, where she is a Professor and Coordinator of the Degree in Advertising and PR.

David Selva-Ruiz holds a PhD from the University of Seville. For his thesis about music video, he received the SGAE / Author Foundation Research Award and the PhD Prize from University of Seville. He is currently a Professor of Advertising and Public Relations and Coordinator of Marketing and Institutional Image at the University of Cadiz. His research focuses on the intersection between new trends and tools in communication and popular culture, with dozens of

Andrea Carteny, PhD, Assistant professor of Fashion through history course and Nationalism and national minorities in Europe at Sapienza University of Rome, is involved in studies on d’Annunzio and his time. He is director of Theory and Strategies of Fashion at the Department of History Cultures Religions.

Carlos K. F. Cheung is a Ph.D. student in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research interests include cultural policy, popular culture and television studies. His recent paper “Trans-border televiusal musicscape: Regionalizing reality TV I am a Singer in China and Hong Kong” is published in *Global Media and China*.

Elaine Chung is a Ph.D. student at SOAS, University of London. Her research focuses on Korean stars in Chinese television. Her works on China-Korea TV dramas and film co-production will appear in McFarland’s edited collections on *Korean drama* (forthcoming) and *Asia-Pacific Film Coproduction: Theory, Industry, and Aesthetics* (forthcoming).

Cristina Colet is DPhil in Euroasiatic studies with a particular interest in Film Studies, she work at the University of Turin (DAMS) as Honorary Fellow in Cinema and History of Fashion Photography, she is member of CRAD (Centro ricerca attore e divismo) and work at Aiace Torino. Her field of interest are related to actors’ performance, stardom, celebrity and fashion, she is also interested in analyzing aspects related to the culture and gender identity.

Camila Cornutti Barbosa, advertiser, master in Communication and PhD in Communication and Information (UFRGS – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2015) focusing on the study of cyberculture, celebrities and humor. She presently is the coordinator of Photography and Advertisement undergraduate programs at FSG (Caxias do Sul, Brazil).

Susan Liesenberg, teacher and researcher, she’s presently finishing her PhD on Communication and Consumption Practices at ESPM São Paulo, Brazil, focusing on buzz mobilization on social networks. She has presented articles on academical events, at home and abroad, as well as on newspapers and magazines, writing about web celebrities.

Charlotte De Backer is Assistant Professor at the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Antwerp (Belgium). She is also a member of MIOS (Media, ICT, and Interpersonal Relations In Organisations and Society), and her current research areas are gossip research, celebrity studies and social food studies.

David Giles is Reader in Media Psychology at the University of Winchester. He has been researching celebrity and audience relationships for nearly two decades and has published many articles on topics such as parasocial relationships and the dynamics of online communication. He is currently writing a book entitled ‘Twenty-First Century Celebrity’ about digital media and new forms of celebrity-audience interaction.

Gaëlle Ouvrein (MA) is a doctoral researcher at the University of Antwerp, research group MIOS (Media and ICT in Organisations and Society). Her research concentrates on the influence of negative celebrity news on adolescents’ online behaviours towards celebrities and towards peers.
Heidi Vandebosch is Professor at the Department of Communication Studies of the University of Antwerp (Belgium). Her research focusses on cyberbullying amongst children and adolescents (prevalence, profiles of bullies/victims, impact, and evidence-based interventions). She is also a member of MIOS (Media, ICT, and Interpersonal Relations In Organisations and Society).

Ruth Deller is a Reader in Media and Communication at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Her PhD looked at religion in British factual TV and she has published widely on topics including reality television, celebrity, religion, fans and audiences and soap opera. She is currently writing a monograph about religion and television.

Glen Donnar is a lecturer in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. He has published diversely on stardom and popular cultural representations of masculinities, monstrosity and disaster in film and television, the mediation of terror in news media, and the ethics of news viewership.

Yektanurşin Duyan is a research assistant in the Department of Cinema and Television in Faculty of Fine Arts at Mardin Artuklu University in Turkey. Duyan is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Radio Television and Cinema at Ankara University, Turkey. She is completing her dissertation on Gender and Stardom in Turkish Cinema. She has published widely in the field of Turkish cinema. Her works focus on the ways that Turkish cinema, stardom, fandom, gender and representation.

Fran Pheasant-Kelly is MA Film Studies Course Leader and Reader in Screen Studies at the University of Wolverhampton, UK. Her research spans fantasy, science fiction, terrorism, space, science and abjection in film and television. She is the author of numerous publications including two monographs, *Abject Spaces in American Cinema: Institutions, Identity and Psychoanalysis in Film* (IB Tauris 2013) and *Fantasy Film Post 9/11* (Palgrave 2013), and the co-editor of *Spaces of the Cinematic Home: Behind the Screen Door* (Routledge 2015). She is currently working on a third monograph entitled *The Bodily Turn in Film and Television*.

Diana-Luiza Dumitriu, PhD in Communication Studies, is Lecturer at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration – Bucharest and Associate professor at the University of Bordeaux. Main research interests: sport communication, celebrity studies, consumer behaviour, and discourse analysis.

Elena Negrea-Busuioc, PhD in Linguistics, is Associate professor at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration – Bucharest. Her research interests: figurative language use (focusing on metaphor and irony) and discourse analysis.

Sarah Anne Dunne is a third year doctoral candidate at University College Dublin. Her thesis examines how rape culture and feminist activism manifest on social networking sites. Her research paper is currently being prepared for print in Gender Hate Online: Understanding the New Anti-Feminism.

Spring-Serenity Duvall is Assistant Professor of Communication at Salem College (USA). Her research on celebrity appears in the journals Celebrity Studies; Communication, Culture, and Critique; and Feminist Media Studies. In 2015, she was the Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Transnational Studies at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario.
Kirsty Fairclough is Director of International and Senior Lecturer in Media and Performance in the School of Arts and Media at the University of Salford, UK. Fairclough has published widely on popular culture and is the co-editor of *The Music Documentary: Acid Rock to Electropop* (Routledge), *The Arena Concert: Music, Media and Mass Entertainment* (Bloomsbury) and *Music/Video: Forms, Aesthetics, Media. New York,* (Bloomsbury) and author of the forthcoming *Beyoncé: Celebrity Feminism and Popular Culture* (I.B Tauris) and co-author of *American Cinema: A Contemporary Introduction* (Palgrave). Her work has been published in *Senses of Cinema, Feminist Media Studies, SERIES* and *Celebrity Studies journals* and she has made several television and radio appearances.

Jacque Lynn Foltyn, PhD, Professor of Sociology, National University, La Jolla, California, writes about popular culture, fashion, beauty, celebrity, and death. The author of numerous scholarly articles and several books, her cultural critiques have been featured in *The New York Times* and she has appeared as a scholar expert of celebrity in documentaries, and on *NBC Today, CNN, CBS 48 Hours,* and *BBC.*

Gaston Franssen is assistant professor of Literary Culture at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. He publishes on literary celebrity (Franssen & Honings, *Celebrity Authorship and Afterlives in English and American Literature,* Palgrave), celebrity politics (*Celebrity Studies,* forthcoming), and celebrity health narratives (*European Journal of Cultural Studies,* forthcoming).

Katja Friedrich is a senior research associate and postdoc at the Department of Communication Studies and Media Research, LMU Munich. Her postdoc qualification project (“Habilitation”) focuses on celebrities and their social impact in Germany. Research interests: Celebrity news, celebrity effects, political communication, media effects.

Ursula Ohliger, M.A., is a research associate and doctoral student at the Department of Communication Studies and Media Research, LMU Munich. Her dissertation project focuses on political coverage in German tabloid journalism. Research interests: Political communication, celebrity journalism and political public relations.

Agata Frymus is a PhD candidate at University of York, and a recipient of White Rose Scholarship of the Arts and Humanities. In her work, she explores the ethnic images of Hollywood stars. Her articles have been published in *Celebrity Studies Journal; Early Popular Visual Culture and Historical Journal of Radio, Film and Television.*


Sinem Güdüm is currently working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of PublicRelations & Advertising at Marmara University, İstanbul, Turkey. Her main research areas are New Media, and digital humanities, with special emphasis on advertising, and artificial intelligence. Assistant
Prof. Dr. Güdüm received her P.H.D from Marmara University, Public Relations & Advertising Department; M.A from Marmara University, European Union Studies; and B.A from Boğaziçi University, Political Science & International Relations Department.


Jamie Hakim is a lecturer in media studies in the School of Art, Media and American Studies at the University of East Anglia. His research is concerned with masculinity, the body, intimacy, affect and digital media. His book the Male Body in Digital Culture will be published as part of Rowman & Littlefield’s Radical Cultural Studies series in 2020.

Hunter Hargraves is Assistant Professor of Cinema and Television Arts at California State University, Fullerton. He has published in the journals Camera Obscura and Television and New Media and in the anthology A Companion to Reality Television. He is currently finishing a manuscript on discomfort in contemporary American television.

Susan Hopkins is a Senior Lecturer in the Open Access College at the University of Southern Queensland, Ipswich campus. Her research interests include sociological approaches to the education of disadvantaged groups including incarcerated students as well as critical cultural studies and media representations of gender, sexuality, post-feminism and empowerment.

Tanya Horeck is a Reader in Film, Media & Culture at Anglia Ruskin University. She is author of the book Public Rape: Representing Violation in Fiction and Film (Routledge 2004) and co-editor of The New Extremism in Cinema: From France to Europe (University of Edinburgh Press 2011).

Gemma Horton is a PhD student at the University of Sheffield. She is currently researching the right to privacy of celebrities under the European Convention on Human Rights and in France, the United States of America and the United Kingdom by engaging in a comparative legal analysis.

Jeroen Jansen is lecturer in the Department of Dutch Language and Literature at the University of Amsterdam. His specializations include the impact of humanism and the revival of learning in Renaissance Netherlands, rhetoric, textual and literary criticism, argumentation and style. His major publications include Bre vitas (1995), Decorum (2001) and Imitatio (2008).

Deborah Jermyn is Reader in Film & TV at the University of Roehampton. She has published widely in the field of celebrity studies and is the editor of Female Celebrity and Ageing: Back in the Spotlight (2014) and co-editor of Women, Celebrity and Cultures of Ageing: Freeze Frame (2015).

Anne Jerslev is professor of Film and Media studies at the University of Copenhagen. She has published about celebrity in journals like International Journal of Cultural Studies, International
Journal of Communication and Celebrity Studies. She is co-editing a special issue of Celebrity Studies about ageing celebrities and fans.

Linda Jones completed a journalism cadetship at the Geelong News before computers replaced typewriters. Her journalism career included working on Fairfax Suburban Newspapers and The Local Echo in the Riverina, before she returned to academia and a PhD, which focuses on how digital technology and the Internet are shaping journalism.

Ana Jorge is Assistant Professor in Universidade Católica, Portugal, and researcher at CECC and CICS.NOVA. She holds a PhD in Communication Sciences (University NOVA of Lisbon, 2012), with a dissertation on young audiences of celebrity culture; and has published in Celebrity Studies, “Childhood and Celebrity” (2017), “Youth and Celebrity” (2018).

Mercè Oliva, PhD, is Lecturer in Media Studies at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain). Her research focuses on celebrity culture, governmentality and reality TV. She has published articles in journals such as Celebrity Studies, Convergence and Social Semiotics and she is the author of Telerrealidad, Disciplina e Identidad. Los makeover shows en España [Reality TV, discipline and identity. Makeover shows in Spain] (Ed. UOC, 2013).

Luis LM Aguiar is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of British Columbia, Canada. He writes on economic change, low wage workers, racism and whiteness. Dr. Aguiar co-edited a book on Researching Amongst Elites: Challenges and Opportunities in Studying Up (Ashgate 2012) and has another book forthcoming on Whiteness in the Hinterland (UBC Press 2019); he is also preparing a manuscript on Cristiano Ronaldo.

Lynne Joyrich is Professor of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University. She is co-editor of Camera Obscura and author of Re-viewing Reception: Television, Gender, and Postmodern Culture and of articles in such journals and books as Critical Inquiry, Cinema Journal, differences, Private Screenings, Logics of Television, and Queer TV.

Jilly Boyce Kay is Lecturer in Media and Communication at the University of Leicester, whose key research focuses on the gender politics of television talk shows and reality TV. She is author of the forthcoming Gender, Television and Voice (Palgrave Macmillan), and co-editor of a forthcoming book on weddings and media cultures (Routledge, edited with Melanie Kennedy and Helen Wood).

Helen Wood is Professor of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester and author of Talking With Television (2009) and Reacting to Reality TV (2012) with Bev Skeggs. She has published widely gender, class and television and is editor of the European Journal of Cultural Studies.

Melanie Kennedy is Lecturer in Media and Communication at the University of Leicester. She has published in journals such as Celebrity Studies and Feminist Media Studies, and her monograph on Tweenhood: Femininity and Celebrity in Tween Popular Culture is forthcoming with I.B. Tauris. She is Book Reviews Editor of Celebrity Studies.

Kaitlynn Mendes is Associate Professor in Media and Communication at the University of Leicester. She has published widely on representations of feminism in the media, and is author of four books including Feminism in the Media (2011) and SlutWalk: Feminism, Activism & Media (2015).
Barry King is Professor of Communications at Auckland University of Technology. He is the author (with Sean Cubitt, Harriet Margolies and Thierry Jutel) of *Studying the Event Film: The Lord of the Rings* (Manchester University Press, 2008). He has also published a substantial number of articles that explore the relationships between popular culture, celebrity and stardom and digital media. He is the author of *Taking Fame to market: Essays on the prehistory and post-history of Hollywood stardom* (Palgrave, 2014) and is currently completing another book, provisionally titled, *Working as a sign* (Palgrave).

Nete Nørgaard Kristensen, PhD, Associate Professor of media studies at University of Copenhagen. Her research areas include cultural and lifestyle journalism, celebrity studies, strategic communication, political communication, media, war and conflict. She has published six books and in international journals such as *Communication, Culture & Critique; Digital Journalism; Journalism; Journalism Practice; Journalism Studies; Media, War and Conflict; Television & New Media*.

Mette Mortensen, PhD, Associate Professor of media studies at the University of Copenhagen. Her research areas include celebrity studies, media and conflict, journalism studies, and visual communication. She is the author or editor of seven books and has published in journals such as *Media, Culture & Society; Celebrity Studies; The International Journal of Cultural Studies; Global Media and Communication; Digital Journalism; Journalism Practice; Information, Communication and Society*.

Pilar Lacasa is Full Professor of Audiovisual Communication. Researcher at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Alcalá, she coordinates the *Culture, Technology and New Literacies Research Group* since 1998. She loves video games, new emerging communication technologies and classic European and American movies. Her research work has been developed from a socio-cultural approach. She has been a visiting at the Comparative Media Studies program (MIT), the University of Southern California, Annenberg Innovation Lab. Currently she’s a visiting researcher at the Digital Ethnography Research Centre (RMIT, Melbourne). Pilar is the author of *Learning in virtual and real worlds* (2013) edited by Palgrave (including a Henry Jenkins’ Foreword).

Julián de la Fuente-Prieto is Associate Professor of Audiovisual Communication, and holds a B.A. in History and a B.A. in Communication Studies. Working as an independent producer and director since 2002, he has made all kinds of audiovisual materials such as ads, reports and music clips. He has also created holographic facilities, 3D projections and interactive apps. He has several publications on film and history and has conducted several outreach projects for film heritage. He currently teaches at the European University, Madrid, and the University of Alcalá.

Sara Cortés is Associate Professor of Audiovisual Communication, and holds a PhD in Psychological Development, Learning and Education. Sara is interested the role of new technologies and video games as cultural tools aimed to develop new literacies in a global world. The main lines are focused on analyzing the creation of new educational spaces where new technologies become literacy practices and the construction of one’s identity when children and youngsters play with video games or use social media. She has been a visiting scholar at LCMI (University of Luxembourg and GLS at the University of Madison. In addition to this, she works as coordinator and web designer of http://www.aprendeyjuegaconea.com.
Celia Lam is a lecturer at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China. She researches the mediation of identity in online spaces. Her current research focuses on the identity construction of ‘non-mainstream’ Australian celebrities.

Celia Lam from the University of Nottingham and Jackie Raphael from Curtin University have been exploring how celebrity bromances are used for promotion. They have published a series of papers and are currently working on a book. They are Board Members of the Centre for Media and Celebrity Studies, and Regional Chairs for the Fame and Persona Research Consortium.

Megan Le Masurier is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Media and Communications, University of Sydney. Her research lies in the fields of slow journalism, indie magazines and feminism.

Katja Lee has just completed a SSHRC postdoctoral fellowship at Simon Fraser University (Burnaby, BC) and teaches at the University of Western Australia (Perth, WA). She has recently co-edited two collections, Contemporary Publics (2016) and Celebrity Cultures in Canada (2016), and is writing a book on the history and development of the celebrity autobiography across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

P David Marshall is a Professor and holds a Persona Chair in New Media, Communication and Cultural Studies at Deakin University. He is the author of many books and articles that relate to celebrity (including Celebrity Persona Pandemic (2016), A companion to Celebrity (2016 – co-edited with Sean Redmond), The Celebrity Culture Reader (2006) and Celebrity and Power (2nd ed. 2014) as well as digital media. His recent work has been developing Persona Studies where celebrity can be seen as a prominent subset of public persona.


Ben Little is co-author (with Prof Jane Arthurs) of Russell Brand: Comedy, Celebrity, Politics Palgrave 2016, an editor of Soundings Journal and Lecturer in Media and Cultural Politics at UEA. He writes about activism, generation and digital politics.

Moya Luckett is the author of Cinema and Community (Wayne State University Press, 2013). She is currently writing two books, one on the relationship between celebrity, economic recession and social mobility and the other on femininity and popular media. She is a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at Bournemouth University.

Alison Lutton is Lecturer in English at Somerville College, University of Oxford. Her research focuses on contemporary (predominantly American) literature and questions of intermediality, celebrity, and literary value, and she is currently working on a monograph project considering how such questions are negotiated in the work and public profiles of LeRoy and Bret Easton Ellis, amongst others.

Camille Nadine Magsalin is currently taking her Master of Arts in Communication Major in Media Studies from the De La Salle University – Manila. Her research mostly examines films, and
television. She is also currently a faculty in the same school handling Media and Information Literacy courses.

Carina Mansey is a PhD student and Visiting Lecturer at City, University of London. Based in the Department of Sociology, but with a background in Media and Cultural Studies, her research tracks the emergence of the first celebrity chefs and aims to ground ideas concerning consumption habits in Britain.

Stevie Marsden is a Research Associate at CAMEo Research Institute for Cultural and Media Economies at the University of Leicester. Her thesis, *The Saltire Society Literary Awards, 1936-2015: A Cultural History*, was completed in 2016 through an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award at the University of Stirling’s Centre for International Publishing and Communication. Her research interests include literary award culture, reader and writer identities, and gender.

Jessica Martin is a college funded PhD Researcher in the School of Media, Communication and Sociology at the University of Leicester. Her research examines representations of feminism and domesticity during the current period of austerity in the UK. Jessica is an active member of the Gender and Media research group at Leicester and is particularly interested in postfeminist popular culture.

Hannah McCann is a lecturer in gender studies at the University of Melbourne. Her research explores feminist discourse on femininity, queer femme LGBTQ communities, LGBTQ history, beauty culture and aesthetic labour. She has published in the *Australian Humanities Review*, *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, and *Australian Feminist Studies*. Her book *Queering Femininity: Sexuality, Feminism and the Politics of Presentation* is due out with Routledge later this year.

Clare Southerton is a research fellow in sociology at the Australian National University. Her research focuses on intimacy and digital culture, surveillance and young people, online communities and videogames. Her work draws on contemporary social theory associated with new materialism.

Joanna McIntyre lectures in Screen and Media at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia. She is the author of the forthcoming book *Transgender Celebrity* (Routledge). She has published refereed work on queer and transgender representation, celebrity, film, television, and Australian culture, including in *The European Journal of Cultural Studies* (2017).

Mark McKenna is an independent scholar having recently completed his PhD at the University of Sunderland, entitled ‘Rethinking the Video Nasties: Economics, Marketing and Distribution. His specialisms are UK and US film production histories, horror cinema, censorship and distribution. He is currently writing a monograph on Sylvester Stallone and co-editing a collection (with William Proctor) on horror film franchises.

Kate McNicholas Smith is a lecturer in Gender, Media and Culture at Lancaster University. Her research engages in feminist analysis of popular culture, and is particularly concerned with issues of LGBTQ visibility and queer audiences.

Sreya Mitra is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Communication at the American University of Sharjah, UAE. Her research focuses on South Asian media, popular culture, stardom, globalization and culture industries. She has presented at various international conferences and her work been published in edited collections and peer-reviewed journals.
Brandy Monk-Payton is Assistant Professor of Communication and Media Studies at Fordham University. Her research focuses on blackness and celebrity in media culture. Her work on race and representation appears in edited collections and the journals Feminist Media Histories, The Black Scholar, Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture, and Film Quarterly.

Francesca Moretti holds a bachelor and a master degree in Communication Studies from Sapienza Università di Roma. Since October 2015, Francesca has become a PhD candidate at the Coris department (Sapienza) and she is currently working on a research based on the study of crowdfunding for the film production.

Sabrina Moro is a PhD candidate in Media and Communications at Nottingham Trent University. Her research examines anti-sexual assault celebrity advocacy and celebrity feminism in the media. She holds a Master’s in Sociology and Gender Studies from the EHESS (Paris, France) and a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University (Montréal, Canada).

Jonathan Murray is Senior Lecturer in Film and Visual Culture at the University of Edinburgh. His books include Discomfort and Joy: the Cinema of Bill Forsyth (2010) and The New Scottish Cinema (2015). He is co-editor of Visual Culture in Britain and a Contributing Writer for Cineaste magazine.

Diane Negra is Professor of Film Studies and Screen Culture and Head of Film Studies at University College Dublin. A member of the Royal Irish Academy, she is the author, editor or co-editor of ten books. She currently serves as Co-Editor-in- Chief of Television and New Media.

Sofia Nika is a PhD candidate at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She is working on her thesis which examines the impact of popular television texts’ characters and their performers’ celebrity personas on audiences’ personal narratives. She is, also, Publicity Assistant for the ‘Game of Thrones Research Project’.

Tomasz Olczyk is assistant professor at University of Warsaw (Applied Social Sciences Institute), he holds PhD in sociology, his work focuses on intersections between popular culture and politics, his main research interests include televised political advertising and celebrity politics.

Jacek Wasilewski is an awarded Ph.D. with a dissertation on Polish identity narratives. Founder of the Document Studies at the University of Warsaw. Semiotician, expert in communication and avid follower of popular culture. Interested in the intricacies of meaning. He is a storytelling expert in advertising.

Melanie Piper recently completed her PhD in film and television at the University of Queensland, Australia. She is currently developing her dissertation, “Docucharacters: Public Persona as Character in Film, Television, and Fandom,” into a book manuscript and has published in several journals including Persona Studies and Transformative Works and Cultures.

Rosemary Oyinlola Popoola is a Lecturer and a Doctoral mentee of the Diaspora College of Mentee Institute initiated by Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). She is currently interrogating the effectiveness of advocacy (celebrity inclusive) in the promotion and protection of women’s rights in her doctoral research.
Annelot Prins is pursuing her PhD in American Studies at the Graduate School of North American Studies at the Freie Universität, Berlin. Her research is grounded in Feminist Theory and Celebrity Studies, and focuses on the rise of celebrity feminism in contemporary US-American pop music.

Melanie Ramdarshan Bold is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Information Studies at UCL, where she teaches and researches topics related to Publishing and Book Cultures. Her main research interest centers around the changing nature of book culture with a focus on digital developments in authorship, publishing, and reading.

Nick Canty is a lecturer in the Department of Information Studies at University College London where he teaches Publishing. His research interests include social media, connecting books with readers and bookselling. He was Co-Investigator on the AHRC Academic Book of the Future project and has an interest in academic publishing.


Tessa Reed is a final year PhD Candidate at King’s College London. She graduated from both the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts and the University of Bristol. Her thesis considers the impact of the virginity movement in the United States on star texts, teen films, and television.

Dr. Peter Rehberg is a cultural critic and theorist. He holds a Ph.D. in German studies from NYU. The focus of his research has been queer theory, popular culture, media studies, and postcolonial studies. From 2011-2016 he was DAAD associate professor in the German department of the University of Texas at Austin, from 2016-2018 he is affiliated fellow at the ICI Berlin, and in Spring 2018 he will be Max-Kade-Professor in the German department at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has published on literary theory, gender, queer, pornography, celebrity culture, and on the Eurovision Song Contest. His book Hipster Porn: Queer Masculinities, Affective Sexualities, and New Media will come out in Spring 2018.

Heli Reimann gained her PhD in 2015, in the Department of Musicology, University of Helsinki. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Sibelius Academy, University of Arts, Helsinki and Tallinn University. Reimann’s research activities lie in the interstices between jazz studies, cultural studies, Soviet studies, Estonian cultural history, musicology, audio-visual culture, historiography and popular music studies. She has published numerous articles in academic journals and books including Popular Music, Jazz Research Journal, and Jazz and Totalitarianism. Her current projects include a monograph on the Tallinn 67 jazz festival.

Timothy Robeers is a Ph.D. student and research assistant at the Media, Policy & Culture Research Group of the University of Antwerp. He is completing a Ph.D. on the mediated communication
about environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility in motorsport, focusing on Formula E.

Hilde Van den Bulck (Ph.D.) is professor of communication studies and head of the Media, Policy & Culture Research Group of the University of Antwerp. Her work in celebrity studies focuses on the role of mediated communication in the celebrity construct and on celebrity philanthropy and activism.

Cornel Sandvoss is Professor of Media and Journalism and has published widely on fans and fan cultures across the spectrum of popular culture including sport and popular music. He is founding co-director (with Matt Hills) of the Centre of Participatory Culture at the University of Huddersfield.

Jeff Scheible is Lecturer in Film Studies at King’s College, focusing on contemporary media. His book *Digital Shift* (U Minnesota, 2015) received the Media Ecology Association’s Susanne K. Langer Award. Other writing appears in *Film Quarterly, American Literature, Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, and *Old and New Media after Katrina*.

Anna Seidl, former principal dancer at the HNB (Het National Ballet, Amsterdam), is assistant professor at the German department at the University of Amsterdam. Her research area entails different fields of cultural studies and recently revolves around topics such as ‘body and motion pictures’ and ‘dance and ageism’. The special quality of her research lies in the fruitful combination of her expertise in the field of art practice as well as the scientific and analytical reflection. Her latest publications are: *William Forsythes Grenz-Gänge. Explorationen in der Welt des Tanzes* (Heidelberg: Synchron Verlag); *Pina Bausch – eine interkulturelle Mittlerin? Ein Rezeptionsvergleich zwischen Deutschland und den Niederlanden. (Amsterdam German Studies)*; *Tanz des Lebens – Tanz des Todes. Hysterische Frauen und Kriegszitterer. (Bielefeld: Transcript)*. *Inklusionen des Fremden im Tanztheater der Pina Bausch: Interkulturalität und social turn. (Theater und Ethnologie. Beiträge zu einer produktiven Beziehung. Forum Modernes Theater)*.

Michael Serazio is assistant professor in the Communication Department at Boston College who studies media production, advertising, popular culture, political communication and new media. He is the author of *Your Ad Here: The Cool Sell of Guerrilla Marketing* (NYU Press, 2013) and has published in the *Journal of Communication, the Journal of Consumer Culture, and Critical Studies in Media Communication*.

Guillaume Sirois is postdoctoral fellow at the School of Social Communications at Saint Paul University (federated with the University of Ottawa). He holds a Ph.D. in communication studies from McGill University and an M.A. in art history from Université de Montréal. His research interests include the governance mechanisms of the art and culture sector, power relations in the global art world, and contemporary visual culture.

Cindy Smith makes interdisciplinary, project-based work—shifting the discourse surrounding both production and reception to Cultural Studies. Her works explore the role of gender, class, race and politics in history and popular culture. Her investigations include installations, museum exhibitions, curatorial projects, writings, lectures and publications throughout the US and Europe. She lives and works in NYC and VT.

Born in Texas but raised on the Internet, Nathan E. Smith is a scholar, freelance writer, DJ, and video artist. He received his bachelor’s degree in Cinema Studies & American Studies from the
University of Tennessee and is currently a graduate student in Film & Media Studies at Columbia University.

Dr. Lindsay Steenberg is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at Oxford Brookes University where she co-ordinates their graduate programme in Popular Cinema. She has published widely on the crime and action genres and is the author of *Forensic Science in Contemporary American Popular Culture*. She is currently working on a monograph entitled *The First Rule of Fight Club: Tracing the Gladiatorial Impulse in Visual Culture*.

Gaylyn Studlar is David May Distinguished University Professor in the Humanities and director of Film & Media Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. She is the author of *Precocious Charms: Stars Performing Girlhood in Classical Hollywood Cinema* (2013, U of California Press), and *This Mad Masquerade: Stardom and Masculinity in the Jazz Age* (1996, Columbia UP) among other books.

Anthea Taylor is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, University of Sydney, Australia. She is the author of *Mediating Australian Feminism* (Peter Lang, 2008), *Single Women in Popular Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), and *Celebrity and The Feminist Blockbuster* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). Her research on Greer is funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery grant.

Sally Totman PhD is an Associate Professor in Middle East Studies at Deakin University. She is the author of *How Hollywood Projects Foreign Policy* (2009) as well as numerous articles on the leadership of Libya under Colonel Qaddafi and the involvement of celebrities in the Middle East.

Valentina Signorelli (PhD Film) is a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Westminster, London and a professional screenwriter. Her research interests include film adaptation strategies, screenwriting techniques in the digital era and media representation of the European identity after the Brexit vote.

Hilde Van den Bulck (Ph.D.) is professor of communication studies and head of the Media, Policy & Culture Research Group of the University of Antwerp. Her work in celebrity studies focuses on the role of mediated communication in the celebrity construct and on celebrity philanthropy and activism.

Aron Hyzen is a member of the Media, Policy & Culture Research Group of the University of Antwerp. He is studying the role of media and celebrities in American populism in the Trump era.

Bethany Usher is a journalist and lecturer at Newcastle University. She worked as a senior journalist for a range of national British newspapers covering news and celebrity stories. She recently completed her doctoral thesis *Celebrity, Journalism and Self-Identity*.

Ana María Velasco Molpeceres is teacher and Predoctoral Researcher at Universidad de Valladolid (UVa, Spain). She has a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism (UVa) and in History of Art (UNED). She is postgraduated in Investigation of Communication (Uva) and in History and Aesthetics of Cinematography (UVa). Actually she has a PhD in progress about women’s press and fashion in Spain.

Toni Velikova is a postgraduate taught student in Book History and Material Culture at the University of Edinburgh. She is a current holder of the Edinburgh EU Masters Scholarship and is
undertaking research into issues of textual controversy, authorship and the celebrity author. She has an undergraduate degree in Media and Cultural Studies from Newcastle University.

Lucy Watson is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney. Her PhD thesis is tentatively titled, “Not ‘just like us’: Queer responses to celebrity media”. She is also an editor of Archer Magazine, an independent magazine about diverse experiences of sex, gender, and sexuality.

Ellen Watts is a PhD candidate in the New Political Communication Unit at Royal Holloway, University of London. She is interested in celebrity activists and representation. She tweets @ellenfelicity and sporadically blogs at ellenfelicity.com.

Brigitte Weingart is a professor of Media and Cultural Studies in the Department of Media Studies & Theatre at the University of Cologne. Former and current research topics include text-image relations, media techniques of appropriation, representations of AIDS and infectious communication (including rumour and gossip), the genealogy and media aesthetics of fascination, Pop and celebrity cultures.


Most recently, his research interests have focused on political representations in American films, the political value of the social media and the role of celebrity diplomacy in international affairs.

Tom Whittaker is Associate Professor in Hispanic Film and Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick. He is the author of The Films of Elías Querejeta: A Producer of Landscapes (UWP, 2011), co-editor of Locating the Voice in Film (OUP, 2016) and Performance and Spanish Film (MUP, 2017). His currently completing a monograph entitled Deviant Noise: Quinquis, Criminality and Sound in Spanish Film for Manchester University Press.

Michael Williams is Associate Professor in Film at the University of Southampton. He is author of Film Stardom and the Ancient Past: Idols, Artefacts and Epics (forthcoming 2017), Film Stardom, Myth and Classicism: The Rise of the Hollywood Gods (2013), and Ivor Novello: Screen Idol (2003).

Alison Winch is a Lecturer in Media Studies at the University of East Anglia. She is author of Girlfriends and Postfeminist Sisterhood (Palgrave 2013) and is currently working on a new project (with Ben Little) called “The New Patriarchs”.

Following a 12 year, award-winning career in the media and a PhD at UEA, Hannah Yelin is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Culture at Oxford Brookes University. She is writing a book on the ghostwritten memoirs of young, female, celebrities and is co-investigator on a research project investigating girls’ ideas about leadership and celebrity. Hannah runs the Celebrity Culture Club, hosting panel discussions between academics and media industry folks.
Matt Yockey is an Associate Professor of film and media studies at the University of Toledo. He is the author of *Batman* (TV Milestones Series) (Wayne State University Press, 2014) and the editor of *Make Ours Marvel: Media Convergence and a Comics Universe* (University of Texas Press, 2017).

Lorraine York, McMaster University, is the author of *Literary Celebrity in Canada* (2007), *Margaret Atwood and the Labour of Literary Celebrity* (2013), and *Celebrity Cultures in Canada*, co-edited with Katja Lee (2016). *Reluctant Celebrity*, which examines celebrity displays of reluctant affect as forms of privilege, is forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan.

Anna Zslobor, a PhD Student and Graduate Teaching Assistant at University of Leicester (United Kingdom).

**PANELS SPEAKERS’ BIOGRAPHIES**


Anna Maria Lorusso is Associated Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Communication of the University of Bologna. She is a member of TRAME, the Center for the interdisiciplinary study of memory and cultural traumas of the University of Bologna and she is director of the Italian Association of Semiotic Studies (AISS). Her research interests include cultural semiotics, cultural memory and rhetoric. Among her books: *Cultural Semiotics. For a cultural perspective in Semiotics*, New York, Palgrave - Macmillan, 2015; *Memosur/MemoSouth: Memory, Commemoration and Trauma in Post-Dictatorship Argentina and Chile* (ed), Nottingham, CCCP, 2017. She has just edited, along with Paolo Peverini, the book *Il racconto di Francesco. La comunicazione del Papa nell’era della connessione globale*, Roma, Luiss University Press, 2017.

Paolo Peverini is a senior lecturer at LUISS Guido Carli University of Rome where he teaches marketing communication and new media. His main topics are semiotics, communication, web reputation, guerrilla marketing. His work has been published in several top semiotic academic journals. In 2017 he has been named by Pope Francis as a consultor to the Vatican Secretariat for Communication. He has just edited, along with Anna Maria Lorusso, the book *Il racconto di Francesco. La comunicazione del Papa nell’era della connessione globale*, Roma, Luiss University Press, 2017.
Simona Romani is Full Professor in Consumer Behavior at LUISS Guido Carli University of Rome. Her main research topics are branding, communication, consumer emotions and consumer responses to responsible and irresponsible company behaviors. She has several publications in reputed marketing and consumer behavior international journals.

Bianca Terracciano is adjunct professor of "Digital Culture and Social Media" at the University of Tuscia and honorary fellow in "Semiotics of Fashion" at Sapienza Università di Roma. She writes for Doppiozero, with which she published in 2016 the ebook Mitologie dell’intimo. Her latest book is Social Moda. Nel segno di influenze, pratiche e discorsi (Franco Angeli 2017).

Annebeth Bels is a Ph.D. student and member of the Media, Policy and Culture research group at the University of Antwerp in Belgium. She is completing a Ph.D. on preteens and sexualisation in and through media, combining critical sociology, feminism and cultural studies with ethnographic methodologies.

Hilde Van den Bulck is professor of communication studies and head of the Media, Policy & Culture research group at the University of Antwerp in Belgium. She combines complimentary expertise in media policies and structures with expertise in celebrity culture, focusing on the role of mediated communication in celebrity and fan culture.

Pilar Lacasa is Full Professor of Audiovisual Communication. As Researcher at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Alcalá, she coordinates the Culture, Technology and New Literacies Research Group since 1998. She has been a visiting scholar at the Comparative Media Studies program (MIT) and a visiting researcher at the Digital Ethnography Research Centre (RMIT, Melbourne). Pilar is the author of Learning in virtual and real worlds (Palgrave, 2013).

Julián de la Fuente is Associate Professor of Audiovisual Communication. He holds a B.A. in History and a B.A. in Communication Studies. Working as an independent producer and director since 2002, he has made all kinds of audiovisual materials and created holographic facilities, 3D projections and interactive apps. He currently teaches at the European University, Madrid, and the University of Alcalá.

Sara Cortés is Assistant Professor in Audiovisual Communication at the University of Alcalá, Spain. The main lines are focused on analyzing the creation of new educational spaces where new technologies become literacy practices and the construction of one’s identity when children and youngsters use social media. She has been a visiting scholar at LCMI, University of Luxembourg, and GLS at the University of Madison. In addition to this, she works as coordinator and web designer of http://www.aprendeyjuegaconea.com.

Stephanie Patrick is a PhD student at the Institute of Feminist and Gender Studies at the University of Ottawa. Her dissertation focuses on news reporting of female celebrity sex scandals in relation to new technologies and corporate capitalism in America.

Thiago Soares is professor and researcher of the Post-Graduate Program in Communication at the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE), Brazil. Coordinator of the Research Group on Communication, Music and Entertainment at the Brazilian Society of Communication Studies (Intercom) 2015-2019. Member of the Laboratory of Analysis of Music and Audiovisial (LAMA). Author of the books Ninguém é Perfeito e a Vida é Assim: A Música Brega em Pernambuco (Nobody is Perfect and Life is Like This: Brega Music in Pernambuco) (2017) and Estética do Videoclipe (Music Video Aesthetics) (2014).
Fabiana Moraes work as journalist and researcher teacher of the Nucelo de Design e Comunicação (Design and Communication group) at Univeridade Federal de Pernambuco, Campus Agreste (UFPE/CAA). She researches hierarchies throughout social visibility and invisibility and processes of celebritification of the self, focusing in racial and gender aspects. She wrote five books including *O nascimento de Joicy* (The birth of Joicy) and *No País do Racismo Institucional* (In the country of institucionalized racism).

Camila Monteiro is a journalist with a MA in Media Processes at UNISINOS (Brazil) and PhD Candidate in Music, Humanities and Media at University of Huddersfield (UK) funded by CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel). She researches race, performance of taste, poverty and stigma in fandoms and antifandoms.

Lene Bull Christiansen is an Associate Professor at the Department of Communication and Arts at Roskilde University (Denmark). She is a core member of the international research network on Celebrity and North-South Relations and a founding member of the Nordic Celebrity Studies Network.

Katrine Meldgaard is a ph.d-scholar at the University of Southern Denmark at the Department of the Study of Culture and she is a member of the Nordic Celebrity Studies Network.

Helle Kannik Haastrup is Associate Professor, Ph.D. at University of Copenhagen. Recent publications in English include “Framing the Oscars Live” In: *Celebrity Studies* (2016). Coorganizer of the Nordic Celebrity Network.

Toija Cinque is in Screen and Design at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. Cinque’s main research interest lies in exploring the intersections between the screen, social media, digital media, legacy media and communications with other studies in history, statistics, privacy and surveillance, stardom and celebrity, audience and reception studies, media ethnography and visualisation, media policy and law. Her works include *Changing Media Landscapes: Visual Networking*, OUP (2015); the co-written *Communication, Digital Media and Everyday Life*, 2nd edition, OUP (2015); *Enchanting David Bowie: Space/Time/Body/Memory*, Bloomsbury (2015), and; *Everyone Says ‘Hi’: The Fandom of David Bowie*, Palgrave (forthcoming 2018) with Sean Redmond. Cinque co-edits *New Scholar: International Journal of the Humanities, Creative Arts and Social Sciences*.

Ian Dixon completed his PhD at The University of Melbourne and currently lectures at SAE Institute and Deakin University. He delivers academic addresses internationally including a plenary speech in USA and Keynote in India. He also directs film and television (including *Neighbours, Blue Heelers*), writes funded screenplays and novels. Ian has published creative literature and was assistant to the Artistic Director of the Australia Korea Foundation for DFAT. Ian appeared in *Underbelly: Squizzy* on Channel 9 in Australia. His acting work can be viewed on *City Homicide, Blue Heelers, Martial Law, Guinevere Jones, Heartbreak High, Struck by Lightning, Shadows of the Heart, Rush* and *Underbelly*.

Lisa Perrott is Senior Lecturer at the University of Waikato. Her research cuts across diverse topics such as popular music, audiovisual aesthetics, animation, transmedia, cultural studies, celebrity studies, fandom and participatory culture. Lisa is co-editor of the Bloomsbury book series: *New Approaches to Sound, Music and Media*. She is also co-editor of the forthcoming collected volume *Transmedia Directors: Music | Sound | Image* and of the forthcoming special issue of *Celebrity Studies*, ‘Navigating with the Blackstar: The Mediality of David Bowie’. Her publications include
Antonella Mascio (PhD New Media Studies) is Assistant Professor in Sociology of Cultural and Communication Processes at University of Bologna. She is Editor in Chief of ZoneModa Journal (Pendragon) and teaches in the Communication Program of Humanities at University of Bologna. In recent years she focused her researches on online social relations and on relationships between the Internet and Tv Drama. She has recently published Fashion Convergence (with Junji Tsuchiya, ZMJ, 2015) Virtuali Comunità (Guerini e Associati, 2008), Visioni di moda (Franco Angeli, 2008), Fashion Games (Franco Angeli, 2012).

Silvia Vacirca is a PhD in History of Europe at Sapienza University with a research project focused on Italian World War II fashions. She has published different essays on the relationship between Italian film, fashion and celebrity culture and writes for L'Officiel Italia and other prestigious fashion publications.

Paola Bonifazio is Associate Professor of Italian at the University of Texas at Austin. In 2011-12, she was National Endowment for the Humanities/Andrew Mellon Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome. Her research interests focus on Italian cinema, including documentary, film theory and history, gender studies, and feminist and postfeminist theories. She is currently working on a book manuscript on the culture of fotoromanzo, from the late 1940s to the late 1960s. Her book Schooling in Modernity: The Politics of Sponsored Films in Postwar Italy (University of Toronto Press, 2014) explores short film productions sponsored by state and non-state agencies to promote modernization and industry, and to govern the Italian people’s conduct.

Giancarlo Lombardi is Professor of Italian, French, and Comparative Literature at the College of Staten Island and at the CUNY Graduate Center, where he currently serves as Executive Officer of the Phd Program in Comparative Literature. He received his doctoral degree in Romance Studies at Cornell University and taught at the University of Rochester, Middlebury, Rutgers, and Smith. He has published extensively on European and North American women writers, Italian film and television studies, cultural studies, and, most recently, on American serial drama. He is the author of “Rooms with a View: Feminist Diary Fiction” and the co-editor, together with Ruth Glynn and Alan O’Leary, of “Terrorism Italian Style” and “Remembering Aldo Moro” both dedicated to cultural representations of Italian political terrorism. His most recent publication is another coedited volume, “Italian political cinema”. He is currently finishing a monograph on the rhetoric of fear in Italian television drama from the 60’s and 70’s, and has just begun working on a new research project on modes of emplotment in crossnational television drama.

Nicoletta Marini-Maio is Associate Professor of Italian and Film Studies at Dickinson College and Editor of the scholarly international journal gender/sexuality/italy. She is the author of A Very Seductive Body Politic: Silvio Berlusconi in Cinema (Milan: Mimesis, 2015). With Ellen Nerenberg, she is co-author and co-PI of Winxology: Grooming the Future Female Consumer. Her publications include articles on film and theater in the years of lead (1970s), coming-of-age film, and auteur cinema, two pedagogical volumes, and a critical translation. She is currently completing a monograph on the Aldo Moro Affair and a study on Decamerotici, a series of Italian films
produced in the 1970s and inspired by Boccaccio’s *Decameron*. In 2013-14, she received the Andrew W. Mellon Penn Humanities Forum Fellowship from the University of Pennsylvania.

Ellen Nerenberg is Hollis Professor of Romance Languages & Literatures at Wesleyan University, where she serves as the Dean of Arts and Humanities. She is author of *Prison Terms: Representing Confinement During and After Italian Fascism* (U of Toronto P, 2001) and *Murder Made in Italy: Homicide, Media, and Contemporary Italian Culture* (Indiana U P, 2012) as well as numerous essays in the fields of Italian screen and cultural studies. With Nicoletta Marini-Maio, she is co-author and co-PI of *Winxology: Grooming the Future Female Consumer*. She serves as Associate Editor of *g/s/i--gender/sexuality/Italy* and as reviews editor for *The Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies*.


Fabio Cleto teaches Cultural History at the University of Bergamo. His research concerns the history of the present, as well as queer theory and the politics of representation. He has published books on camp (1999, 2006, 2008), nineteenth-century literary dissidence (2001), queer pulp (2004, 2007), mid-Sixties transatlantic culture (2013), and the obscenity of the Noughties (2014).

Lucio Spaziante is Lecturer at the University of Bologna with interests in the field of semiotics, with particular reference to music, youth cultures, media and audiovisuals. He has conducted research in France, UK and USA. Among his recent publications: *Icone pop. Identità e apparenze tra semiotica e musica* (2016).

P David Marshall is a professor and holds a Persona Chair in New Media, Communication and Cultural Studies at Deakin University. He is the author of many books and articles that relate to celebrity (including *Celebrity Persona Pandemic* (2016), *A companion to Celebrity* (2016 - co-edited with Sean Redmond), *The Celebrity Culture Reader* (2006) and *Celebrity and Power* (2nd ed. 2014) as well as digital media. His recent work has been developing Persona Studies where celebrity can be seen as a prominent subset of public persona.

Charles W. Hedrick, Jr. received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania (1984). He is now Professor of History at UC Santa Cruz. Among his principal publications are *History and Silence: Purge and Rehabilitation of Memory in Late Antiquity* (2000) and *Ancient History: Monuments and Documents* (2006).

Gianni Guastella is professor of Latin language and Literature at the University of Siena. His work covers anthropology of the ancient world, reception of Latin literature in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance, gossip and rumour in ancient biography, fama and its personifications. His last book is *Word of Mouth. Fama and Its Personifications in Art and Literature from Ancient Rome to the Middle Ages*, Oxford University Press 2017.

Arnoud Visser is Professor of Textual Culture in the Renaissance in the Department of Languages, Literature and Communication, and Director of the honours programme of the Faculty of Humanities at Utrecht University. His research has focused on early modern
intellectual culture, with particular attention to classical and patristic traditions in the Reformation period.

Eva Giloi is Associate Professor in the History Department at Rutgers University-Newark. Her PhD (Princeton University 2000) received the Fritz Stern Prize. In 2012-2013, she was Alexander-von-Humboldt fellow at the Center for the History of Emotions. Her work covers material culture; visual culture; monarchy; fame, celebrity, charisma and fan culture.

Katja Lee has just completed a SSHRC postdoctoral fellow at Simon Fraser University (Burnaby, BC) and teaches at the University of Western Australia (Perth, WA). She has recently co-edited two collections, *Contemporary Publics* (2016) and *Celebrity Cultures in Canada* (2016) and is writing a book on the history and development of the celebrity autobiography across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Shelley Cobb is Associate Professor of Film and English at the University of Southampton. She has published widely on women filmmakers, film adaptation, celebrity culture and chick flicks and is currently Principal Investigator of the AHRC-funded project “Calling the Shots: Women and Film Culture in the UK, 2000-2015”. Her books include *Adaptation, Authorship and Contemporary Women Filmmakers* (Palgrave, 2015) and the edited collection *First Comes Love: Power Couples, Celebrity Relationships and Cultural Politics* (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Hannah Hamad is Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at Cardiff University, and author of *Postfeminism and Paternity in Contemporary US Film: Framing Fatherhood* (New York and London: Routledge, 2013). She was first the co-editor and then the editor of the Forum section of Celebrity Studies Journal (Routledge) from 2014-2017 and has published widely on gender, postfeminism and neoliberalism in popular culture.

Neil Ewen is Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader in Media and Communication at the University of Winchester. He is the co-editor of *First Comes Love: Power Couples, Celebrity Kinship and Cultural Politics* (Bloomsbury, 2015) and *Capitalism, Crime and Media in the 21st Century* (Palgrave, forthcoming 2019). He is also Cultural Report section editor of *Celebrity Studies* journal.

Fiona Handyside is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies and French at the University of Exeter. She is the author of *Sofia Coppola: A Cinema of Girlhood* (I. B. Tauris, 2017), *Cinema at the Shore: The Beach in French Cinema* (Peter Lang, 2014), and co-editor of *International Cinema and the Girl* (Palgrave, 2015).

Danielle Hipkins is Associate Professor of Italian Studies and Film at the University of Exeter. She has published widely on gender representation in postwar Italian cinema. She is currently working on girlhood and contemporary Italian cinema, and memories of cinema-going in Italy of the 1950s.

Catherine O’Rawe is Reader in Modern Italian Culture at Bristol University. She is the author of *Stars and Masculinities in Contemporary Italian Cinema* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), co-author (with Jacqueline Reich) of *Divi: la mascolinità nel cinema italiano* (Donzelli, 2015), and has a particular interest in gender and stardom.

Georges-Claude Guilbert is American Studies and Gender Studies Professor at the Université Le Havre Normandie, France. His publications include books on Carson McCullers, Madonna, Billy
Wilder, gender in daily life and his Vietnamese grandmother. His new book, out in 2018, deals with gay icons and the mechanisms of gay iconicity.

Brenda R. Weber is professor and chair in the Department of Gender Studies. Her work includes: Makeover TV; Women and Literary Celebrity in the Nineteenth Century; Reality Gendervision; and Latter-day Screens (forthcoming).
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

FLIGHTS & GETTING THERE

Airports
Leonardo da Vinci Airport
Rome’s main international airport, Leonardo da Vinci, aka Fiumicino, is 30km west of the city. It's divided into four terminals: Terminals 1, 2 and 3 are for domestic and international flights; Terminal 5 is for American and Israeli airlines flying to the US and Israel.

Terminals 1, 2 and 3 are within easy walking distance of each other in the main airport building; Terminal 5 is accessible by shuttle bus from Terminal 3.

The easiest way to get into town is by train, but there are also buses and private shuttle services.

Bus
SIT Bus Regular departures to Stazione Termini (Via Marsala) from 8.30am to 12.30am; from Termini between 5am and 8.30pm. All buses stop near the Vatican (Via Crescenzio 2) en route. Tickets are available on the bus. Journey time is approximately one hour.

Cotral Runs between Fiumicino and Stazione Tiburtina via Termini. Three to six daily departures including night services from the airport at 1.15am, 2.15am, 3.30am and 5am, and from Tiburtina at 12.30am, 1.15am, 2.30am and 3.45am. Journey time is one hour.

Schiaffini Rome Airport Bus Regular services from the airport to Stazione Termini (Via Giolitti) between 6.05am and 8.25pm; from Termini between 5.10am and 9.30pm. Allow about an hour for the journey.

Car
Follow signs for Roma out of the airport and onto the autostrada. Exit at EUR, following signs for the centro, to link up with Via Cristoforo Colombo, which will take you directly into the centre.

Private Shuttle
Airport Connection Services Transfers to/from the city centre start at €22 per person.
Airport Shuttle Transfers to/from your hotel for €25 for one person, then €6 for each additional passenger up to a maximum of eight.

Taxi
The set fare to/from the city centre is €48, which is valid for up to four passengers including luggage. Note that taxis registered in Fiumicino charge more, so make sure you catch a Comune di Roma taxi – these are white with a taxi sign on the roof and Roma Capitale written on the door along with the taxi's licence number. Journey time is approximately 45 to 60 minutes depending on traffic.

Train
Leonardo Express Runs to/from Stazione Termini. Departures from the airport every 30 minutes between 6.23am and 11.23pm, and from Termini between 5.35am and 10.35pm. Journey time is 30 minutes.
FL1 Connects to Trastevere, Ostiense and Tiburtina stations, but not Termini. Departures from the airport every 15 minutes (half-hourly on Sundays and public holidays) between 5.57am and 10.42pm, and from Tiburtina every 15 minutes between 5.01am and 7.31pm, then half-hourly to 10.01pm.

Ciampino Airport
Ciampino, 15km southeast of the city centre, is used by Ryanair for European and Italian destinations. It’s not a big airport but there’s a steady flow of traffic and at peak times it can get extremely busy.
To get into town, the best option is to take one of the dedicated bus services. You can also take a bus to Ciampino station and then pick up a train to Termini.

Bus
Schiaffini Rome Airport Bus Regular departures to/from Via Giolitti outside Stazione Termini. From the airport, services are between 4am and 10.50pm; from Via Giolitti, buses run from 4.50am to midnight. Buy tickets on board, online, at the airport, or at the bus stop. Journey time is approximately 40 minutes.

SIT Bus Regular departures from the airport to Via Marsala outside Stazione Termini between 7.45am and 11.15pm, and from Termini between 4.30am and 9.30pm. Get tickets on the bus. Journey time is 45 minutes.

Atral Runs buses between Ciampino Airport and Anagnina metro station (€1.20) and Ciampino train station (€1.20), where you can get a train to Termini (€1.50).

Car
Exit the station and follow Via Appia Nuova into the centre.

Private Shuttle
Airport Shuttle Transfers to/from your hotel for €25 for one person, then €6 for each additional passenger up to a maximum of eight.

Taxi
The set rate to/from the airport is €30. Journey time is approximately 30 minutes depending on traffic.

Boat
The nearest port to Rome is at Civitavecchia, about 80km north of town. Ferries sail here from Barcelona and Tunis, as well as Sicily and Sardinia. Check www.traghettiweb.it for route details, prices, and to book.
From Civitavecchia there are half-hourly trains to Stazione Termini (€5 to €16, 45 minutes to 1½ hours). Civitavecchia’s station is about 700m from the entrance to the port.

Bus
Long-distance national and international buses use Autostazione Tiburtina. Get tickets at the bus station or at travel agencies.
From the bus station, cross under the overpass for the Tiburtina train station, where you can pick up metro line B and connect with Termini for onward buses, trains and metro line A.
Bus operators include:

Interbus To/from Sicily.
Marozzi To/from Sorrento, Bari and Puglia.
SENA To/from Siena, Bologna and Milan.
Sulga To/from Perugia, Assisi and Ravenna.

Car & Motorcycle
Rome is circled by the Grande Raccordo Anulare (GRA) to which all autostradas (motorways) connect. The main autostradas serving Rome are:
A12 Runs to/from Civitavecchia and connects with the A91 Rome–Fiumicino Airport.

Train
Rome’s main station and principal transport hub is Stazione Termini. It has regular connections to other European countries, all major Italian cities and many smaller towns.
Train information is available from the Customer Service area on the main concourse to the left of the ticket desks. Alternatively, check www.trenitalia.com or phone 89 20 21.
From Termini, you can connect with the metro or take a bus from Piazza dei Cinquecento out front.
Taxis are outside the main entrance/exit.
Left Luggage is available by platform 24 on the Via Giolitti side of the station.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Here are some of the best options for moving around Rome:

Bus, Subway/Underground, Tram and Urban Trains

The Rome ATAC Transportation Network runs buses, an underground system (subway), trams and urban trains rete. Buses and trams run from 5:30 am to midnight. The underground runs from 5:30 am to 11:30 pm (1:30 am on Fridays and Saturdays).
For specific information on schedules please download the Moovit App.
All tickets are valid on all buses (including COTRAL urban routes), trams, the underground and regional trains (2nd class) within the City of Rome.

BIT - valid for 100 minutes, €1,50 (valid for 100 minutes from stamping; only valid for one underground ride)
BIG - Daily Ticket: € 6,00
BTI - 3-day Pass: € 16,50
CIS - Weekly Pass: € 24,00
Monthly Pass - € 35,00
Annual Pass - € 250,00
You can purchase tickets and passes in a number of newsstands, tobacconists and bars throughout the city. Moreover, automated vending machines are available in all underground stations and some bus stops.

**Taxi**

Official taxis are white. They are identified by a code and have a fare meter. You can find taxis easily throughout the city and at dedicated taxi stops, or you can call for one (06 0609, 06 3570, 06 6645, 06 8822, 06 4157, 06 4994, 06 5551). Moreover, you can also download the *MyTaxi* App.

**CONFERENCE VENUE: SAPIENZA UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA**

Sapienza University of Rome, founded in 1303 by Pope Boniface VIII, is one of the oldest universities in the world, and a top performer in international university rankings.

Since its foundation, Sapienza has constantly played a significant role in Italian history and has been directly involved in key changes and developments in society, economics and politics. Merging centuries of tradition with cutting-edge didactic activities, research and innovation, Sapienza provides top quality education and research opportunities. The main campus is a real city within the city located in the heart of Rome. Sapienza University is an extraordinary place for students and teachers from around the world to meet, exchange and develop new ideas and philosophies. And it all takes place in one of the most breath-taking cities in the world. The main Sapienza Campus, the “Città universitaria,” was designed by Architect Marcello Piacentini and inaugurated in 1935. It’s a true city within the city where educational activities are integrated with administrative and reception structures, library services and museums.

Besides the historical campus on Piazzale Aldo Moro in the San Lorenzo Neighbourhood, Sapienza has various faculty and department buildings and offices in various areas of Rome, as well as university centres in other areas of the Lazio Regino.

**HOW TO GET TO SAPIENZA**
From the Airport: train, shuttle bus, taxi or shared shuttle taxi (requires booking).

From Termini Train Station: you can easily reach Sapienza on foot, by taking via Marsala. It's only a 5-10 minute walk from the Termini Train Station. Otherwise, take bus n. 310 and get off at the "Università/Regina Elena" Stop or take the Subway.

From the Tiburtina Train Station: take bus n. 71 or n.492 and get off at the "Verano/DeLollis" stop.

By Subway/Underground: take the "B Line" Metro to the "Policlinico" stop.

By tram: you can also reach Sapienza by tram, getting off at “Università Sapienza” stop. Keep in mind that the tramway n. 3 is from/to National Gallery of Modern Art, Trastevere, Colosseum, and n. 19 from/to St. Peter's Basilica.

All keynotes and panels will take place in the Literature and Philosophy Faculty building (CU003), highlighted in yellow and red in the map below.