

# WOMEN ON THE VERGE

## Transformations in Literature, Gender and Society

ALC Graduate School, The University of Manchester, 16 June 2017

July 20, 2017  
The University of Manchester

### CONFERENCE REPORT

The one-day conference *Women on the Verge: Transformations in Literature, Gender, and Society* was held at The University of Manchester on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017, thanks to the support of NWCDTP and [artsmethods@manchester](mailto:artsmethods@manchester).

It constituted a platform for rethinking and redefining two leading themes, in an international, interdisciplinary, and supporting environment:

1. The concept of femininity and gender representations (socially, geographically and culturally embedded);
2. The re-appreciation of women as creative and professional figures within the literary environment and the cultural marketplace.

The conference was structured into four streams, according to the disciplinary fields:

- Translation and Creative writing
- Media and Film Studies
- Literature
- Society and History

Each stream encompassed three to four speakers, who delivered inspiring and interesting presentations that stimulated a constructive dialogue and discussion on the conference themes. The keynote speakers, Dr Danielle Hipkins (University of Exeter), and Dr Sharon Kinsella (The University of Manchester), investigated the concept of femininity taking into account, respectively, contemporary Italian and Japanese societies, thus further enhancing the international breath of the conference. In fact, the event involved 19 contributors from 15 different institutions and 5 countries (the complete conference programme is available on the [conference website](#)).

The one-day colloquium was closed by a final panel discussion on curating, researching and showcasing female archives in the digital area. Dr Jenna Ashton and Dr Jenny Mabbott – respectively Founder and Creative Director of Digital Women’s Archive North CIC (DWAN) and Head of Collections and Engagement at People’s History Museum – examined the topic from a local perspective, focusing on the area of Greater Manchester. Dr Carmela Pierini, from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan, moved beyond the national

borders by investigating a specific case study within the Italian context and presenting the issues facing the researcher engaging with cultural archives.

The event had a good turnout, with about 40 people among presenters and attendees. In addition, the conference was live-tweeted and streamed, thus widening the participation also to people who could not be physically present on the day.

The high quality of the conference was confirmed by the attendees, who expressed their satisfaction in the feedback forms. Moreover, they expressed an interest in future collaborations and projects, a point that had been one of our primary objectives.

*The Organising Committee*

Federica Coluzzi, Marta Fanasca, Deborah Elena Giustini,  
Anna Lanfranchi, Elena Anna Spagnuolo