

CFP: *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*

Issue 24: Fostering Diversity on and off Screen

An Australian Screen Production, Education & Research Association (ASPERA) special issue

In recent years, individuals and groups from inside and outside of academia have called for greater diversity on screen, resulting in campaigns such as #MeToo, #TimesUp, and #OscarsSoWhite. In particular, the gender imbalance that exists on screen and behind the camera has been a particular point of focus. 2015 figures from Australian national funding body, Screen Australia, revealed a gender imbalance in mainstream filmmaking, with women accounting for only 32% of producers, 23% of writers and 16% of directors. Later that same year, Screen Australia announced their five-point, \$5 million plan for *Gender Matters*, a suite of initiatives aimed at addressing this imbalance within the Australian screen industry. With comparable gender disparity figures also evident outside of Australia, similar initiatives have been implemented in other territories, such as the Swedish Film Institute's FiftyFifty by 2020 initiative (2012), the British Film Institute's *Three Ticks* initiative (2015) and the Irish Film Board's suite of measures in 2017.

The issue of gender imbalance on/off screen has recently been explored further by Screen Australia, with recent research by Caris Bizzaca (2019) posing the question, "where does gender disparity in the Australian screen industry start?" Bizzaca's research involved the collection and analysis of data from four Australian film schools, which found that there are significant gender discrepancies within specific degree courses.

Other recent research has explored the gender imbalances of Australian key creative teams (Verhoeven, 2016), the gendered nature of media industries more broadly (see *Media Industries*, volume 6, issue 1, 2019; *Feminist Media Studies*, volume 18, issue 3, 2018) and the specifics of diversity on screen in feature film form (see New York Film Academy, 2017; Verhoeven, 2018).

Further to the research cited above, the research sub-committee of the Australian Screen Production Education & Research Association (ASPERA) proposes a special issue of *Alphaville* that looks forward, posing the question: what further measures can give rise to increased diversity both on screen and behind the camera? To this end, **we invite full length articles (6000 words)** that explore the challenges associated with fostering diversity on and off screen, and that make suggestions for new approaches in the screen production classroom, on set and in regards to the screen industries more broadly. In addition to work addressing gender imbalances, we welcome an exploration of intersectionality, recognising the complex ways in which the effects of varying forms of discrimination intersect, converge or overlap.

- Subjects of research may include:
- Studies and/or evaluations of funding body initiatives aimed to increase diversity
- Case studies from the screen industries - e.g- film productions and/or screenplays which have demonstrated a commitment to increased diversity on screen
- Gendered diversity on screen- a consideration of intersectional factors such as ethnicity, disability, age or class

- Case studies from educational settings - how to improve diversity on/off screen in student work
- Empirical studies of educational practices regarding screen diversity
- Practice-based approaches to pedagogies of diversity in/out of the classroom

We also invite short articles that explore teaching methods for a dossier on classroom practices designed to foster diversity (2000 words).

It is hoped that the special issue will present research that suggests a way forward for practitioners, educators and members of the broader screen industries from all over the globe.

Please note that both the full-length articles and the shorter articles on teaching methods will be peer-reviewed.

In the first instance, please send a 200-word abstract and a 100-word biography to rsc@aspera.org.au by Monday 14 September 2020.

These abstracts will be reviewed by the editors, and responses will be issued by December 2020. Drafts of full papers will be due in June 2021, with amendments to follow. Publication of the Special Issue will occur in late 2022.

Special Issue Editors

Dr Kath Dooley, Senior Lecturer, Curtin University

Dr Kath Dooley is a filmmaker and academic in the Discipline of Theatre, Screen and Digital Media at Curtin University, Western Australia. She completed a creative Ph.D. exploring the screenwriting approaches and production methodology of contemporary French directors, with a specific focus on portrayals of the body. Kath has written a number of short and feature-length screenplays, and has directed several award-winning short films and music videos. Her research interests include screen production methodology for traditional and immersive media, screenwriting and screen education. She is co-editor of *The Palgrave Handbook of Screen Production* (2019).

Margaret McHugh, PhD Researcher, University of Technology Sydney

Margaret McHugh is currently a PhD researcher at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Margaret's PhD explores how gendered narratives of women in documentary film, and the underlying values they represent, might be critiqued using an intersectional feminist approach and screen production research. She is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, lecturer and has a background in film festival marketing and programming.

Dr Marsha Berry, Associate Professor, RMIT University

Marsha Berry is an Associate Professor in the School of Media and Communication RMIT University where she teaches creative practice research methods. She is author of *Creating with Smartphones* (2017) Palgrave MacMillan and is co-editor of three volumes on mobile and screen media. With dozens of articles and book chapters, she has published her research extensively in highly prestigious international journals such as *New Media and Society* and *New Writing* as well as in edited books. She is an ethnographer, writer and artist whose

practice includes filmmaking, participatory art projects, and poetry. Her video art and photography has been exhibited in Australia and internationally in exhibition spaces such as the Directors Lounge in Berlin and the Queensland Centre of Photography. She has been invited to develop and facilitate workshops focussing on creative practice both in academic and community settings and to speak, write book chapters for edited collections and examine theses on the basis of her reputation as an artist scholar who works with mobile media.

Dr Bettina Frankham, Lecturer, University of Technology Sydney

Dr Bettina Frankham is a practice led researcher in digital media. She has a background of industry experience that spans multiple forms of media including television, radio and web production. As a moving image practitioner, she makes creative works that cross into territories of documentary, art and poetry. Her projects have screened at international media arts festivals including Videobrasil International Electronic Art Festival, Stuttgart Filmwinter Festival for Expanded Media, Berlin Asia-Pacific Film Festival, the Artist Film Festival California and Flickerfest International Short Film Festival Australia. Her research interests include art and documentary intersections, expanded documentary practice and the impact of digital culture on creative media production. She is currently exploring the role of aesthetic experience in knowledge creation and is developing an open, poetic approach to media projects that address issues of social concern. Bettina teaches in digital media arts and production in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UTS.

For more information on Alphaville Journal go to: <http://www.alphavillejournal.com>

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