

Call for Papers

Women's Autobiographical Filmmaking

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Guest editors: Dr Felicia Chan (University of Manchester) and Dr Monika Kukolova (University of Salford)

Autobiographical filmmaking refers to films created by filmmakers that tell stories about their lives, experiences and memories. These may be truthful or partially fictionalised, remembered clearly or misremembered, or a combination of these, usually in ways that also explore how film as a medium itself can do this — a form of practice-as-research, if you like. We are interested in exploring with potential contributors whether there might be a gendered nature to this mode of filmmaking / life-remembering / self-narrating? Do filmmakers who identify as women tell different stories about themselves and their lives from those who identify as men, or do they do so in a different way? How do women filmmakers navigate their simultaneous objecthood and subjecthood in the eye of the camera (Everett, 2007)? Much of the canon in film studies is constituted by works of male auteurs, all in one form or another said to be exploring their lives, their pasts and their selves on screen: think of figures like Federico Fellini, Woody Allen, François Truffaut, Shane Meadows, the list goes on. This structural domination is being continually challenged (Gledhill and Knight, 2015) and moves to rehistoricise women's filmmaking have seen increased attention on figures from Agnès Varda through to Greta Gerwig though much more remains to be done on women filmmakers in the global majority.

There has been a longer history of scholarship on women's literary life-writing (Smith and Watson, 1998; Neuman, 2016; Brodzki and Schenck, 2019) but less so on women's life-writing on/through film as a mode of self-narration. How have women filmmakers had to navigate the industrial structures of filmmaking with all its gatekeeping mechanisms, including access to capital? To what extent are these gatekeeping mechanisms disproportionately discriminatory towards women?

We are inviting proposals to explore any area of the subject, although we are especially keen to receive proposals from scholars studying the ways women in the global majority use cinema to write themselves and their memories into post/colonial histories. We would also like to invite proposals on alternative publication formats such as the video essay, and shorter provocations, interviews or reports.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Filmmaker case studies
- Close readings of individual films
- Industry analysis
- Autobiographical film as method
- Challenges to theoretical orthodoxies, e.g. auteur theory, canon-making, etc.
- Decolonial approaches to gender studies and women's filmmaking

Full-length articles: 5,500-7,000 words, including notes but excluding references

Video essay: Approx. 3-15 mins, plus accompanying text 500-1000 words

Short reports, provocations, reviews, interviews, reflections: 1,500-2,500 words

Full-length articles and video essays will be subject to full peer review. Guidelines here:

<https://www.alphavillejournal.com/Guidelines.html>

Publication Timeline

15 May 2024, abstract due

31 May 2024, notification of editors' decision

15 January 2025, full video essay / manuscript due

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If you are interested in contributing to this issue, please send a 300-word abstract along with a brief biography, in the same file, to Dr Monika Kukolova (M.Kukolova@salford.ac.uk)

Feel free to contact us with any questions.

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