

Gender and Identity in the Short Fiction of Contemporary British Women Writers

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For this seminar, I will present my PhD project, work in progress, titled *Gender and Identity in the Short Fiction of Contemporary British Women Writers*. The main aim of this dissertation is to explore hybrid identities and interpersonal relationships in the short fiction of contemporary Scottish author Jackie Kay, paying special attention to the importance of liminal states. Also, I will be tackling the intersection between literary genre (short stories) and gender (women) as especially fruitful to articulate a position of resistance against hegemonic discourses.

'Cher', between the myth of celebrity and the empowerment of minorities.

Transmutations of the 'unruly woman'

Orquídea Cadilhe (CEHUM, GAPS)

This seminar is based on my PhD thesis defense, in which I discussed the concept of the 'celebrity myth' in the context of cultural studies in dialogue with performative and gender studies. The aim was to research the impact of popular culture icons in contemporary society and question up to what extent they are catalysts of social ruptures and changes, ultimately demonstrating the potential for such figures to deconstruct dominant representations and thus perform a socio-political role. In particular, I will talk about how the performer Cher has been playing a crucial role in these dynamics since she persistently embodies the myth of the 'unruly woman'. I will refer to the intersemiotic relations between such alternative representations as empowering rewritings of dominant ones and how Cher constantly places herself at liminal spaces, helping promote the intersection of margin and center and eliminate the lines of division between social groups.