WRITING THE NUN'S BODY: CORPOREAL FEMINISM, *ÉCRITURE FÉMININE,* AND MONASTIC PRACTICE

Tamara Barrett | Deakin University

ABSTRACT

This essay explores the production of corporeal writing through a creative writing-as-research methodology, with the latter aiming to develop a narrative of the bodily experiences of a fictional 1960s Catholic nun. This essay engages with Elizabeth Grosz's proposed framework for a feminist corporeal subjectivity, and Hélène Cixous's notion of *écriture féminine*. Cixous discusses such writing as something that comes from the body; it is not a technique *per se* but a way of being-in-language that attempts to bypass traditional modes of language and engage with the female self – and the language of that self. It is within this context of écriture féminine that I will discuss the creation of the narrative 'Consumption'. This essay explores the ways in which the methodology constitutes an attempt to create a protagonist with modes of language derived from an embodied, sensorial practice that resist, in a small way at least, traditional literary discourses and patriarchal processes.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Tamara Barrett is a Master of Arts (Creative Writing) graduate from Deakin University. She was short-listed for the Hammond House International Poetry Prize in 2021. She teaches in the undergraduate Creative Writing program at Deakin University.

KEYWORDS

corporeal feminism— *écriture féminine*—lay sister—nun—practice-led research

My mother entered a Catholic convent when she was nineteen years old, in 1962, before the radical changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II; 1962-1965). Vatican II – a series of meetings held at the Vatican in Rome to discuss how the Church should engage with the world – set in motion a reshaping of the Catholic Church, which resulted in the abolition of many archaic convent practices. However, until this time, monasticism had changed little for centuries, and the traditions of cloistered life demanded complete obedience, conformity, and self-abnegation. In religious terms, the body was regarded as separate from the soul and something that could be made into an 'empty vessel' (O'Brien 2005:187; Curran 1989). Thus, the corporeal experience of many Australian nuns was predicated on self-abasement and 'suffused with self-denial' (O'Brien 2005:184) for the purpose of being closer to God. This bodily denial, which was required of women in monastic life until the mid-to-late 1960s, inadvertently and due to the excision, implicitly makes corporeality central to the experience of being a Catholic nun.

Of all the stories my mother tells of her time as a nun, the most interesting to me always are stories about bodies responding to demanding ways of living: such as the Polish lay sister who worked in the convent laundry, misplacing her false teeth amidst sheets, soap, and steam. These lay sisters were servant-class nuns (when compared with the choir sisters), and were responsible for relentless, physically demanding work, rising as early as 4am to complete chores of cleaning, cooking, and caring for the sick (Trimingham Jack 2001:83). Despite their commitment to a spiritual life, with its associated bodily denial, these women used their bodies tirelessly. This tension between body and mind – constructs taken for granted – that was unique to religious life and arguably stretched to breaking point for the lay sisters, was inspiration for development of the creative artefact, 'Consumption' (Barrett, unpublished). In this piece, the protagonist, Alba, enters a convent as a lay sister, where, through the combined effects of unresolved family trauma and the rigid confines of convent life, she embarks on extreme fasting behaviour and an exploration of her changing body.

Structural feminist Dale Spender argues that 'language is not neutral; rather it shapes reality with hues of phallocentricism' (1980:94). In the process of researching female cloistered life, it became apparent that language is indeed 'not neutral' but also is *neutralising* in the way that official Catholic histories have left only skeletal traces of individual women's lives. These histories tend to be 'patriarchal and episcopal' (Burley 2005:4), and either overlook women's experiences or 'mythologise and dehumanise' them (Campion 1978:8; Gervais and Watson 2014:1). Contemporaneous accounts of nuns' lives are also limited in content and availability; an occurrence explained by historian

Anne O'Brien, who writes 'the emphasis on self-abnegation within female monasticism discouraged individual sisters from writing memoirs or keeping diaries' (2005:182). As such, day-to-day details of physical experience seem to be lost to history. This paucity of personal records constitutes a wholesale erasure of the embodied nun experience until the mid-1960s. It is into this void that I wrote 'Consumption', with corporeality – that is, a corporeal subjectivity – at the fore, with the hope to contribute in some way to an alternative approach to traditional modes of historical representations of the nun.

In discussing corporeal subjectivity I reference the work of feminist Elizabeth Grosz, who proposes an approach to subjectivity that, instead of relying on dualisms of body and mind, approaches corporeality as a framework for subjectivity, in which 'all the effects of depth and interiority can be explained in terms of the inscriptions and transformations of the subject's corporeal surface' (Grosz 1994:vii). Notably, this model challenges the binary model used in the Christian tradition, and especially in religious life, which aligns the soul with God and the body with sin, and assumes common-sensical castings of depth and surface.

In 'Consumption', the protagonist uses minimal dialogue, which allows her body to be the focus so that, in a way, Alba's corporeality becomes the narrative – imbued with embodied sensation, emotion, and sexuality. In doing so, I hoped to create not only a narrative in which a nun's subjectivity is derived from a body that is less constrained by traditional mind:body binary models, but also one that draws attention to corporeal subjectivity as a means of storytelling. We read:

> When she returns to the chapel for prayer, the ocean seeps from her feet and mixes with scattered prayer dust. She limps back to bed, leaving a trail of white batter in her wake. (Barrett, unpublished)

Alba's body becomes a mode of expression in place of internal monologue or dialogue, and in this passage seems to express the way in which her skin fails to contain her inner self or 'ocean'. As Elizabeth Grosz states in *Volatile Bodies*, 'bodies have all the explanatory power of minds' (1994:vii). There is an expansiveness within this notion that pushes against preconceived frameworks that define 'character', 'power', and even 'gender', and allows a circumvention of limitations ascribed by models that reduce subjectivity to the psychical interior. In reframing a fictional nun in these terms, I hoped to challenge the mind/body binary model dominant in the Catholic Church and reveal a new means of understanding.

Attempting to write female embodiment presents some challenges. One difficulty lies in the way that women have historically been constructed in literary and social terms, as closely aligned to the body – a leaking, unpredictable, reproducing, yet frail body – while men, conversely, have traditionally aligned with 'what they (falsely) believe is a purely conceptual order' (Grosz 1994:14). This patriarchal bodily positioning, as Grosz posits, has been used to justify women's secondary social position, and arguably occurs no more decidedly than in Christianity, in which male clergy remain wedged firmly between women and God (1994:1). Given these corporeal limits, it is understandable, as Grosz argues, that feminists have attempted 'to define themselves in non- or extracorporeal terms' (1994:14). Thus, choosing to locate subjectivity in the body of an (arguably) subjugated character is fraught.

However, avoiding an embodied femininity does little to challenge patriarchal literary discourses or refigure female corporeality (especially within a religious discourse where it is arguably most needed); it merely excises the flesh and subjective experience of being and writing Woman. Although the question of how women's bodies should be constructed in literature is well beyond the scope of this essay, perhaps one answer may be embedded in the intentional making processes used to create 'Consumption'; these locate the body as central to both the *act* of writing and the narrative itself, instead of at the periphery**.**

To this end, I used a corporeal creative writing-as-research methodology. The notion of corporeal writing relates to French feminist Hélène Cixous's philosophy of *écriture féminine* (translation: feminine writing), which she differentiates from a traditional male, structuralist approach. Cixous states that 'writing comes from deep inside. It is deep in my body, further down, behind thought' (Cixous 1993:118; 1976:873-893). Rather than suggesting techniques for how écriture féminine is produced, Cixous discusses this writing as a way of 'being-in-language' (Gibbons 2006:177). We read: 'I don't plan ever…I just have a feeling which is a very strange feeling of trust. It's as if I believe that if I go to the place of appointment, it will come' (Cixous 2004:122). In order to develop a methodology honouring Cixous's writing philosophy, I engaged with the corporeal writing strategies of Lidia Yuknavitch, who says of Cixous in her novel *Chronology of Water:*

> With Hélène Cixous you must close your eyes and open your mouth. Wider. So open your throat opens. Your oesophagus…Wider…Open the well of your sex…Yell corporeal prayer. This is writing. (2010:451)

Like Cixous, Yuknavitch's philosophy derives from the notion of the body as a narrative source. Yuknavitch states 'your body is an experience collector' (2015), and her techniques encourage experimentation with non-linear forms and fragments of bodily experience, incorporating the sensory from both subject matter and the writing process itself. Further, in her Youtube videos on corporeal writing (Yuknavitch 2015), she encourages writers to unearth their ‘primary metaphors’: for example, water is one of Yuknavitch’s primary metaphors, recurring in many forms throughout her work. She explains that through identifying her primary metaphors, she learned ‘her subconscious had created a way for me to tell a story’ (Yuknavitch 2015). Her techniques were thus adopted for use in this project.

To further engage with corporeality, I devised a generative writing schedule to create conditions under which my body was subject to temporal control that echoed the monastic governing of a nun’s body. Although the bodily experience of being a nun is poorly documented, some facts are known about their movements – from when they rose, recreated, worked and prayed, spoke, to what they ate, drank, and wore. Worldwide, religious life was heavily regulated and dictated by the 1917 Code of Canon Law (Abbo and Hannan 1952), the regulatory laws of the Church, along with a set of papal-approved rules (known as ‘the Rule’) and other constitutions. Across countries and orders, nuns followed very similar schedules, which provided a foundation for knowing some things about what nuns’ bodies did in time and space, *objectively*. We also know from these sources that nuns were expected to abstain from physical expressions of sexuality, shun ‘particular’ friendships, and reject benign sensuousness, such as ‘pleasures of the palate’ (Curran 1989:56).

In order to replicate a sense of a pre-Vatican II nun’s heavily structured schedule and engage with repetitive physical restrictions, I set writing sessions at the Catholic prayer times of Lauds, Vespers, and Compline; three of the seven canonical Hours of prayer. For six weeks, I committed to writing three times daily for thirty minutes (6.30am, 5.30pm, and 9pm), four days per week. ‘Stream of consciousness’ writing was used to produce content related to the broad themes of a fictional lay sister in the 1960s. I disregarded adherence to traditional punctuation, grammatical concerns, and line breaks in order to keep the text open and allow for creation of unintended word combinations and syntactical meanings, and I set no expectations around content or quantity of output: the only requirement was to show up and write.

Over forty-three thousand words were produced, from which I developed the final artefact. This process of creative writing-as-research, which sits within the framework of practice-led research, is concerned with ‘new knowledge or understandings generated by the studio enquiry and methodology that may not have been revealed through other research processes’ (Barrett and Bolt 2012:1). Using this process meant the knowledge or understandings derived from the research phase would be unpredictable; nevertheless, I had developed a hypothesis for my outcomes. Before commencing the writing-as-research stage, I researched Catholic doctrine, constitutions, and conventions that ruled convents in the pre-Vatican II era and developed a conceptual knowledge of what life might be like for a lay sister. Combining this knowledge with Foucault's (1975) theory of disciplinary power in monastic life, and the concomitant resistance to this power, I contended that my own subjection to temporal control would lead to a form of resistance to the structured writing times, which in turn would affect the creative writing output.

Instead, a new understanding was derived from the practice itself. Gaylene Perry, in her essay on creative writing-as-research, states that the 'creative process is not outcome-driven but rather an experiential journey' (in Barrett and Bolt 2012). In effect, the act of being creative throws forth understandings that derive from the act of doing. In the case of my project, these understandings are as follows. Through this methodology, the mode of writing shifted quickly from 'writing a narrative about a body' to an embodied practice in which creative output was noticed but not amended or judged, and sensory details from the physical act of sitting and writing were incorporated, along with shifts of mood, light, and fragments of dreams that inhabited the periphery of my consciousness on waking. The permissiveness of this practice – along with the non-negotiable nature of the scheduled writing – seemed to largely bypass the usual effort needed to produce 'good' writing; indeed, the process became less about outcome than attending to the act itself.

In *A Philosophy of Practising*, Pont describes practising as 'a cultivated mode...a sensibility within doing' (2021:3). Under these terms, as a sensibility within doing, the set writing schedule could be described as 'practising' – a process that was generative without the sense of usual exertion. Pont refers to this ease as an aspect of practising, so that practising 'by-pass[es] or abstain[s] from the natural effort' (2021:153). The natural effort in this case would be to forcefully 'produce new writing' rather than let it arise without intervention from the act of practicing. By this reasoning, both 'natural' effort and 'unnatural' effort would result in the production of written material, but the distinction (for this project at least) lies in the experience and origins of its production; in the first instance a cerebral effort is required, in the second it is that which arises seemingly naturally – and yet without 'natural' effort – from the body, which perhaps goes to Cixous's point that an écriture féminine 'comes from deep inside', rather than being a forced enterprise conforming to literary norms and structures (1993:118).

Indeed, throughout this corporeal writing methodology, I noted a heightened awareness of my own embodied sensations, which was consequently integrated into the construction of Alba. Thus, although the narrative remains constrained by the androcentric Catholic Church at one register, the methodology encouraged expressions of physical pleasure, sexuality, and suffering (for example, Alba's starved state is presented as one akin to jouissance) that liberates, at least partially, the protagonist from religious taboo and binarised thinking. In some respects, ‘Consumption’ could be considered an exploration of the ways in which a subjugated body seeks or experiences pleasure and this prompts questions for future work about corporeal subjugation and its effects on the experience of female embodiment.

A further outcome of the mode of writing used was that my anticipated resistance to the writing process did not emerge. Instead, I looked forward to the unexpected sense of freedom and space for contemplation that I felt during the sessions. Through this experience, insight was gained into how the within-schedule liberty I felt during writing might correlate to a quietude or solace – or even an expanded sense of space – which nuns from pre-Vatican II regimes may have experienced despite (or as a consequence of?) their cloistered, scheduled lives. In a study examining responses of Catholic nuns to corporal discipline, investigators found that as well as enacting various forms of resistance, some women also reported the rigid structure ‘allowed space for reflection’ and made ‘space for survival, resistance, and even solace within rigid corporally-based disciplinary structures’ (Gervais and Watson 2014:301). Affect theorist Ann Cvetkovich (2012:190) argues that repetitive corporeal practice of activities rooted in the everyday and domestic can be a mechanism to relieve spiritual despair. She terms this ‘the utopia of ordinary habit’ (2012:191). In both instances, the concept of a mode of ‘practising’ becomes a way to explain both space and solace within disciplined structures.

My assumptions about the corporeal experience of nuns were reframed through use of this methodology, which allowed for an experiential understanding of the way in which time-space corporeal constraints placed on the body may allow for solace or a sense of expanded space. This finding serves as a reminder that although androcentric representations of the nun have denied a female embodiment by presenting the obedient spirituality of a nun as a victory of mind over body, in fact, the reverse may be true. The lived experience of women – of any body – is inseparable from the corporeal and should be thus represented. In this way, the creative writing-as-research process generated both new understanding and unintended creative outcomes that may not have been revealed through other processes.

I developed the final artefact from extracts written during the scheduled writing, composed with various fidelities to écriture féminine. Virginia Woolf defines this form of writing (which she terms ‘the female sentence’) as writing of a ‘more elastic fibre than the old, capable of stretching to the extreme, of suspending the frailest particles, of enveloping the vaguest shapes’ (1923:191). Her description is suggestive of skin – pliable, strong, and containing. Coincidentally, skin is one of the recurring tropes (or perhaps what Yuknavitch terms a ‘primary metaphor’) in ‘Consumption’, one which arose uncoerced from the practising of creative writing during the research phase. It is to this issue – that of metaphor – that I now turn, looking not at the metaphors in 'Consumption' or how they function, but rather at their origins in relation to écriture féminine.

In many forms of writing, we know metaphor to be used as a literary device, whereby it is 'a transfer of meaning in which one thing is explained in terms of another, whether a thing, emotion, or idea' (Kinzie 2013:435). Such a definition does not concern itself with the constitutive operations of metaphor, only its function as a literary trope; one that can be created or used *consciously*. In *Metaphors We Live By* (1980:145), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson posit that metaphor has deeper origins than as a linguistic device, arguing (and echoing an understanding long-established in psychoanalysis) that metaphor forms the basis of our conceptual system, which they claim is largely metaphorical (1980:3). For example, the metaphor, 'time is money', recurs in everyday expressions such as 'time well *spent*'. Such metaphors are not used for literary affect but rather are used naively and sincerely, because, as Lakoff and Johnson contend, 'human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical' (1980:6). However, Cixous emphasises the mode of metaphor which arises from the *unconscious*. We read:

> I have the feeling, perhaps mistaken, that the intense use I make of metaphors is not arbitrary or capricious. For me, the origin of the metaphor is the unconscious… That in the dream there is a production which is necessary because it is dictated not by a wish or a consciousness of writing but by the drama that is played out behind thought and of which I know nothing…A force that I am not recounts my story to me…the scenes of the unconscious are aroused by affinities that are not deceptive, and that reveal relationships between a particular object, a particular scene – according to the work Freud described, of course…I let the metaphor come, exactly as if I were dreaming. (Cixous 1997:27-28)

Cixous refers to Freud's work in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), and the 'revealed relationships' to which she alludes relate to Freud's theory of condensation and displacement. Freud believed that the unconscious mind was a reservoir of thoughts, feelings, urges, and signifiers that have been repressed, which emerge – unrecognisable to the conscious mind – in symbolic form through processes of displacement (whereby one 'thing' stands in for another) and condensation (in which a fragment stands in for the whole) (Surprenant 2006:199-210).

However, it was Lacan who explicitly aligned metaphor with Freud's condensation, and metonymy with displacement, proposing that 'the unconscious is structured like a language' (Lacan 1993:119). In the way that tropes of metaphor and metonymy in language represent ideas (signifieds) in terms of other ideas, Lacan proposed that the psyche functioned in the same way, whereby ‘slips, failures, jokes and symptoms, like the elements of dreams themselves, become signifiers, inscribed in the chain of an unconscious discourse’ (Althusser 2019:141). Walker, who researches artistic practice in relation to psychoanalytic theory, on this count reads Lacan to be saying that the unconscious – and the knowledge it contains – offers a more ‘credible source of subjectivity than the consciously manipulated ego’ (Walker 2009:81). If indeed metaphor (and other mental ‘objects’) from the unconscious find their way into creative writing, such writing could foreseeably contain subjective truths, perhaps even truths freed (or less-shackled at least) from interference by the intentional (conscious) thought processes.

Extrapolating this notion to ‘Consumption’, it is hoped that through engagement with the concept of écriture féminine, the discourse of the androcentric Catholic Church and patriarchal writing traditions at large might be in part, or even in some minor way, circumvented or elided. In the same way, constraints of conscious knowledge about a subject are sent to the background, thereby creating space for new forms of meaning or intimations of other sensibilities or unsaid ways for understanding the 1960s nun experience.

I have come to see the writing project of artefact and exegesis as a reconciliation. The act of writing can be a search for clarity or a means to understand ourselves. But for Cixous, as read by Gibbons, ‘it is also…an open-ended exploration of, and an experience of being explored by, that to which one’s attention is called (2006:171). What, if anything, did the ‘exploration’ throughout this project, reconcile? In writing ‘Consumption’, it seems that two ostensibly incompatible things were brought together – écriture féminine and the dominant narrative structure – which is, as is often the case, a reconciliation of necessity.

As feminist and French scholar Leslie Rabine states, ‘écriture féminine attempts to write the body, but the body it writes is a cultured one’ (1987:32). Dependence on traditional modes of writing seems, to an extent, unavoidable in depicting a character from an era in which patriarchal, dualist, hierarchical oppositions organise the predominant discourse. This dependence was intensified by a narrative tethered, in part at least, to an androcentric theological vocabulary predating the twentieth century. Yet, despite the seemingly rigid confines of language and social discourses bounding the experience of the early 1960s nun, écriture féminine offers a possible means by which to de-familiarise the past, and, specifically, historical representations of female corporeality. This type of writing may in turn challenge assumptions and subjective truths about ‘being a nun’ through engagement with alternate modes of language that attempt to express an embodied female subjectivity.

A distinction should be made here that ‘Consumption’ does not, nor is attempting to, *represent* corporeality in the sense of ‘constituting’ or ‘standing in for’ the experience of any nun of that era. Rather, the artefact, and the process of creating it, hoped to *generate* corporeality; a corporeality not in opposition to the male as subordinate or lacking, but rather one that sits *below* binaries of the phallic symbolic order. As Cixous says: ‘Writing, in its noblest function, is the attempt to unerase, to unearth, to find the primitive picture again, ours, the one that frightens us’ (1993:9). Following the line of Cixous’s thought, perhaps the use of traditional forms of writing says less about literary traditions and more about the body: perhaps it is the body itself that causes fear.

The capability of the female body – not only on the page but also in the flesh – to distinguish itself is a formidable, disrupting thing. For this reason alone, the early Church created doctrine (still in existence today) to contain it (Curran 1989). It is this power that Cixous, among other feminist writers, called women to reclaim (Cixous 1976; Woolf 1923). It is possible that écriture féminine is one means to restore such power. Of note, Cixous did not believe in *opposing* phallocentric symbolic systems, but rather complicating them through plays with language. Perhaps this practice of complication is what allows embodied narrative forms to emerge as palimpsests of stories inscribed over and through our cultured bodies that are underwritten by centuries of literary tradition.

As Barrett states in *Practice as Research*, ‘innovation is derived from methods that cannot always be pre-determined, and “outcomes” of artistic research are *necessarily* unpredictable’ (2012:1). Unlike research in other fields in which narrow parameters are set and variables controlled, creative writing-as-research allows a breadth of reflective investigation that has the potential to produce – or access – a broad range of insights. As academic Dominique Hecq suggests, ‘creative writing research is a triangulation of two seemingly mutually exclusive discourses; one recognising the reality of the unconscious, and the other the importance of rational and critical process’ (2012:3). In other words, creative writing-as-research is a process of reconciliation between rational or critical processes and the unconscious, from which valuable insights might arise. Such insights may have the capacity to effect small but positive changes by creating space within existing dominant discourses for alternate understandings to be explored and expressed.

Works Cited List

Abbo JA and Hannan JD (1952) *The Sacred Canons: A Concise Presentation of the Current Disciplinary Norms of the Church*, B Herder Book Co, St Louis MO.

Althusser L (2019) 'Freud and Lacan' in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, (Louis Althusser ed) Monthly Review Press, USA.

Barrett E and Bolt B (eds) (2012) *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I.B. Tauris, London.

Barrett T (2022) 'Developing feminist narrative forms through practice-led research: portraying corporeality of a 1960s Australian Catholic nun' [unpublished Masters thesis], Deakin University, Burwood.

Burley S (2005) 'An Overview of the Historiography of Women Religious in Australia' *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, accessed 20 January 2022**.**

Campion E (1978) 'Irish Religion in Australia' *Australasian Catholic Record* 1(Jan):8.

Cixous H (1976) 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (Cohen K and Cohen P trans) *Signs* 1(4):875-893.

Cixous H (1993) *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing* (Cornell S and Sellers S trans) Columbia University Press, New York.

Cixous H (2004) *The Writing Notebooks of Héléne Cixous* (Sellers S ed and trans) Continiuum, New York.

Curran P (1989) *Grace Before Meals: Food Ritual and Body Discipline in Convent Culture*, University of Illinois Press, Chicago.

Cvetkovich A (2012) *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Freud S (1900) *The Interpretation of Dreams*, (trans Crick J) Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999.

Foucault M (1975) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Sheridan A trans) Allen Lane, London.

Gervais C and Watson A (2014) 'Discipline, Resistance, Solace and the Body: Catholic Women Religious' Convent Experiences from the Late 1930s to the Late 1960s' *Religious* 5:277-303. DOI: 10.3390/rel5010277

Gibbons R (2006) 'To Write with the Use of Cixous' *New Literary History* 37(1):169-178.

Grosz E (1994) *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*, Indiana University Press, Indianopolis.

Hecq D (2012) 'Beyond the mirror: On experimental knowing as research mode in creative writing.' *TEXT* 16(2):1-13.

Kinzie M (2013) *A Poet's Guide to Poetry*, University of Chicago Press, London.

Lacan J (1993) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book III:The psychoses 1955-1956* (Grigg R trans) WW Norton and Company, New York.

Lakoff G and Johnson M (1980) *Metaphors we Live By*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

O'Brien A (2005) *God's Willing Workers: Women and Religion in Australia* University of New South Wales Press Ltd, Sydney.

Pont A (2021) *A Philosophy of Practising With Deleuze's* Difference and Repetition, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Rabine L (1987) 'Ecriture Féminine as Metaphor' *Culture Critique* 8:19-44.

Surprenant C (2006) 'Freud and Psychoanalysis' in Waugh P (ed) *Literary Theory and Criticism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 199-210.

Spender D (1980) *Man Made Language*, Routledge, London.

Trimingham Jack C (2001) 'What's in a veil? Discourses informing a study of lay sisters' *Change: Transformations in Education* 4(1):76-90.

Walker S (2009) 'Artmaking, Subjectivity, and Signification' *Studies in Art Education* 51:77-91.

Woolf V (1923) 'Romance and the Heart' in *The Nation and the Athenaeum* May 19, 1923.

Yuknavitch L Corporeal Writing Youtube. 13 December 2015, accessed 3 December 2020.

Yuknavitch L (2010) *Chronology of Water*, Canongate Books, Edinburgh.