

## Gender Awareness in Language Education



Community

Newsletter

SPRING 2014

### Message from the Coordinators

Diane Nagatomo Fiona Creaser

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to our first GALE Community Newsletter for 2014. Fiona and I would like to give a huge thank you to Todd Squires for volunteering to edit the newsletter this year! We would also like to shout out a huge thanks to Salem Hicks who has stepped down as Publications Chair as of April first, and a big warm welcome of appreciation to Kristie Collins who will be taking over that position. Salem will continue to stay on as the managing editor of the GALE Journal, so we expect a smooth transition and that GALE will continue to grow and develop through its publication of the newsletter and journal, and through the expanding range of activities we are taking part in. We must also thank Paul Arenson for his continual WEB support. If you haven't had a chance, please take a look at our webpage—where our activities and publications are all uploaded:  
<http://tokyoprogressive.org.uk/gale/site>

GALE members have been very busy over the past few months. Our main gathering was at JALT in KOBE where we held the GALE forum, which included Shane Doyle, Kim Bradford-Watts and Michi Saki discussing "Gender: a lifelong learning experience." GALE member Sara Mulvey was GALE's recipient of the 2012 Best of JALT award

and recognized at the Best of JALT party on the Saturday night of the conference. Once again, congratulations Sara!

GALE also co-sponsored (with SIETAR Kansai) the screening of the film "Ripples of Change," a documentary of the early women's movement in Japan in October in Osaka as well as the PGL Conference held in Tokyo in November. Gerry Yokota was a GALE sponsored invited speaker, and talked about "Engendering Communities of Peace" and GALE members Jen Teeter, Tina Ottman, and Michele Steele presented. Fiona Creaser also gave a harassment workshop in Osaka in December, please take time out to read Sandra Healy's report about this.

In February many GALE members met up and presented at the annual WELL (Women Educators and Language Learners) retreat at the National Women's Education Center in Saitama.

Upcoming events include the PAN Sig conference in Miyazaki in May where Fiona Creaser, Aaron Hahn, Susan Pavloska, and Francis Shinkai will present a panel entitled "Sustaining gender awareness in the EFE classroom". Diane Nagatomo, Reiko Yoshihara and Kristie Collins will be representing GALE at the Yokohama JALT meeting in May as well.

GALE takes a leading role in the forthcoming JALT International Conference to be held in Tsukuba from November 21-24 by sponsoring

Kimie Takahashi (*Language Learning, Gender and Desire*) as a plenary speaker. In addition to the gender-related plenary and presentations, we will also hold our annual GALE Panel and our annual general meeting as well.

Fiona and I are now in our third year as co-coordinators for GALE and we feel that it is time to start passing the leadership into new hands. Neither of us knew what we were getting into when we volunteered three years ago, but we both can say that it has been a rewarding and fun experience. If anyone is interested in taking over the reigns, please let us know! We are more than willing to stay in the background as shadows so that new coordinators will not be left alone!

Diane and Fiona

## **On Feminism and Contemporary Avant-garde Poetry by Women**

by Jane Joritz-Nakagawa

At the GALE Forum at the 2012 national JALT conference in Hamamatsu, I presented textbook data demonstrating that poetry by women and avant-garde poetry, as well as poetry by non-white poets, is relatively in most cases and often completely neglected in introductory college level American and British poetry textbooks published in Japan. Additionally, I have noted at universities I have taught at in Japan, by examining course syllabi online and talking with colleagues, that my colleagues were rarely teaching the work of women poets or teaching any avant-garde work. In my own teaching I include poetry by women including avant-garde poetry by supplementing the course textbooks with such work, providing it in handout form to my students. This work has received enthusiastic responses from my students. I also decided several years ago to make the work of women including avant-garde poetry by women

the focus of my presentations at local literary and pedagogy conferences because such work is also typically under-represented at these conferences as well; any a conference attendee can easily assess this by examining conference agendas. In my experience, more male than female academics present at these conferences and male presenters more often tend to focus on the work of male poets just as the reverse is often true (the fewer female presenters often focus on the work of female poets in my experience). It's almost as if there is a kind of gender based apartheid at local conferences.

My decision to focus on the work of women and avant-garde work in classes and presentations is in part reactive (to address imbalances) and in part based on the fact that I enjoy this work and feel it worthwhile, interesting and important. I'm glad that students also have found it so, according to anonymous course evaluation data I've collected over the years.

Below I share the text of a 30-minute speech I gave at the IASIL (International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures) conference in Kyoto in the fall of 2013. I was the only presenter who discussed the work of an avant-garde female poet over the two days of the conference. However the speech was well-received and because I link the work of Catherine Walsh to the work of other contemporary female innovative poets, thinkers, and artists from Japan, the U.S., U.K., and France to feminism (especially Marxist-feminism) and to the work of a few male thinkers, I would like to share this speech with GALE readers in the hopes that it may encourage GALE educators to include the work of women poets and thinkers and avant-garde work in their courses. Interestingly, I wrote the publisher (Tony Frazer of Shearsman, an elite independent poetry publisher based in England) about my speech and the conference. In a private communication Mr. Frazer indicated to me that Walsh's work is largely ignored in Ireland. When I asked why Mr. Frazer replied it is because Walsh is female and avant-garde. The organizer of the panel I spoke on introduced my speech as being about "one of Ireland's most overlooked poets."

In addition to feminism the speech explores connections between Walsh's work, multiculturalism and capitalism and adopts a montage-like style of presentation consonant with the type of work it discusses.

**IASIL Japan Conference 2013** October 12  
Kyoto *Notre Dame University*

Out of bo[u]nd(arie)s{age}: Catherine Walsh's  
*Optic Verve*

Speaker: Jane Joritz-Nakagawa

*Optic Verve* is a nomadic, adventurous weaving of fragments of lineated and non-lineated bits of verse and prose and languages and points of view, at turns personal and political or the fused personal is political/political is personal, drawing on/exposing lyrical (in the sense of personal and also musical), non-lyrical and language-oriented traditions and non-traditions but limiting itself to no one of these in a kind of transcultural transpoetic symphonic statement.

Catherine Walsh writes in *Optic Verve* that "a writer draws webs of connections"; *Optic Verve* will itself be by Joritz-Nakagawa connected to diverse feminist works such as some of those of France's Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, American linguist Robin Lakoff, American poets Ann Lauterbach and Leslie Scalapino, British poet Frances Presley, Japanese poets Park Kyong Mi, Sekiguchi Ryoko and Kora Rumiko, and Japanese visual artists Ikemura Leiko and Murase Kyoko as well as Deleuze & Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Walsh's strategy to resuscitate the reader at the death's door of capitalism, patriarchy and other forms of control and authority is a kind of Marxist-feminist dissident speech, a poetic defibrillation technique that works a bit like a camera spun around incessantly at a busy street corner in any anonymous city, though the city may mostly be one inside the mind, inhabited by outcasts, non-conformists and related Others whose fragmented sub- and semi-

conscious impressions have been given form in *Optic Verve*.

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Out of bo[u]nd(arie)s{age}: Catherine Walsh's  
*Optic Verve*

Walsh has stated:

You are only supported if you are a part of that tradition . . . which must celebrate above all else your sense of Irishness and your sense of being part of an ongoing linear tradition of Irish writers, writing out of a sense of bondage almost<sup>1</sup>

*Optic Verve* (Shearsman Books, 2010) runs against/away from linearity, stasis, authority, convention, patriarchy, structure and bondage towards the nonlinear, unhinged, culturally, poetically and linguistically plural and emancipated:

of any natural good sense processed  
packaging of eagerness curiosity

quick commodification arrogance  
attempting dominance

lots of people to ask to leave the enclosure --

(*OV*: 39)

continuity

what

lies beneath

granite

(*OV*: 42)

<sup>1</sup> from *Not Heaney, Healy: Questions, Answers and Explorations at the Edge of Irish Writing* by Robert Archambeau, online: <<http://home.jps.net/~nada/healy.htm>> (6 June 2013)

[poetry] (language/ curiosity and energy) breaks free from its containment in (penitentiary of) everyday (commodified) life -- "continuity" heavy and dead as stone --

Rather than Ireland specifically the setting is everywhere (or nowhere special):

Whose place was it? To say what its name is is saying I don't know whose it is. There's a girl somewhere, in London or Birmingham, Madrid or Barcelona, who says what its name is every time she tells her story. . .

There's a boy in Cork or Clondalkin, Amsterdam or Australia, with a history of hard times, hard work . . . (OV: 24)

with shifting pluralized linguistic boundaries:

nunca mas

no volved nunca mas

aquí estoy (OV: 16)

and locations: "never again / do not return anymore / here I am"

A dislocation that can come from encountering other cultures, "other"/other parts of oneself, Other(s) (as oneself):  
. . . . Affable

Middle Eastern shop owner who had children cross to shelter under the awning in heavy showers, extending it over the concrete slope for them. We were not likely to be carting home sacks of rice and beans unaided. . . The occasional very hot day giving elderly women carrying shopping a seat, a glass of water, he would ask if we would like to wait beneath the awning. This was

part of beginning to notice meeting other peoples, other cultures.

(OV: 31)

A process, a statement of incompleteness ("becoming" is anti-fascist as Lucy explains<sup>2</sup> and dissident speech is relativistic as Meyers notes<sup>3</sup>). [As quoted in my article, *Unstable Identities*, published in The Argotist Online<sup>4</sup>] Kristeva has commented:

all identities are unstable: the identity of linguistic signs, the identity of meaning and, as a result, the identity of the speaker<sup>5</sup>

or as Dani Cavallaro writes: "The notion of a conscious and unified self is imaginary . . ."; this insight "is relevant to contemporary feminism because it stresses there are no given identities and that there is therefore nothing sacred or immutable about patriarchal definitions of woman"<sup>6</sup>

-- nor sacred/immutable about nationalistic conceptions of countries or their inhabitants. As Kristeva has written "Machiavellism is nothing more than patriotism."<sup>7</sup>

Walsh writes:

Maybe you are young, Irish, money in your pocket . . . Do you want to be the

<sup>2</sup> see Niall Lucy, *Postmodern literary theory*, chapter 11 (Blackwell, 1997) as well as Deleuze & Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (trans. Massumi; London: Continuum, 1987) which states that "becomings . . . have neither culmination nor subject, but draw one another into zones of proximity or undecidability" (p. 558).

<sup>3</sup> Discussed on p. 92 and in chapter five of *Subjection and Subjectivity*, by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> <<http://www.argotistonline.co.uk/Joritz-Nakagawa%20essay.htm>>

<sup>5</sup> in Dani Cavallaro's *French Feminist Theory*, p. 78 (London: Continuum, 2003)

<sup>6</sup> *ibid* p. 27

<sup>7</sup> In Kristeva's *Strangers to ourselves* (trans. Roudiez; Columbia UP, 1991) p. 110

Polish man? Do you want to be the  
Russian/ Latvian/ Croatian/  
Lithunian/Slovakian/Serbian/Estonian/C  
zech/Slovenian/Ukranian (OV: 95)

-- identities, interactions and inter-connections  
raise blurry questions, yield uncertain results; "all  
that is solid melts into air"<sup>8</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari have written:

We live in the age of partial objects,  
bricks that have been shattered to bits,  
and leftovers. We long longer believe in  
the existence of fragments that, like  
pieces of an antique statue, are merely  
waiting for the last one to be turned up,  
so that they may all be glued back  
together to create a unity that is  
precisely the same as the original unity<sup>9</sup>.

*Optic Verve* is of course a nomadic, adventurous  
weaving of fragments of lineated and non-lineated  
bits of verse and prose and languages and points  
of view, at turns personal and political and the  
fused personal is political/political is personal<sup>10</sup>,  
bits of writing and comments about writing that  
have no answers:

What needs

to be asked here, at this juncture? Here,  
at this? Why? How will that pertain to  
the outcome? Is there an outcome? How  
else term whatever consequence is then?  
Did you understand anything more or

<sup>8</sup> from chapter one of *The Communist Manifesto* by Marx  
and Engels:  
<[http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/commu-  
nist-manifesto/ch01.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/commu-<br/>nist-manifesto/ch01.htm)> (21 Sept 2013)

<sup>9</sup> p. 42: *Anti-Oedipus: capitalism and schizophrenia* (trans.  
Hurley et al; Univ of MN Press, 1983)

<sup>10</sup> "The personal is political" by Carol Hanisch (1969) is  
online at:  
<<http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html>>  
(accessed August 29, 2013)

differently? Did you meet, what?  
(OV: 30)

A picture. Not a photograph, perhaps a  
photograph. Not a painting, perhaps a  
painting. (OV: 30)

If we compare Williams' "The Poem":

It's all in

the sound. A song.

Seldom a song. It should

be a song--made of

particulars, wasps,

a gentian -- something

immediate, open

scissors, a lady's

eyes -- waking

centrifugal, centripetal

unlike Williams of course Walsh never limits  
herself to the prescriptive "no ideas but in things"  
– nothing must be or "should" be.... "should" is  
authoritative, masculine (masculinist; note also the  
"male gaze" looking at "a lady's eyes"). An  
authoritative voice speaks (from above  
downward) to an object; a feminine or feminist  
interaction may rather be something more like that  
described by Luce Irigaray:

When I perceive the other, it is  
important that I am attentive to at least

three dimensions: the qualities of the subject who perceives, the other present to me as an object of perception, the other who is and must remain a subject.<sup>11</sup>

head full of

immensities

world small

again

expansive

stretchy

encompassing

sketchy

life

(OV: 64)

Walsh explores both subject and object positions in *Optic Verve* and poetic practice both by “doing” it and analyzing it:

. . . what does a writer do?

Looks, hears, watches, listens, pays attention. A writer thinks, waits, analyses, formulates, intuitively feels, reads a lot. A writer explores music, painting, drawing, sculpture, dance, theatre; moves out in the world, notices the quotidian. A writer draws webs of connections . . .

(OV: 109)

I am reminded of Paul Hoover’s comment about his own poem “Poems We Can Understand”:

The poem marks a period when I was trying to move from a poetry consisting exclusively of imagery – I’d been raised to think that “essaying” in poetry is unacceptable—to a poetry of thought and music.”<sup>12</sup>

“Sketchy / stretchy” – a unified “solid” impression would be an oppression --and would be male; as D. H. Lawrence wrote:

A woman is not . . . even a distinct and definite personality . . . A woman is a living fountain whose spray falls delicately around her . . . A woman is a strange soft vibration on the air, going forth unknown and unconscious . . .<sup>14</sup>

Connections (= feminine, a desire to be connected<sup>13</sup>). . . in attempt to grasp (! perhaps not, more like “brush”) something (what?):

[As mentioned in my *HOW2* ecopoetics postcard, *Modern Pastorals*, online at: <http://how2postcard.blogspot.jp/2008/02/ecopoetics-postcard-modern-pastorals-by.html>] Catherine Belsey wrote:

The avant-garde is not just a matter of style. Because it poses questions, it undermines all certainties, including the certainty that you possess the truth—and are entitled to kill people in its name.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Luce Irigaray, *To Be Two*, p. 51 (trans. Rhodes & Cocito-Monoc; New York: Routledge, 2001)

<sup>12</sup> p. 102 in *Ecstatic occasions, expedient forms*; David Lehman, ed. (Univ of Michigan, 2001)

<sup>13</sup> See for example *Masculinity and femininity: the taboo dimension of national cultures* by Geert Hofstede, p.11 and chapter five; Marcia Cavell’s discussion in *The psychoanalytic mind: from Freud to philosophy*, on pp. 230-231, of Carol Gilligan’s work; and Diana Tietjens Meyer’s discussion of Nancy Chodorow in *Subjection and subjectivity*, pp. 80-81 for examples of how the feminine is related to connectedness; yet as D. H. Lawrence noted “everything, even individuality itself, depends on relationship” (from the Kindle version, n.p. of “We Need One Another” in *The Complete Works of D. H. Lawrence*,

Delphi Classics, 2012)

<sup>14</sup> from *The Complete Works of D. H. Lawrence*; see end of note 12

<sup>15</sup> Belsey, C. *Poststructuralism: a very short introduction*.

Tamura Ryuichi wrote in his poem, “Water” :  
“Poetry is the renunciation of completion”<sup>16</sup>. In  
*Optic Verve*, sketchiness, uncertainly,  
incompletion, blurriness and question-posing  
exists against a shifting backdrop of:

large airy multi-purpose constructions  
allowing

for the ever-changing demands of running  
schools . . . (OV: 65)

candid warts and all there they are as  
ever up for grabs/down and out a line in  
the soup kitchen cardboard home on the  
street dole queue on a/wet miserable pox  
of a day a disease recently people as  
symbols our media a blight a/candid  
honesty reminiscent of some perfectly  
placed asylum perplexing procedural  
take on the madam (OV: 58)

The realization that the world I knew was  
not

a fixed unit in stasis, or the same as anyone  
else's. Freedom.

Tentatively, infrequently, an emergence.  
(OV: 22)

Blurry boundaries, a flight from stasis, definitions  
and control. In Luce Irigaray's *Elemental  
passions*:

Waiting for that wall which divides us  
to be made porous by your arrival. For  
its limit to be crossed. The line of the  
horizon temporarily effaced.<sup>17</sup>

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Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Line 2 of the poem “Water” (水), published bilingually in  
*Poetry Kanto 24* (2008), pp. 26 and 27.

<sup>17</sup> Luce Irigaray, *Elemental passions* (trans. Collie & Still,  
London: Athlone, 1992) p. 102

For me infinity means movement, the  
mobility of place. Engendering time,  
yes. Always becoming. How can that  
future be brought to pass between your  
instants which are always already  
counted?<sup>18</sup>

There is something if not also feminist girlish and  
womanly in all this blurriness becoming and  
tentativeness, as in Robin Lakoff's studies of  
women's language<sup>19</sup>, where women were found to  
use tentative and “fuzzy” language in interactions  
(hedges, dodges, tag questions, smoothers,  
discursive “fabric softeners” of various kinds  
including rising intonation -- “uptalk” -- where  
women turn statements into questions -- *Optic  
Verve* contains a preponderance of interrogatives  
for a poetry book) not because they lacked  
confidence necessarily but because they wished to  
make space to allow others in --in creating  
horizontal rather than vertical relationships; thus a  
lack of closure authority and finality – *Optic  
Verve* develops along overlapping horizontals.  
This “tentativeness” and “blurriness” – a poetry of  
incompleteness (yet complete! completed also by  
the reader) can of course be found in the work of  
other contemporary female poets, for example,  
American poet Ann Lauterbach:

Crave thee this dialogue? This touch?

Is an allegory of—

Let's walk a little into it.

David says that generation had something we  
lack,

*a calm mind. David says*

*perhaps only those from another country*

*can combine the rhetoric of feeling with*

---

<sup>18</sup> *ibid* p. 71

<sup>19</sup> See *Language and Women's Place: Text and  
Commentaries* by Robin Tolmach Lakoff, ed. Mary  
Bucholtz, Oxford UP 2004.

I have forgotten the rest.<sup>20</sup>

(David who appears to like to pontificate is not very memorable on the subject of foreigners--)  
Or Lauterbach's poem "When Color Disappoints (Joseph Beuys)" which ends:

the falling motif of the twilight

bells, many bells

some were bells

they may have been bells.<sup>21</sup>

This fuzziness and uncertainty further calls to my mind the blurry female forms in the paintings and sculptures of Ikemura Leiko ("the slightest suggestion of a body . . . They are ghostly creatures, an idea . . ." <sup>22</sup>; cf Lawrence's depiction of a woman as "a strange soft vibration on the air", above) and the female forms in the paintings of Murase Kyoko where the feminine figures never appear to dominate or overpower the landscapes (if anything the reverse!) which rather often appear to be attached to or intertwined with them, "limp and bending"<sup>23</sup> :

My voice is tiny

And my eyes, they hardly see<sup>24</sup>

Why so small and blind? Some of Murase's and Ikemura's female figures have no eyes; in several of Ikemura's works, the young female girls' eyes are blinded by their arms which extend into their eye sockets, where the arms appear to be drawn into the face to stop or wipe tears. In (excerpts from, in English translation) French poet Jeanne Hyvrard's "The Shafting":

<sup>20</sup> From Ann Lauterbach's poem "Walk" in *If in Time*, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid p. 156

<sup>22</sup> description of her art in the book *Leiko Ikemura*, pub Kerber Verlag, 2004, p. 121

<sup>23</sup> p. 119 in the art book *Kyoko Murase: Fluttering far away*, Seigensha, 2010

<sup>24</sup> ibid, from the preface

The price was oblivion

Madness had helped to postpone the moment

A becoming was needed

One had to accept the drying up

It had been going on since the beginning of time

Small already you didn't want me to live

My shadow threatened you through what strange blindness

You wanted the roadway for yourself

I was not entitled to run down to the creek<sup>25</sup>

Ikemura is no stranger to border crossing either, having lived in Europe for decades<sup>26</sup>. In the work of certain female Japanese poets we find yet more ethereal blurriness, such as in some poems of Sekiguchi Ryoko, who lives in Paris and translates her own verse into French; here in English translation: "oscillation, / which endlessly invites / overlaps and folds"<sup>27</sup>; "smoothing the flow of air"<sup>28</sup>; ". . . a staircase rhythm, the unfurling of a digital cross-section that knows no rest"<sup>29</sup>; "Filmy pieces swirl endlessly inside, tracing the changing

<sup>25</sup> From "The Shafting" (La baise) on p. 273 and 275 by Jeanne Hyvrard in *Women's poetry in France 1965-1995*, ed/trans. Michael Bishop (Wake Forest UP 1997).

<sup>26</sup> Walsh has also lived abroad. Peter Caws, in "Identity: Cultural, Transcultural, and Multicultural," wrote: ". . . every 'first' or 'native' culture in the singular . . . is 'imposed from without' . . . Consequently an identity that depends on it cannot be *one's own* identity in the strong sense . . . The dialogical process of the development of an authentic identity . . . will . . . require the transcendence of one's culture of origin" (on p. 371 of *Multiculturalism*, ed. David Theo Goldberg, pub. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

<sup>27</sup> from "Heliotropes", in *Four from Japan*, p. 58 (2006, ed/trans Sawako Nakayasu; joint pub. Litmus (Brooklyn) & Belladonna (NYC)

<sup>28</sup> ibid p. 59

<sup>29</sup> ibid p. 61



currents of air. Following the erratic flights . . . <sup>30</sup>

Compare lines by Japanese poet Park Kyong Mi (who writes of multicultural identity in essays): “On the nape of my neck runs / A single thread of the river’s water / And I am unable to lift my heavy head” <sup>31</sup> although in *Optic Verve* the blurriness appears often without or with less of the fragility some of the above excerpts could appear to suggest (depending to an extent upon where in the poem the reader finds herself perhaps of course as *Optic Verve* shifts repeatedly in tone, style and genre--).

In (excerpts from a translation of) Japanese poet, novelist and essayist Kora Rumiko’s “The painting that disappeared me”:

First the artist painted me into an ocher landscape. Next he drew in a white roadway behind me. . . . With each stroke I am whittled away. . . My body is falling to the floor in neat, red clumps. . . . He is deep in thought as he paints (what a politician!). He pushed me further into the background. I am a failure. What can I do? My life is over. Rather than take flight in fright and hide myself in a drawer, better to go on existing as an unseen particle within the canvas. No matter what, I can never have a life that has any form of its own.<sup>32</sup>

In her work “Words and Objects”:

My life sat there before me  
like one more object. It was like an  
unspeakable word. . . . To speak my  
life, I chose my words paradoxically.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid* p. 63

<sup>31</sup> From the poem “April” also in *Four from Japan*, p. 43.

<sup>32</sup> Excerpts from “The painting that disappeared me” by Kora Rumiko in Sandra Buckley’s (ed/trans) *Broken silence: voices of Japanese feminism*, p. 120 (Berkeley: Univ of Calif Press, 1997)

This was an act of treason against their language – the language of men. <sup>33</sup>

Kristeva wrote: “we each have our own self . . . blurred and nevertheless substantial . . . .” <sup>34</sup>

American poet Leslie Scalapino has commented:

Writing a form that implies closure in conventional works that I’ve heard or read—I find that completely stifling. You feel that you’re trapped and dead. I have a reaction of real claustrophobia<sup>35</sup>.

U.S. poet Lyn Hejinian has stated an intention to create “....a genuinely ‘open’ or ‘generative’ poetic text, a text that ‘relinquishes total control and challenges authority as a principle and control as a motive’”<sup>36</sup> What British poet Harriet Tarlo wrote of American poet Rosmarie Waldrop’s poetry book *Lawn of Excluded Middle* could also be said of *Optic Verve*:

Here the fractured narrative gives us the silence of a woman “without history,” a silence weighed down by the presence of the unnamed other, but with a desire to explore history and culture<sup>37</sup>

Walsh, Lauterbach, Waldrop, Scalapino, Hejinian (and others obviously) of course each engage in varieties of language-oriented poetry; as Hoover has noted:

Implicit in the language poets’ break with traditional modes such as narrative, with its emphasis on linearity and

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*. p. 129

<sup>34</sup> *Strangers to Ourselves* (see note 6), p. 118

<sup>35</sup> In Frost and Hogue, p. 309 *Innovative women poets: an anthology of contemporary poetry and interviews* (2007, Univ. of Iowa Press)

<sup>36</sup> In Perloff, M. 1996, *Wittgenstein’s ladder: poetic language and the strangeness of the ordinary*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 212

<sup>37</sup> p. 252 of “A She Even Smaller than Me: Gender Dramas of the Contemporary Avant-Garde” in Mark and Rees-Jones, *Contemporary Women’s Poetry: Reading/Writing/Practice*, Palgrave, 2000

closure, is a challenge to the male-dominant hierarchy.<sup>38</sup>

Luce Irigaray has commented:

Women cannot be self-assured without language and systems of representation being transformed, because these are appropriate to men's subjectivity.<sup>39</sup>

American poet Adrienne Rich wrote:

It's exhilarating to be alive in a time of awakening consciousness; it can also be confusing, disorienting and painful . . . .

Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for woman, is more than a search for identity; it is part of her refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society. A radical critique of literature, feminist in its impulse, would take the work first of all as a clue to how we live, how we have been living, how we have been led to imagine ourselves, how our language has trapped as well as liberated us . . . (18)

No male writer has written primarily or even largely for women, or with the sense of women's criticism as a consideration when he chooses his materials, his theme, his language . . . (20)

I feel in the work of the men whose poetry I read today a deep pessimism and fatalistic grief; and I wonder if it isn't the masculine side of what women

<sup>38</sup> Hoover, P. (Ed.) 1994, *Post modern American poetry*, New York: W. W. Norton, p. xxxiv

<sup>39</sup> in *Je, tu, nous*, p. 96 (1993; NY: Routledge, trans. Alison Martin)

have experienced, the price of masculine dominance (25).<sup>40</sup>

Kora Rumiko has said:

I felt even as a child that language was not mine, that I existed outside the language that surrounded me, like a foreigner . . . . (104)

In my own experience there has been confrontation, even war, and yet when I try to communicate these experiences, as I remember them, I find only an empty language that cannot accommodate me. I began reading foreign verse and found escape there, especially in French poetry. I came back to Japanese and began to experiment with words, breaking down the boundaries between language and self, allowing words to disappear into me, and me into words, in moments of struggle and confusion . . . . (105)

The woman that is created in the texts of Japan's male writers is a stranger to me. These novels make me angry. . . Contemporary male writers are possibly even worse. They are not mature enough to be able to represent adequately the individual experience of a woman. I can only wonder at the fact that they're so popular. It's frightening. As a Japanese I'm embarrassed at the thought of these male writers being translated and read outside of Japan. . . . When I first began writing, I was so troubled by the overt masculinity of the language of so many male writers . . . (105-106)<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> "When we dead awaken: writing as a re-vision" by Adrienne Rich, 1972; online at: <<http://www.westga.edu/~aellison/Other/Rich.pdf>> Accessed August 29 2013

<sup>41</sup> excerpts from an interview published in *Broken silence: voices of Japanese feminism* (pp. 104-108); ed/trans Sandra Buckley, Berkeley: Univ of Calif Press, 1997.

Saito Chiyo stated in her interview:

A [Japanese] young girl learns how to speak politely or in a feminine style . . . . All these layers of politeness and femininity act to blur any sense of what a woman is actually thinking (255).<sup>42</sup>

Kora Rumiko remarked in hers:

I think that in Japan it is true to say that poetic language is generally marked as feminine. (108)<sup>43</sup>

Eavan Boland has described herself as “a woman in a [an Irish] literary tradition that simplified women,” (25) remarking: “writers, if they are wise, do not make their home in any comfort within a national tradition.” (26)<sup>44</sup>

*Optic Verve* may almost be an escape into language but is a pluralistic and feminist exploration of self, society and culture/s, as well as a weaving which successfully avoids the heavy-handed stance of poet as overbearing authoritarian blabbermouth with loudspeaker; the speaker here, where one exists, is female onlooker and explorer, and part of the landscape:

-sand sea sun sky

me (OV: 82)

Whether in poem-y or prose-y (poetic/prosaic—these distinctions are often blurred by and overlapping/fused in Walsh) parts of *Optic Verve*, Walsh does not discard the affective realm:<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> From an interview with Saito, pp. 247-256; also in Buckley (see note 40, above).

<sup>43</sup> See note 40, above

<sup>44</sup> From her essay “Outside History” reprinted in Sharon Bryan, ed., *Where we stand: women poets on literary tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993).

<sup>45</sup> see e.g. Calvin Bedient’s “Against conceptualism: defending the poetry of affect,” in the *Boston Review*, online

So you can see I’m tired of the slogan type diary style. The relentless propagation of the notion, by large publishers who ought to know better; and that far from being irritated, annoyed, insulted, outraged, offended, disappointed, saddened, upset or etc. by the flogging increasingly of that dead horse of literary styles the pseudo factual, sentimentalized chick-lit/darling mummy style diary writing as base, as narrative hook, as god bless us, literary stream of consciousness; it leaves me cold. (OV: 101)

and merges the political with the personal (especially the social politics of literary style, the foreigner, and Marxist feminism). Megan Simpson, writing about innovative contemporary American poetry by women, stated:

The modes of inquiry in which these writers engage involve a feminist inquiry into authority. Always indeterminate, open, resisting closure, this writing performs interpretative, expressive, dialogic acts that require both reader and writer to participate . . . in the making of meaning<sup>46</sup>.

*Optic Verve* may be a necrophilic fantasy: an intimate yet political female dance with the would be corpse of masculinist language and hegemonic capitalism, a longpoem which could constitute a “crime against mass culture”<sup>47</sup> -- maybe just the kind of poetic defibrillator necessary for us to

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29 July 2013: <<http://www.bostonreview.net/poetry/against-conceptualism>>

<sup>46</sup> *Poetic epistemologies: gender and knowing in women’s language-oriented writing*, by Megan Simpson, 2000, State Univ of NY, p. 11

<sup>47</sup> American poet Charles Bernstein used this phrase in an interview with poetry critic Marjorie Perloff, online (accessed 29 Aug 2013) at: <[http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/perloff/articles/mp\\_cb.html](http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/perloff/articles/mp_cb.html)>, first published in *Fulcrum* no 2, 2003.

temporarily escape the deadening effects of oppressive bureaucracies and patriarchal despots who help create the giant capitalistic sinkholes into which we increasingly haplessly plunge – a step, the goddess willing, towards a new and better world like this one:

a Utopia of misfits and oddballs, in which the constraints for uniformization and conformity have been removed, and human beings grow like wild plants in a state of nature . . . no longer fettered by the constraints of a now oppressive sociality, they blossom into neurotics, compulsives, paranoids, and schizophrenics whom our society considers sick but who, in a world of true freedom, may make up the flora and fauna of “human nature” itself<sup>48</sup>

described by Fredric Jameson as well as glimpsed in books such as *Anti-Oedipus* and in volumes of poetry like Walsh’s.

In the words of a poem by British poet Frances Presley:

These units of language keep us constantly guessing, like the first steps of desire.<sup>49</sup>

*Jane Joritz-Nakagawa has over 25 years of teaching experience with university students, most recently as Associate Professor at Aichi University of Education where she taught courses in gender studies, pedagogy, British and American poetry, comparative poetry, pedagogical methods, and required EFL. As a poet who has published seven volumes of verse and as an educator and researcher, she has presented and published widely on the topic of feminism and contemporary poetry.*

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<sup>48</sup> From Fredric Jameson’s 1994 book *The Seeds of Time*, p. 99; online (30 Aug 2013) <<http://fadingtheaesthetic.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/1994-the-seeds-of-time-1.pdf>>

<sup>49</sup> From the poem “Mineheads” in *Myne: New and Selected Poems and Prose 1976-2005*, pub. Shearsman Books

## Harassment Workshop: Fighting Back

December 14, 2013

Fiona Creaser

Reported by Sandra Healy

Fiona Creaser held a practical and informative workshop at Kyoto Institute of Technology in December 2013 on the important topic of harassment. The aim of the workshop was to provide people with realistic help and advice to address issues concerning harassment.

Fiona started with an explanation of the different kinds of harassment that can occur at work including two kinds of sexual harassment: *Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment* which involves expressed or implied demands for sexual favours in exchange for some form of benefit (a promotion, a raise, a good grade or a recommendation) or to avoid some detriment (termination, demotion, a failing grade, denial of fellowship), and *Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment* which arises from unwanted conduct that is so severe or persistent that it creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment. Conduct may be physical, verbal or non-verbal. Some examples of this may be the display or use of sexually explicit materials in the workplace or classroom, touching, hugging or kissing, or conversations or jokes of a sexual nature (University of Maryland). Sexual harassment is the only type of harassment legally written into the law in Japan, but Fiona went on to define some of the other kinds of harassment that we may encounter at work.

*Academic harassment* which is defined by the Network for Action Against Academic Harassment in Japan as all kinds of hostile action perpetrated by a dominant side in the academic field. Some examples of academic harassment are not permitting the use of books or research equipment to a person, refusing to accept a research theme or forcing someone to follow a research theme. Refusing to promote someone because of

their attitude is “bad” or spreading malicious rumours about a colleague.

A third type of harassment is *power harassment*, and an example of this that Fiona and the group discussed in detail was *mobbing*. *Mobbing* is defined as an emotional assault which begins when an individual becomes the target of disrespectful and harmful behaviour. Through innuendo, rumours, gossip and public discrediting, a hostile environment is created in which one individual gathers others willingly, or unwillingly, to participate in continuous malevolent actions to force a person out of the workplace. These actions escalate into abusive and terrorising behaviour and the victim feels increasingly helpless when the organisation does not put a stop to it, or may even plan or condone it (Women in Higher Education). *Mobbing* may occur in a number of ways, and varies a great deal in scope and intensity. Some examples of mobbing behaviours are: not speaking to the target, not including the target in departmental planning, downgrading work done by the target or taking away a course from the target when the students complain of too much work, rather than supporting the target.

After working through the definitions of the various kinds of harassment, Fiona told a couple of anonymous stories of harassment, and started the interactive part of the workshop. The participants shared stories of harassment that they had witnessed, or had experienced, and thought about how they could handle situations in which harassment occurred. One important point raised was the isolation that victims often feel, and how it is important to be able to break the silence and combat this.

We also thought about the *Double Plus Factor*, a concept with which many of us in the workshop could identify with. The *Double Plus Factor* is something additional about a person’s identity which makes them stand out in a crowd, this can be someone’s ethnicity, race, sexuality and as Fiona explained in her case the fact that she was born with one hand. Fiona described how harassers spread rumours about a person’s differ-

ence and solidify already negative stereotypes about someone’s difference to excuse harassing behaviour or to deflect the harassing behaviour from themselves. By doing this they deflect their own unprofessional and unacceptable behaviour by putting the blame on the person being harassed. For example in Fiona’s case it would work along the lines of comments such as, “I think the reason Fiona is being so sensitive is because she is disabled, it must be really hard for her to be disabled and cope with work and family life. I think this is probably why she is over reacting to my request, in fact I don’t think she can probably cope at all.” By appearing sympathetic and bringing up notions of ‘ability’ and ‘disability’ the harasser is actually coming across as a very nice person whereas in fact the opposite could well be true.

A vital part of the workshop was sharing strategies and coping mechanisms, which could be used to fight harassment situations. Some of these strategies include familiarising yourself with university or workplace harassment prevention policies, keeping a diary or a record of events, talking to someone you trust and not getting sucked into the crazy world of your harasser.

A useful tool Fiona taught the group was 'The Grid of Life'. On a sheet of paper draw a large rectangle and divide it into thirds both horizontally and vertically so that you have nine boxes, kind of like a noughts and crosses or tic-tac-toe board.


On this grid write down all the things that are going on in your life. It may be difficult at first to think of nine different areas of your life, and often people start off with 3 or 4, but after a little while

it is usually possible to come up with 9 areas. The purpose of the grid is to think about your life and to try and balance all of the parts. If you do not have enough areas filled maybe you need to think about adding something to enhance your life, and if you have too many then maybe you need to think of reducing some of the things in your life. If we have a problem in one area of our life then you may be able to find strength in another area. When we put these aspects of our lives on paper it puts the harassment, or other problems, into perspective and helps us to notice other things that are important.

Another constructive step that people can take is to join a self-development course and Fiona recommended a programme called *The Springboard Women's Development Programme* which develops skills that will help identify the clear, practical and realistic steps that women can take to make a better world for themselves at work and at home, whilst building the practical skills and confidence to take these steps.

The link for this programme is:

<<http://www.springboardconsultancy.com/springboard.htm>>.

At the end of the workshop, Fiona shared some resources that we can use in Japan:

- 1) Sexual Harassment on Campus: The National Network (キャンパス・セクシュアル・全国ネットワーク) was established in 1997 and has branches all over Japan. See website: <<http://cshnet.jp>>
- 2) Network for Action against Academic Harassment (アカデミック・ハラスメントをなくすネットワーク) See website: <<http://www.naah.jp>>
- 3) The Dawn Centre: 3-49, 1-chome Otemae, Chuo-ku, Osaka, 540 0008, Phone: +81-6-6910-8615, Fax: +81-6-6910-8624, E-mail: <[dawn@dawncenter.or.jp](mailto:dawn@dawncenter.or.jp)>
- 4) Tokyo English Lifeline: <<http://www.telljp.com>> (English)
- 5) Human Rights Counselling for Foreigners at the Ministry of Justice

<<http://www.moj.go.jp/JINKEN/jinken21.html>>  
(English)

The workshop was a thorough introduction to harassment and the practical things that we can do to overcome it, and I would highly recommend it to everyone who has experienced harassment firsthand or has been a witness to it. Fiona is planning to continue her workshops around Japan so keep an eye out for further details or feel free to invite Fiona to do a workshop in your local area and if she is able to do so she will.

The University of Maryland:

<<http://www.president.umd.edu/legal/policies/def.html>>

Women in Higher Education:

<<http://www.wihe.com/displayNews.jsp?id=18929>>

Network for Action Against Academic Harassment:

<<http://www.naah.jp/kenkyu/canada.pdf>>

*Fiona Creaser is an Associate Professor at The University of Kitakyushu and her field of research is harassment in Japan. She teaches a seminar on gender studies as well as classes on Japanese culture and society.*

*Sandra Healy is an Associate Professor at Kyoto Institute of Technology and her research interests include gender, language and culture and extensive reading.*

**A Global Discussion on International Women's Day**

by Kristie Collins

In March, 2014, I had the good fortune to be asked to join a University of Tsukuba delegation to attend the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centers & Associations (WFUCA) 2014 International Conference on “Global Ethics, Sustainable Development & Social Media” in New York City. The most thrilling part of this opportunity, in my eyes, was the fact that the five-day event overlapped with International Women’s Day, celebrated each year on March 8<sup>th</sup>, and that a special panel was being organized at the United Nations Headquarters to commemorate the day. I could not wait to hear the speakers address the plethora of concerns and the multitude of accomplishments related to women—and thus, to children and men, as well—in their respective nations. Having spent thirteen of the past eighteen years in Japan, I was eager to hear how other countries were prioritizing women’s issues, particularly in regional/national UNESCO circles, as UNESCO’s two (current) global priorities are “Africa” and “Gender Equality.”

colleagues—including our university president and one of our vice presidents—over the five-day stay. While Tsukuba was the largest delegation (and a co-sponsor) at the conference, there were nearly 200 participants in attendance, representing more than 20 countries. In addition to the WFUCA regional attendants, ten youth laureate participants from Pakistan, Kenya, India, Italy, Indonesia, Lithuania, the US, and the Philippines were celebrated for their prize-winning contributions to the Worldwide Multimedia Youth Competition. It was heartwarming to hear about the types of projects that these young people are undertaking in their communities—from creating village libraries, to designing regenerative bicycle brakes, to campaigning for economic policies to alleviate world hunger—and they certainly give us hope for a more compassionate and sustainable future.



Most of our delegation arrived to New York on March 7<sup>th</sup>, and it was wonderful to have the chance to get better acquainted with many of my



On the morning of March 8<sup>th</sup>, delegates were shuttled from the hotel to the United Nations Headquarters for the opening session of the conference. Finally, after the formalities were completed and a lunch was served, it was time for

the afternoon panel on “International Women’s Day.” The panel was comprised of seven speakers: Vice President Caroline Fern Benton, University of Tsukuba (Japan); Ambassador Mitsuhei Murata, Executive Director of the Japan Society for Global System and Ethics (Japan); Sarah Jibril, Ph.D., Special Advisor to the Nigerian President on Ethics and Value (Nigeria); Mrs. Daniela Popescu, President EFUCA (Romania); Mr. Bill Perkins, New York State Senator (US); Mrs. Marialuisa Stringa, Ex officio Member, WFUCA (Italy); and Ms. Song Lijun, Vice President Beijing Municipal UNESCO Clubs Associations (China). Each panelist had approximately ten minutes to speak, and the session wrapped up with a question and answer period and closing remarks by University of Tsukuba’s President, Kyosuke Nagata.



The panel topics were wide-ranging and, for much of the session, seemed somewhat watered down. While the American senator and the WFUCA/EFUCA representatives focused on the importance of involving women in decision making (without direct reference to ways to do so), the Chinese delegate spoke at length about the ways in which gender equality is being achieved in education, work and society in her home country. More contentiously, Dr. Jibril spoke to the ‘reclaiming’ of power by embracing (traditional) femininity and addressed laws and practices related to sexuality and gender identity in her country. Dr. Jibril’s talk was specifically linked to the current debate on the criminalization

of homosexuality in areas of Africa, and this part of the panel discussion made evident the difficulties faced when trying to communicate across diverse cultures and countries. Listening to this presentation—representing a view so very contrary to my peers’ and my own—I considered how often these cross-cultural discussions must occur at the UN, and I hoped that world leaders will continue to navigate these difficult waters, finding ways to respect cultural differences, yet ultimately prioritizing human rights in their policies and practices.



The standout speakers of the panel were, in my estimation, the two Japanese representatives; Tsukuba’s own Vice President Benton and Ambassador Murata. Dr. Benton offered a thoughtful presentation on the importance of women’s roles in the recovery and reconstruction of Tohoku, emphasizing the need for women to take on more active and vocal positions in society. She presented data on the casualties from both the Great Hanshin Earthquake (1995) and the Great East Japan Earthquake (2011), and explained how the larger numbers of female casualties can be explained by social factors, such as some women’s inability to reach safety as they tended to help family members escape first. Dovetailing Dr. Benton’s presentation, Ambassador Murata introduced a compelling talk entitled “A Plea for a Civilization of Harmony Based on Maternal Culture.” Ambassador Murata focused on the catastrophic results of power-based civilizations—seen in vastly disparate living conditions and devastated environmental circumstances



worldwide—and built a case for a ‘maternal’ civilization of harmony. Both panelists advocated for women to be encouraged into previously male-dominated areas of study and work, and for women and men to reconsider the values that underpin the way societies are currently being constructed and led.

The rest of the conference offered panels and presentations, which also, in many ways, related back to gender issues and women’s concerns. From panels on “21<sup>st</sup> Century Education and Civil Society 2.0” to “The Future We Want: Ethics as a New Foundation for Sustainable Development,” it was clear that all delegates saw gender equality and increased female participation in education and leadership as necessary for peace and sustainable development worldwide. Throughout the meetings, galas, and courtesy visits, however, I reflected upon my expectations of what this conference and trip would mean to me, and what I actually gained from the experience. To my surprise, the “eureka moment” of what I did learn from my trip to New York came to me after my return to Japan.



On March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, less than 24 hours after returning to Japan from the UNESCO WFUCA conference, I attended an afternoon symposium at

the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo, titled “Japan-Canada Policy Dialogue on Democracy, Diversity, and Disasters: From Ottawa to Tokyo.” For the event, two panels addressed a variety of topics related to gender, diversity, and social vulnerability, and advocated for increased participation of women in the leadership necessary to rebuild the Tohoku region. From the Director-General of the Gender Equality Bureau (Ms. Tomoko Samura), to the Head of the Asia Pacific United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (Ms. Hang Thi Thanh Pham), to the President of Japan Women’s Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (Ms. Akiko Domoto), the message was the same: women need to take their place at the table in directing the future of Tohoku—and Japan, and the world. We learned that the Japan Women’s Network for Disaster Risk Reduction was drafting recommendations for including gender perspectives in disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy for inclusion in the “Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (HFA2),” and that these recommendations are going to be considered for adoption at a UN World Conference to be held in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, in March, 2015. The strategies and ideals presented by these panelists reflected similar views to those of Vice President Benton and Ambassador Murata, and I was struck by the realization that I had travelled all the way to New York City to learn about the work in gender equality and women’s empowerment advocacy that was already happening all around me in Japan.

In closing, I will always remember the International Women’s Day that I spent at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. I am deeply grateful that I was given the opportunity to join the Tsukuba delegation to the UNESCO WFUCA conference, and I will actively seek out opportunities to support UNESCO clubs and associations here in Japan and abroad. Finally, I am thankful to discover that we may not always need to look elsewhere for examples of ways that Japan can support gender equality—I have a new, hopeful feeling that we are coming into a time where gender equality is being recognized as an urgent and indispensable priority for Japan’s future.

**Kristie Collins** is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan. She has taught Gender Studies, Cultural Studies, Canadian Literature, Intercultural Communication, and English as a Foreign Language in Canada, Poland, England, Turkey, Finland, and Japan, and regularly presents her work at conferences in Japan and abroad. Kristie's first book, *The Marginalized Majority: Media Representation and Lived Experiences of Single Women* (Bern: Peter Lang) was launched last summer (2013) and is available for purchase online.

## **UPCOMING CONFERENCE NEWS**

### **2014 PanSIG Conference**

“Sustainability: Making Teaching and Learning Last”

May 10-11, 2014

Miyazaki Municipal University

### **GALE Forum**

Title: Sustaining Gender Awareness in the EFL Classroom

*For many students in Japan gender is a word that is known but not understood. Japanese culture is often used as an excuse to ratify discriminatory gender roles and students receive little or no feedback on how to recognize and name gender bias in the classroom and in society as a whole. This panel aims to discuss gender awareness within the EFL classroom and seek out ways in which to motivate and maintain student interest in gender issues not only in the classroom but also in Japanese society at large.*

“Gender Awareness in the Classroom”

**Fiona Creaser** (University of Kitakyushu)

*This presentation will focus on resources used in the classroom to promote awareness of gender issues. It will focus on materials and techniques used to motivate students to take a greater interest in gender and what it means in the classroom environment as well as society at large.*

“Family” and “work”--(de)stabilizing topics in classroom conversations

**Aaron Hahn** (Fukuoka University)

*Two of the topics in the classroom where we run most directly into gender issues are “future dreams/occupations” and “family”. These two topics are ubiquitous in communication and four skills textbooks, but are rarely inclusive of all family types and gender roles. How can we destabilize these narratives while 1) not preaching to students, and 2) remaining at a level that promotes English language learning? While this presenter will offer some preliminary possibilities, the main hope/goal is to hear ideas from all forum participants for strategies that have been successful or unsuccessful in their classrooms.*

“Organic Gender Studies: Making Good Use of the Classroom Hour”

**Susan Pavloska** (Doshisha University)

*Educators in Japan often face resistance not only from administrators and faculty in administrative positions, but also from students themselves when they seek to introduce gender awareness into their classes. This interactive presentation explores how insights from gender studies can be incorporated unobtrusively into the types of classes that are the mainstay of many English-language instructors' course loads by drawing on the “organic” conditions already present in the classroom.*

“Avoiding Demotivation: What the teachers need to know”

**Frances Shinkai** (Teikyo University, Fukuoka)

*A recent survey of private universities noted an increase of students who lack motivation to study. According to Dornyei (2001) with students and teachers' classroom experience motivational influences that deenergize action are common. This presentation will focus on the teacher as one of many possible causes of demotivation. If negative experiences in the language classroom can be lessened or eliminated, students may be more open to sustain interest in learning about gender issues and other topics. What the teacher should be aware of when teaching to promote learning and avoiding student demotivation will be a topic open for discussion.*

### **2014 JALT National Conference**

“Conversations Across Borders”

November 21-24, 2014

Tsukuba International Congress Center (Epochal Tsukuba), Tsukuba, Japan

### **GALE Forum**

Title: Gender Across Borders

*For updates on presenters and presentation topics, please check the JALT homepage ([www.jalt.org](http://www.jalt.org)) or the GALE homepage.*

## **GALE MEMBER PUBLICATIONS** **NEWS**

GALE member **Jane Joritz-Nakagawa's** poetry book **FLUX** (published by U.S. poetry publisher BlazeVOX in 2013 and on sale at Amazon.com in both paper and Kindle versions) was reviewed on February 23, 2014 by Kris Kosaka in The Japan Times.

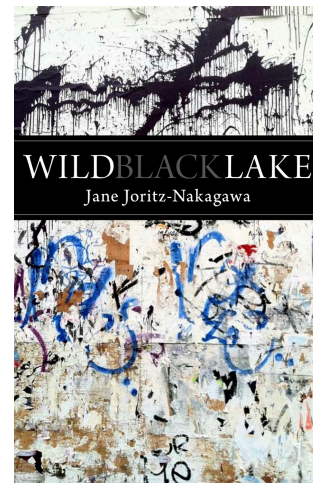
Kris wrote:

Particularly effective are Joritz-Nakagawa's prose poems. These stream-of-consciousness social commentaries condense one women's

lifetime of sexual experiences to their very essence, with Joritz-Nakagawa constantly crossing the boundary between prose and poetry. Her poems reference modern racial tensions and the nuclear disaster in Fukushima, while quoting the disparate words of the singer Morrissey and Albert Einstein, in a shifting perspective of form and fancy.

An online version of Kris' review may be read here:

<<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2014/02/22/books/flux/#.UxGXpSjxeqo>>



Jane's poetry chapbook **wildblacklake** will go on sale at its U.S. publisher's website in March, 2014. To order contact Steve Tills <STills AT GWLISK.com> or <theenkBooks ATrochester.rr.com> or Jane at <[janenakagawa@yahoo.com](mailto:janenakagawa@yahoo.com)>.

Advance praise for **wildblacklake**:

This is poming that reveals how to catch the illimitable in little bottles. Yet, Jane Joritz-Nakagawa also shows in WILD BLACK LAKE her learned precision with particulars within a spacious thinking among our many apparitions or, in more practical terms, how precisely to build post-millennial connections between these extremes.

-- G. E. Schwartz.

The chapbook will be sold online for USD seven plus S&H or via Jane for \$10.00/1000 yen (additional charge to cover mailing/handling costs). The cover features original artwork by former Japan resident Alexis Alvarez. Excerpts were featured in the poetry ezine *On Barcelona* in February. Review copies may also be obtained through either Jane or Steve.

Jane is also helping to launch a new group in Japan called **The East Japan Poetry Association** (東日本国際詩学会) which held its inaugural event on March 15, 2014 at Toyo University's Hakusan campus. For information about this group, or if you'd like to host a poetry event at your university or local community center, contact Jane via <janenakagawa@yahoo.com> or <vf2j-nkgw@asahi-net.or.jp>.

**Jennifer Teeter** is the author of a chapter entitled “Sustainable Shipping to Meet the Needs of Small Island Developing States” (Chapter 6) in the book *Green Technology Applications for Enterprise and Academic Innovation* edited by Ezendu Ariwa (Release date: February 2014 by IGI Global).

**Reiko Yoshiwara** published the following book  
吉原令子 (2013). 『アメリカの第二波フェミニズム』 東京：ドメス出版 .

R. Yoshihara. (2013). *Amerika no dainiha feminizumu (The second wave feminism in the United States)*. Tokyo: Domesushuppan.



**Diane Nagatomo** is the author a chapter entitled “In the Ivory Tower and Out of the Loop” in the book *Advances and Current Trends in Language Teacher Identity Research*. (Ling, Y., Said, B.S. & Park, K., Eds.) to be published by Routledge in October, 2014.

## What is the purpose of the GALE SIG?

Gender Awareness in Language Education Special Interest Group (GALE SIG) of the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) exists:

- to research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training, such as differences in discourse styles, preferred teaching and learning styles, interests, needs, motivation, aptitude, achievement, classroom interactions, same-sex versus coeducational classrooms and same-sex vs. opposite-sex teaching, and social identity.
- to improve pedagogical practices, develop language teaching materials, and provide a clearinghouse for materials inclusive of gender
- and gender-related topics in EFL subject areas such as communication, history, literature, linguistics, science, sociology, cultural studies, etc.
- to raise awareness of workplace and human rights issues related to gender for language professionals, such as discrimination, harassment, and violence based on gender and
- sexual orientation, and discrimination on the basis of marital or parental status, and to provide information for countering such discrimination.
- to increase networking opportunities among language professionals interested in teaching, researching, and/or discussing education, such as biological sex, gender identity, gendered language, sexual orientation, gender behaviour, gender roles and gender socialization.

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### GALE Professional Development Scholarship

GALE invites GALE members *without access to research funds* to apply for a Professional Development Scholarship to attend a conference

that GALE officially participants in. The number of scholarships available per year will depend upon the financial situation of GALE and in some cases the scholarship money will be divided between conferences. The purpose of the scholarship is to support research in the field of gender awareness and to support GALE members without research funding. A grant for *up to* 40,000 yen, depending upon the type of presentation to be given, will be made available to the successful applicant. The scholarship is intended to *help* defray conference attendance expenses. In return, the successful applicant **MUST** give a presentation on a GALE related topic at the conference (under the content area of Gender in the case of JALT conferences) and commit to writing the following: an academic research article based on that presentation or a practical pedagogical article to be published in the next edition of the GALE Journal and Proceedings or in the GALE Newsletter. The placement of the scholar recipient's article will be made after discussion with the applicant, the Publications Chair, and the Coordinators. The deadline for Journal letters of intent is annually on Dec. 15 and the deadline for the GALE Newsletter is several times a year.

In order to apply for this scholarship, application materials should include:

1. A signed statement that the candidate does not have access to research funds from another source such as an employer.
2. A signed commitment to give the presentation and write a related research paper to be published in the GALE Journal in the next edition of the GALE Journal and Proceedings.
3. A short introduction including your research interests.
4. A 250 word detailed abstract for presentation and subsequent paper. Make sure that your proposal deals with an issue(s) pertinent to GALE's purpose; it is written clearly, with a specific focus; the research goals are clearly defined; the proposal addresses issues that have not been dealt with before or are dealt

with in a unique way. In other words, check that your proposal in some way furthers research or theory in the area of gender awareness.

Please send enquires to: [scholarship@gale-sig.org](mailto:scholarship@gale-sig.org)

**2009 Scholarship Recipient: Rachel Winter**

**2013 Scholarship Recipient: Michele Steele**

**A Brief History of GALE (revised from the last newsletter—please feel free to provide more information so we can have a complete history of our vibrant group)**

**1995** A group of fourteen women attending the November 1995 annual conference of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) met for dinner and created WELL (Women in Education and Language Learning—which later became Women Educators and Language Learners)

**1996** Three WELL members presented on a Colloquium at JALT 1996 on "Gender Issues In Language Education" (Hardy, Yamashiro & McMahill, published in 1997).

**1998** "Gender Issues in Language Education" was included in a list of content area categories on the JALT conference application form.

There was a breakthrough in two JALT presentations having the words "gay" and "lesbian" in their abstract or title. A Forum called "**Silent Voices in the Classroom: Unraised, Unheard**" (Mateer, Lubetsky, Sakano, & Kim, 1998) looked at sexual orientation (Lubetsky), gender roles (Sakano), and ethnic background (Kim). It was sponsored by the Junior/Senior High School Special Interest Group and avoided the general proposal vetting process.

The other presentation, Summerhawk's "**From Closet to Classroom: Gay Issues in ESL/EFL**" was part of another Gender Issues in Language Education Colloquium (Smith, Yamashiro, McMahill, & Summerhawk, 1998). Gay and lesbian issues perhaps gained perceived legitimacy because from that year,

GALE and WELL members at JALT 1998 facilitated the selection of Kei Imai, a female Japanese professor of economics, who gave a Parallel Plenary Address on "**Women Graduates in Employment.**"

The May 1998 volume of JALT's monthly magazine, *The Language Teacher*, was a Special Issue entitled "Gender Issues in Language Teaching" (Smith & Yamashiro, 1998). It included an introduction, nine main research articles, two of which are written in Japanese, an opinion and perspective piece, three teaching materials articles, and a list of gender internet resources. So many submissions were collected that three articles spilled over into the June issue of *The Language Teacher* (MacGregor, 1998).

**2000** JALT plenary speakers have typically been non-Japanese males, although this trend reversed at JALT 2000, with all four plenary speakers being female. GALE sponsored Jane Sunderland as a JALT main speaker.

There was also a GALE conference in Hiroshima organized by Cheryl Martens.

**GALE became an official JALT Sig in 2000**

**2001** There was a GALE-WELL conference in Tokyo at Daito Bunka Kaikan held entirely in Japanese organized by Barbara Summerhawk, Jane Joritz-Nakagawa, and others

**2001 (September 29)** A joint GALE-EASH (East Asian Studies Hokkaido) conference titled "The Other Hokkaido: Gender, Diversity and Minorities" conference was held at Hokkaido International School in Sapporo featuring forty speakers from nine different countries including Cynthia Nelson as a guest speaker.

Nov 2001 Robert O'Mochain organized a masculinities panel featuring Japanese and Western experts for the Kitakyushu National JALT conference.

**2002** The inaugural Peace as a Global Language Conference took place at Daito University's Daito Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo, founded by GALE Coordinator Jane Nakagawa with the help of members of GALE, WELL, and many other groups, and especially but not only the help of Barb Summerhawk, Kazuya Asakawa, Keiko Kikuchi and Cheryl Martens.

**2003** Kristine Mizutani became the coordinator.

Because no one had indicated interest in becoming coordinator by the summer of 2004, Kris proposed disbanding GALE. It was then that Andrea Simon-Maeda and Steve Cornwell offered to be officers to keep GALE, a much needed SIG, afloat.

**2007** The Gender and Beyond GALE conference was co-sponsored by the Pragmatics SIG, GILE, CUE, TE, PALE, the Osaka Chapter of JALT, and the Pragmatics Society of Japan.

**2008** GALE rejoined the PanSIG conference [after several years away] in order to be more active and network with other SIGs.

Salem Hicks worked with LLL coordinator Eric Skier and collaborated to offer Neela Griffiths' SIG forum presentation at the JALT national conference.

**2009** Folake and Salem Hicks helped with the PanSIG conference.

**2010** GALE collaborated with the IGALA6 Conference in Japan. Kristie Collins, GALE coordinator, collaborated with the Bilingual SIG

to sponsor Laurel Kamada as JALT featured speaker.

**2011** Michi Saki and GALE collaborated with Kyoto JALT to host an event.

2011 Folake Abass (Coordinator) organized a one-day conference at Kyoto University entitled: Gender Awareness in Language Education: Exploring Gender and its Implications

**2012** Diane Nagatomo and Fiona Creaser, as new GALE coordinators, facilitated GALE's participation in the PAN-SIG Conference. GALE sponsored Diane Nagatomo as a featured speaker for the JALT national conference.

**2013** GALE took part in the PAN-Sig conference in Nagoya in May. GALE hosted a forum at the JALT National Conference in Kobe on October 26 with Michi Saki, Kim Bradford-Watts and Shane Doyle presenting. In addition, GALE members Gerry Yokota and Salem Hick presented individual papers.

## **GALE Journal**

<[http://gale-sig.org/website/the\\_gale\\_journal.html](http://gale-sig.org/website/the_gale_journal.html)>  
Started in 2008, the online Journal and Proceedings of the Gender Awareness in Language Education special interest group of JALT—affectionately known as "THE GALE JOURNAL"—has been attracting excellent academic research articles related to gender issues and awareness raising. Published once a year, it is a double-blind, peer-reviewed academic journal with an editorial team dedicated to publishing high quality research papers which add to the volume of knowledge in gender awareness and education. The Journal also publishes other academic writing such as resource reviews, perspective and forum pieces.

We are always looking for eager volunteers to join our editorial team as editors, peer reviewers for blinded papers, and proofreaders.

## ***Call for papers for GALE Journal Volume 8 FALL 2015***

**150-word abstract deadline: Dec. 15, 2014**  
**Completed Paper Deadline: Jan. 31, 2015**

**Submissions and inquires: [editor@gale-sig.org](mailto:editor@gale-sig.org)**  
**See website**  
[http://gale-sig.org/website/the\\_gale\\_journal.html](http://gale-sig.org/website/the_gale_journal.html)  
**for archive Journals and submission guidelines.**

## ***Submissions for the GALE Community Newsletter Fall 2014***

**Deadline: October 31**  
**[squires.todd@gmail.com](mailto:squires.todd@gmail.com)**

## GALE JALT SIG EXECUTIVES 2010-2011:

### Coordinators:

Diane Hawley Nagatomo/ Fiona Creaser:

[coordinator@gale-sig.org](mailto:coordinator@gale-sig.org)

### Program Chairs:

Laurel Kamada/ Sandra Healy: [programchair@gale-sig.org](mailto:programchair@gale-sig.org)

### Treasurer:

Shane Doyle [treasurer@gale-sig.org](mailto:treasurer@gale-sig.org)

### Membership Chair:

Brent Simmonds: [membershipchair@gale-sig.org](mailto:membershipchair@gale-sig.org)

### Publications Chair:

Kristie Collins: [publicationschair@gale-sig.org](mailto:publicationschair@gale-sig.org)

**Web Person** Paul Arenson

**Member(s)-at-Large:** Kristie Collins, Blake E. Hayes, Tina Ottman, Folake Abass, Gerry Yokota, Jane Nakagawa

[memberatlarge@gale-sig.org](mailto:memberatlarge@gale-sig.org)

## JOINING GALE

Although GALE is a special interest group of JALT, you do NOT have to be a member of JALT to be a subscriber of GALE. Subscribers have full access to member rights except they cannot become GALE executive board members. Those who wish to join GALE can either:

JALT members: ¥1,500 should be sent by post to the JALT office using a “furikae” form in “*The Language Teacher*” magazine. Please contact the JALT Central Office at <jco@jalt.org> for more details.

Non-JALT members: ¥2,000 should be sent to the GALE treasurer. Please contact the GALE membership chair for more details.