

# Australian Reception Network (ARN) Newsletter

Issue 1, 28 June 2023

Interdisciplinary research into the history and future of reading

## WE'RE BACK!

*A warm welcome to all ARN members whether new or continuing!*

On 28 June 2023, our revamped website was launched, and we released this first issue of the ARN newsletter.

We look forward to engaging with our members during this time of growth and renewal.

Stay tuned for more exciting news, events, and developments as the year progresses!



## WHO'S ATTENDING THE SHARP CONFERENCE?

Several ARN members are presenting at the conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing being held online this week:

**Laetitia Nanquette** delved into “The Role of New Technologies in the Literary Publishing Industry in Iran in the 2000s” as part of a panel which took place yesterday.

**Simone Murray** will be exploring “Why Literary Studies Isn't Talking About the Internet Novel” in a panel on Contemporary Digital Trends. SHARP attendees can join this panel at 11.00am 30 June 2023 AEST. [Read Simone's abstract on Page 2 →](#)

**Edsel Parke**, our ARN admin assistant, will be sharing a poster about his ongoing PhD project, “Narrative Identity and the Empirical Reader”.

*Missed out on SHARP this year? Further details about the conference can be found at [sharpweb.org/sharp2023/](http://sharpweb.org/sharp2023/)*

## THE NEW ARN WEBSITE IS NOW LIVE

Our website has received its long overdue facelift! On the new site, you can learn about the exciting work being undertaken by your fellow ARN members, access a range of reception-related resources, and keep track of news, events and Calls for Papers in the field.

*Explore the revamped ARN website:  
[australianreceptionnetwork.com](http://australianreceptionnetwork.com)*

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*The end of a book's wisdom appears to us  
as merely the start of our own.*  
– Marcel Proust

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## UPDATES FROM OUR MEMBERS

Congratulations to **Maggie Nolan** who has recently accepted a position at the University of Queensland as Associate Professor in Digital Cultural Heritage. As part of the job, Maggie will also become the Director of AustLit: 'the definitive information resource and research environment for Australian literary, print, and narrative cultures.' We look forward to seeing the interesting reception-related material that emerges from Maggie's work. Learn more about AustLit at <https://www.austlit.edu.au/>.

Congratulations also to **Ika Willis** who was appointed as co-editor of the journal *Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History*, alongside **Amy Blair** (Marquette University), in April 2023. We can expect to see more Australian content there from now on! Ika and Amy have been editing a special issue of the journal entitled 'Reading Time', which will appear in mid-2023.

*If you have your own news items which you would like included  
in future issues of the newsletter, feel free to contact us.*

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## “WHY LITERARY STUDIES ISN’T TALKING ABOUT THE INTERNET NOVEL.”

—A/Prof Simone Murray, SHARP conference panel abstract (11.00am 30 June 2023 AEST)

“Novels foregrounding the internet have existed since the mid 1990s, although the term ‘internet novel’ has only recently taken off. Earlier internet novels tended to play with format---mimicking hypertext links, email threads, and PowerPoint slideshows. More recent works still experiment with born-digital genres such as Twitter messages, though they equally invoke the internet at the structural level through multiple, interweaving storylines or via characterisation exploring individuals’ social-media dependency.

Most prominent among the recent crop of internet novels is Patricia Lockwood’s *No One is Talking About This* (2021) which, among other accolades, was shortlisted for the 2021 Booker Prize. The highly autobiographical plot follows a minor social-media celebrity whose online persona threatens to consume her life entirely. It is only when her sister’s unborn child is diagnosed with a life-threatening genetic abnormality that she snaps out of her solipsism and wades into the overwhelming tides of real-world emotions. The book remediates characteristics of ‘the portal’ (p.3) in its brief fragments of text, often aberrantly juxtaposed. Moreover, the book’s production uses typeface changes, emojis and other design elements to evoke the experience of browsing Twitter’s infinite scroll.

*No One* is closely intertwined with the encompassing digital literary sphere. Lockwood’s prior Twitter fame and globetrotting appearances at writers’ festivals are not only the subject of the book’s first half but were routinely mentioned in early reviews. The book’s recursive relationship to its own conditions of existence reaches its apogee in a one-minute video made by the Booker Prize administrators to publicise shortlisted titles. An actress reads a two-paragraph excerpt from the novel while viewers are transported through a riot of internet-native interfaces, emerging as psychologically overloaded and ‘internet poisoned’ (p.76) as the book’s protagonist. My analysis of *No One* is emblematic of how literary studies can reinvigorate its method in the wake of postcritical exhaustion. Attending to the medial qualities of books themselves and their circuits of participation in the online world demonstrates how profoundly literary culture is now interwoven with digital technologies.”

## CURRENT CALLS FOR PAPERS

**Title:** *Reading for Life in Uncertain Times: Literature and Wellbeing symposium*

**When:** 13-14 Sept 2023    **Where:** Virtual

**Deadline:** 10 July 2023 (title and 500-word abstract)

**Website:** All enquiries to Dr Juliane Roemhild [j.roemhild@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:j.roemhild@latrobe.edu.au)

**Details:** Reading for therapeutic purposes, sometimes called bibliotherapy, has a long and varied history. Since the turn of the millennium, however, there has been a surge in scholarly interest in the practical application of reading as a eudaimonic practice. The symposium aims to bring together researchers and practitioners to share their work. Practitioners from a variety of contexts — mental health clinics, hospitals, addiction clinics, libraries, community centres and so on — and researchers from a range of disciplines are invited to share their experience, data & insights, questions & hopes for the future. We invite proposals for short papers and project presentations (15-20 minutes) exploring the potential of reading to promote flourishing in individuals and communities.

**Title:** *Historical Fictions Research Network Conference*

**When:** 23-24 Feb 2024    **Where:** University of Malmö, Sweden

**Deadline:** 1 Sep 2023 (title and 250-word abstract)

**Website:** <https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/hfrn-conference-2024/>

**Details:** The combination of adaptation and historical fictions sheds light on epistemological and cultural aspects on form and content, aesthetics and embodiment, values and ethics, authenticity and credibility, traditions and re-thinking and a variety of uses of the past in fiction. *See website for further details.*

**Title:** *Literature and the Anthropocene in EFL Education*

**When:** 20-21 Feb 2024    **Where:** Virtual

**Deadline:** 31 Aug 2023 (title and 250-300-word abstract)

**Website:** <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/05/25/virtual-conference-literature-and-the-anthropocene-in-efl-education>

**Details:** We welcome 250-300-word abstracts for 15-minute conference papers that explore the role literature has or can have in helping learners of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) in primary, secondary, and tertiary education, including pre-service teacher education, to identify, respond to, challenge, or otherwise critically engage with the Anthropocene. *See website for further details.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Conference of the Reception Study Society*

28-30 Sep 2023

New Mexico State University

<https://receptionstudy.org/conference>

*IGEL Conference*

28-30 Sep 2023

Hybrid (Monopoli, Italy & virtual)

<https://igelsociety.org/events/igel2023/>



Visit the ARN website:

[australianreceptionnetwork.com](http://australianreceptionnetwork.com)

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