

Call for Papers

New Perspectives on Walking Women in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

An International Conference, 28 and 29 March 2025

Warburg-Haus, Hamburg, Germany

Confirmed Keynote Speaker: Dr Kerri Andrews

Although women have always walked and written about their manifold experiences as pedestrians, they were largely neglected in the historiography of walking of the twentieth century. As Deirdre Heddon and Cathy Turner noted in 2012, it had been common practice in cultural and literary histories of walking to present women “as an ‘exception’ to an unstated norm, represented by a single chapter in a book or even a footnote” (225). Following the publication of Lauren Elkin’s *Flâneuse: Women Walk the Streets of Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice and London* (2016), research on walking women has expanded and diversified significantly in recent years. Kerri Andrews’s *Wanderers: A History of Women Walking* (2020) and *Way Makers: An Anthology of Women’s Writing about Walking* (2023) and Annabel Abbs’s *Windswept: Why Women Walk* (2022), for example, focus exclusively on the writings and representations of women walkers. Critics have begun to develop new approaches to reading, documenting, and theorising women’s pedestrian mobilities, employing practice-based approaches (e.g. Heddon and Myers 2020) and taking into account archival material (e.g. Bredar 2022) and perspectives from material ecocriticism (e.g. Hamilton 2018). Rather than examining representations of women’s walking according to masculine paradigms like Romantic wandering, *flânerie*, or psychogeography, critics now increasingly examine woman walkers on their own terms.

This conference brings together scholars from the humanities and social sciences (e.g. from literary studies, cultural studies, film, TV and theatre studies, art, history, sociology, anthropology, geography etc.) who are working on roles and representations of walking women in Anglophone literatures and cultures from the early modern period to the immediate present. The aim of the conference is to assess current trends in scholarship on walking women, to identify its blind spots, and to develop new perspectives on women walkers by deliberately looking at forms, contexts, media, and periods that have received less or no attention so far.

Potential topics for 20-minute papers could include but are not limited to:

- New theoretical and methodological approaches to women’s walking between 1500 and the present
- Walking women in neglected literary forms and genres, e.g. drama, poetry, non-fiction, autofiction, and the periodical press
- Women walkers in art history, film & TV, photography, social media, and podcasts

- Representations of woman walkers in works by less canonised authors, directors, and artists and in newly acquired archival material
- New readings of women walkers in canonical literature
- Beyond the white Western norm: representations of woman walkers of colour; women's walking in the Anglophone Global South and (post)colonial contexts
- Beyond the able norm: women walkers with disabilities; health, illness and walking
- Beyond the heterosexual norm: queer women walkers
- Women's walking in settings and areas beyond the established urban/rural binary
- Women's walking in the contexts of migration and war
- Women's collective pedestrian practices, e.g. women's marches and walking clubs
- Women's walking and political activism
- Women's walking in the Anthropocene; women walkers and environmentalism
- Material culture and consumerism: walking clothes and gear
- Walking mothers; walking with children
- Women's walking and gendered violence
- Pedestrian mobilities related to walking, e.g. running and mountaineering
- Women's walking as work or part of work; economic dimensions of women's walking

The conference conceives of women as anyone who identifies as female, regardless of their sex assigned at birth. Contributions on non-binary and genderqueer walkers are welcome as well. Selected papers from the conference will be published in a special issue of a journal.

The conference will take place on 28 and 29 March 2025 in the stunning historic reading room of Hamburg's [Warburg Haus](#). Thanks to generous funding from the [Daimler and Benz Foundation](#), travel bursaries are available for confirmed speakers and there will be no conference fee.

Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words and a brief bio (max. 100 words) to Sandra Dinter, the conference organiser, by **7 October 2024**: sandra.dinter@uni-hamburg.de. Applicants will receive notification of acceptance in late October 2024.

Select Bibliography

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