



Call for Contributions to edited volume

Reconciliatory Spaces: Post-Conflict Interventions in Anglophone Women's Writing

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In the landmark resolution 1325 of the year 2000, the UN Security Council stresses that the peace and reconciliation agenda has to embrace women's participation, and encourages research into the role that women play as agents in processes of conflict resolution and social reconstruction, as well as into the impact of conflict on women's lives. This work must be intersectional, incorporating the experiences of a wide range of women, including the perspectives and remarkable contributions of Indigenous women to conflict resolution.

In her work on women and peacebuilding, Elizabeth Porter (2008, 2016) claims that the model of relationality offered by the feminist ethics of care is very useful for reconciliation, based as it is on restorative values such as the absence of domination, interdependence, empathy, or openness to diverse and silenced voices. Porter also importantly argues that reconciliatory spaces may occur in multiple settings, not just formal ones such as "tribunals" or "commissions", but also unofficial ones "around a kitchen table, under a tree, in a playground, on the grass or on a mat in a hut. Sometimes they transpire through the use of theatre, drama, art, play or healing workshops, wherever people are open to express their individual stories and learn about others" (2016, 223). In these spaces, individuals "need to feel free to argue and disagree; they also need opportunities to apologise, confess, forgive, build trust and develop changed relationships that show the healing power of reconciliation" (224). With regard to the particular contribution that the arts can make, John Paul Lederach (2005) insists that reconciliatory efforts require a degree of creativity, of what he calls "the moral imagination", shown for example in "the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies" or in "the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown" (5).

This volume aims to foreground the responses of Anglophone women writers to the issues involved in reconciliation processes and debates. We seek original papers that illuminate articulations of reconciliatory spaces in women's writing, or that approach the text as a potential space of reconciliation, where its challenges and contradictions are played out, but also where ideas conducive to social reconstruction may be creatively generated. We adopt a dynamic approach to reconciliation (Verdeja 2009) not as an event, but as an open process, a space of relationality and dialogism, an arena of negotiation and encounter with the other. We understand the term 'writing' in a broad sense, including literary work in different genres as well as non-fiction or screenwriting.

We invite a consideration of contexts immersed in, or suffering the absence of processes of transitional justice in the aftermath of conflict and violations of human rights, where a society progresses towards the recognition of past wrongs, social reconstruction and peace. The origin of conflict may lie in political, interethnic violence and repression, as in the cases of African countries (e.g.: Apartheid, civil war), or in the grievances suffered by Indigenous populations in the colonial past in settler societies such as Australia or Canada (e.g.: the Stolen Generations, Indian Residential Schools). We also encourage the exploration of relevant contexts that are less paradigmatic or that have been underexamined.

Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following issues:

- The role of compassion and empathy in reconciliation
- The benefits and challenges of truth-telling and forgiveness
- Imagining reconciliatory relationships
- Questions of material space as/and reconciliation
- Confronting and articulating atrocity in post-conflict contexts
- Rape as war crime, the persistence of a rape culture, and post-conflict reconciliation
- Women writers and peace activism
- The potential pitfalls and paradoxes of identifying the feminine with peaceful nurturing values
- Reconciliation and genre: Are there particular genres of reconciliation—'sorry' novels, literature about truth commissions—or are certain genres particularly suited to address reconciliation-related issues—poetry, theatre?
- Reconciliation and speculative fiction (dystopias, utopias, fantasy, science fiction): Imagining horizons of possibility and/or articulating discontent?
- How do children's and young adult texts engage with conflict and reconciliation?

Submission guidelines

Papers should be original, unpublished, theoretically informed, and address our distinctive focus on Anglophone female writers and reconciliation. Detailed proposals (600-1,000 words) for full essays (6,000 - 7,500 words) and queries should be sent to the email address **reconfemua@gmail.com** by **July 30th, 2024**. Submissions should include the author's name, affiliation, a tentative title, up to 5 keywords, a short bibliography as well as a 200-word biographical note.

Notification of acceptance: Authors will be informed of the results of their submission **before September 30th, 2024**.

The submission deadline for selected essays will be **April 15th, 2025**. Selected papers will be included in a volume that will be published in a top international publisher.

This volume is part of the research output of the project "Spaces of Reconciliation: Post-Conflict Interventions in Anglophone Women's Writing" (PID2022-138786NB-I00, Ministry of Science and Innovation, Spain).

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