

# *Aphra Behn Society*

## *Newsletter*

*January 2018*

### **Letter from the Editor**

Dear ABS Members,

In many ways, this has been a remarkable year. Remarkable for the Aphra Behn Society and Burney Society as Laura Engel and Marilyn Francus organized an inspired and inspiring joint conference, B2, at Duquesne University. Included in the conference were two thought-provoking plenaries given by Kristina Straub and Linda Zionkowski, a litany of remarkable panels and papers, daily (and delicious) catering for conference members, and ending with the wonderful performance of *The Busy Body*. A huge “HUZZAH” to Laura and Marilyn!

For me, the conference highlighted the incredible work that is being generated by ABS (and Burney Society!) members, and to repeat my sentiments from the summer newsletter, how all of you as scholars, educators, speakers, and people also create a much-needed beacon of hope in these tumultuous times with your work. I look forward to receiving news of your future rays of light!

Read on to discover how your fellow members are impacting the world!

Nichol Weizenbeck  
nicholw@comcast.net

### **Letter from the Executive President**

Greetings, fellow ABS Members!

Happy new year, and a happy start to the school year to all! I hope you're managing to stay warm, dry, and flu-free!

I want to begin my note with an announcement and a request to the membership. As you'll see from my financial report, last year, we spent more money than we earned. Such things happen from time to time, of course, but I want to ensure the long-term financial health of the organization. As such, beginning this year, dues will rise from \$20 a year to \$25. Since very few people pay their dues in non-conference years, however, I would like to put a proposal to the membership: that beginning this year, we collect dues on a biennial basis, or \$50 for two years' membership. Our Society's constitution currently calls for annual dues, so to shift to a biennial structure will require a constitutional amendment approved by two-thirds of our voting

membership. In the coming weeks, then, I will put the question to an official vote; please do watch your email and participate!

I am so pleased to report that our biennial conference at Duquesne was an amazing experience, and I'm very glad that so many of you were able to join us for B2, the joint meeting of the Burney and Behn Societies! Laura Engel and Marilyn Francus put together a wonderful program, full of intellectual companionship and exchange, delicious food, and a full-length performance of Centlivre's *The Busy Body*. I'm not sure I've ever laughed so hard at a play before! On behalf of the entire society, I want to express my gratitude to Laura and Marilyn for their wonderful organizational work, to Duquesne University and West Virginia University for sponsoring our meeting, and to Kristina Straub and Linda Zionkowski for their marvelous plenaries. The conference was a true delight! And now we turn our focus to 2019, when Emily Friedman will be hosting us at Auburn University in Alabama. I look forward to watching this new conference take shape, and hope you will join us again!

The ABS will have an active presence at ASECS this year! If you plan to be in Florida, please join us on Thursday at 11:30, when Kate Ozment will be hosting our society's official panel, "Women and their Publishers." Aphra Behn happy hour will definitely be happening again – details will follow as the conference approaches! And of course, I will provide this year's official ABS collectible buttons. Make sure to grab one for yourself! While it's early yet, please do be contemplating potential ABS panel topics for the 2019 ASECS conference. I'll be inviting your proposals in early April.

The folks at *ABO* are, as always, doing marvelous work! I hope you'll check out their most recent issue at <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/abo/>. The editors look to the past, remembering how the journal began, and then articulate their exciting and ambitious plans for the future. Please consider submitting your own work to *ABO* so that you can be part of realizing that vision. And also make sure to check out *ABO: Public*, the public-facing arm of the journal, at <http://www.aphrabehn.org/ABO/>!

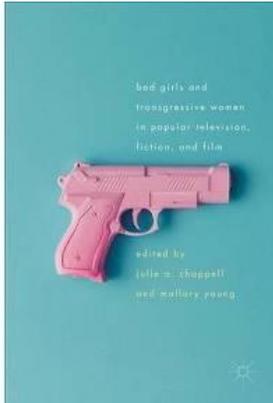
To conclude on a serious note: the #MeToo campaign has exposed many harsh truths about sexual harassment and assault in academia. On behalf of the ABS executive board, I want to emphasize that the Aphra Behn Society maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment and assault. Should you ever be made to feel unsafe at one of our events, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or to any member of our executive board.

I wish you all a happy spring semester!

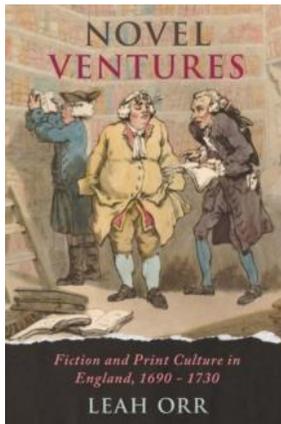
Jennifer

Jennifer L. Airey  
Associate Professor of English  
Executive President, Aphra Behn Society for Women in the Arts, 1660-1830  
University of Tulsa

## New Publications from our Members

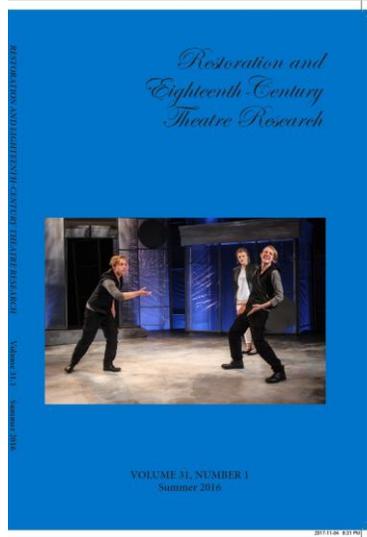


Julie Chappell and Mallory Young have edited a collection of essays that focus on the representations of a variety of “bad girls”—women who challenge, refuse, or transgress the patriarchal limits intended to circumscribe them—in television, popular fiction, and mainstream film from the mid-twentieth century to the present. Perhaps not surprisingly, the initial introduction of women into Western cultural narrative coincides with the introduction of transgressive women. From the beginning, for good or ill, women have been depicted as insubordinate. Today’s popular manifestations include such widely known figures as Lisbeth Salander (the “girl with the dragon tattoo”), *The Walking Dead*’s Michonne, and the queen bees of teen television series. While the existence and prominence of transgressive women has continued uninterrupted, however, attitudes towards them have varied considerably. It is those attitudes that are explored in this collection. At the same time, these essays place feminist/postfeminist analysis in a larger context, entering into ongoing debates about power, equality, sexuality, and gender.



The eighteenth century British book trade marks the beginning of the literary marketplace as we know it. The lapsing of the Licensing Act in 1695 brought an end to pre-publication censorship of printed texts and restrictions on the number of printers and presses in Britain. Resisting the standard “rise of the novel” paradigm, *Novel Ventures* incorporates new research about the fiction marketplace to illuminate early fiction as an eighteenth-century reader or writer might have seen it. Through a consideration of all 475 works of fiction printed over the four decades from 1690 to 1730, including new texts, translations of foreign works, and reprints of older fiction, Leah Orr shows that the genre was much more diverse and innovative in this period than is usually thought.

Contextual chapters examine topics such as the portrayal of early fiction in literary history, the canonization of fiction, concepts of fiction genres, printers and booksellers, the prices and physical manufacture of books, and advertising strategies to give a more complex picture of the genre in the print culture world of the early eighteenth century. Ultimately, *Novel Ventures* concludes that publishers had far more influence over what was written, printed, and read than authors did, and that they shaped the development of English fiction at a crucial moment in its literary history.



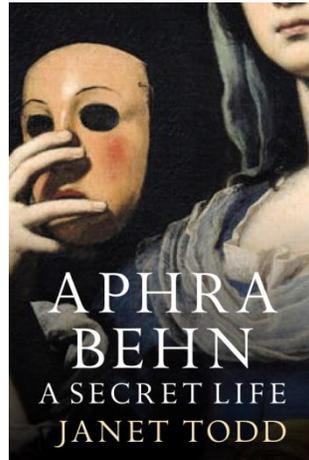
## Aphra Behn Society Graduate Essay Prize

The Aphra Behn Society Graduate Essay Prize is a biennial award made by the Society for the best graduate student paper presented at the ABS Meeting. Papers will be judged on the following criteria: provides clear articulation of the argument, advances critical understanding of the subject, demonstrates an intelligent relationship to secondary resources, and shows adeptness of close reading skills. In addition to special recognition, the prize carries a cash award of \$150, as well as the opportunity for publication in our journal, *ABO* <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/abo/> .

To enter, you must be member of the Aphra Behn Society; for membership information, please visit <http://aphrabehn.org/members.htm>.

The paper you submit for the prize must be an expanded, revised version of the one that you presented at the conference (about 4,000-6,000 words). Papers should be correctly formatted according to MLA documentation style. Submissions must be sent directly to Dr. Jennifer Airey by January 15, 2018. Please send an attached Word Document or PDF to [Jennifer-airey@utulsa.edu](mailto:Jennifer-airey@utulsa.edu). The contest will be judged by Dr. Sarah Creel and Dr. JoEllen DeLucia, members-at-large for the Aphra Behn Society.

The winner of the prize will be notified soon after the committee has made its decision and will be announced through the Aphra Behn Society's Newsletter and listserv.



For the Aphra Behn Society, and indeed, the canonization of Aphra Behn herself, one of the most important scholars to date is Janet Todd. While much of her writing and research has been an enormous and important undertaking, the paucity of hard evidence concerning Behn's life, arguably makes Todd's *Aphra Behn: A Secret Life* the most impressive. In this study of Behn's life, Todd takes readers on a journey both through an individual's history as well as a nation's.

With only scraps of a paper trail, Todd admits that she takes a speculative approach to her research. While the phrases "likely to have," "if she did" and "Aphra may have" may fill some readers with unease, we must appreciate the honesty with which Todd writes and her unwillingness to deceive us with a reporting of concrete "facts." Indeed, one must admire Todd's commitment to attempting to put a puzzle together that is missing so many pieces.

The text creates, in full circle, a portrait of Behn, beginning with her rather humble origins, and ending with her somewhat cryptic death (yet almost certainly caused by either an illness or its alleged "cure"), a death that allowed Behn to "avoid outliving her age." The pages in between augment a portrait of the author to reveal an at times paradoxical woman who was amorous, witty, resourceful, rebellious, conservative, submissive, powerful, loyal, and perhaps most of all, mysterious. Alone for this round picture of Behn, the hefty read is worth the time. Equally fascinating, however, are the very clear and documented facts with which Todd also paints a picture of England during the years of Behn's life.

From the spying, to the treasonous acts, to the machinations, to the trade industry, to the politics, to the scandals, Todd weaves together a nation that existed in a special moment in time, a nation awash in color and character. Through the lens of Behn, Todd gives life to the characters of John Hoyle, the Earl of Rochester, and Nell Gwyn amongst the royalty and other celebrities. The multiple lenses of focus and levels of interest make for a true page turner.



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### ABS at ASCES 2018

Kate Ozment will be hosting the ABS's official panel, "Women and their Publishers."



*ABO: Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts* is a peer-reviewed, scholarly online journal published twice yearly under the auspices of the University of South Florida. The journal's policies and mission may be found at <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/abo/policies.html>. Past volumes may be viewed at <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/abo/>.

**Editor:**

Laura Runge (University of South Florida)

**Section Editors:**

Kirsten Saxton, Scholarly Editor (Mills College)

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Robin Runia, Book Review Editor (Xavier University)

**Managing Editors:**

Jennifer Golightly (University of Denver)

Aleksandra Hultquist (University of Melbourne)

**Newly Published Essays and Chapters from our Members**

Susan Carlile published "Less of the Heroine than the Woman": Parsing Gender in the British Novel." *Aphra Behn Online*, June 9, 2017, <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/abo/vol7/iss1/6/>

**Conference Presentations**

Karen Gevirtz presented "Which Way to the River?: Ypres and *The History of the Nun*" and spoke on the roundtable about the forthcoming edition of the Works of Aphra Behn at the Aphra Behn Society - Burney Society joint conference in Pittsburgh in November. She invites anyone within striking distance of Newark, NJ (just outside NYC) to give a paper at Seton Hall University's annual women and gender studies conference (<http://www.shu.edu/womens-conference-proposals.cfm>), a one-day conference for a general audience in March. If anyone is

looking for a very (*very*) relaxed atmosphere to share a corner of her/his work AND an easy but significant way of Doing A Seriously Good Thing, please join us on March 16.

## Call for Papers

Seton Hall's Conference on Women and Gender: (<http://www.shu.edu/womens-conference-proposals.cfm>)

## ABOPublic

Alaina Pincus and Marilyn Holguin, editors. *ABOPublic: An Interactive Forum for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830* is a public scholarship forum to promote discussion of contemporary issues in eighteenth-century studies. *ABOPublic* looks forward to receiving posts in the future. Send your submissions to: <http://www.aphrabehtn.org/ABO/>.

## Financial Report

January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017

### Cash on Hand

	Balance 1/1/17	Balance 12/31/17	Change
Checking account	\$7,115.95	\$7527.03	\$411.08
Savings Account	\$11,255.73	\$10,000.19	(\$1,255.54)
Paypal Account		\$249.78	\$249.78
		<hr/>	
	\$18,371.68	\$17,777.00	(\$594.68)

### Income 1/1/17 – 12/31/17

Bank income	\$2.18	
Membership	\$1,247.56	
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		\$1249.74

ABO receives 25% of Society income from dues, so these are not monies the Society may use.

