

PAY(ing) ATTENTION

Narratives of Notoriety and Fame

February 17, 2023

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
35TH ANNUAL
ENGLISH GRADUATE CONFERENCE

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: WILL SCHEIBEL
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



While attention is aspirational for some, it can be destructive for others. The practice of attending suggests the purposeful direction of the mind in an effort to attract, call, draw, arrest, or fix the object of attention. Narratives of **seeking, evading, obtaining, rejecting, and desiring** attention are pervasive in the study of literature, gender and sexuality, race, history, sociology, psychology, media, communications, philosophy, ecology, disability, class, art, and more. From Winston's interactions with the **surveillance state** and subaltern resistance in George Orwell's 1984 to the flourishing of a viral social media lexicon of terms and hashtags – Karens, OK Boomers, #FreeBritney, #Metoo – **bids for visibility** have resulted in **fame, notoriety, infamy**, or, when such bids fail, **anonymity**. How can scholarship in the fields mentioned above help us contend with these multifaceted narratives of attention?

This conference welcomes presentations that interrogate positive, negative, and ambivalent associations of what it means to give or elicit attention. What does it mean to pay or be paid attention? What happens when we pay attention to something new? What happens when we stop paying attention? How do/can/should we think about the relationship between the observer and the observed? How do we define fame? How have online personas and personal "brands" changed the way we seek and receive attention? Is privacy a privilege, a right, or something else? How do channels of communication influence attention-getting and attention spans? Who does and does not want attention?

We invite abstracts for papers that explore the tensions and contradictions within narratives of attention, fame, notoriety, and privacy. Presentations are welcome from but not limited to the fields of literature, critical studies, art, history, film, theatre, music, philosophy, and the humanities broadly.

ABSTRACTS OF 250-300 WORDS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO
STONYBROOKENGLISHGRADCON@GMAIL.COM BY JANUARY 25, 2023