



Omission

University of Oxford English Faculty Graduate Conference 2018
Friday, June 1, 2018

Call for Papers

How should we engage with omissions? Some gaps, it seems, demand to be filled, while others remain obstinately empty. Omissions can be productive, playful, and deliberate, but they can also impede and obscure. From lost or damaged Medieval manuscripts to censored modernist texts, omissions have marked and shaped our critical practices. This is true not only of textual omissions: feminist, gender, and queer theorists have addressed silences in a heterosexist canon and postcolonial theorists have raised issues of exclusion and marginalisation.

Sins of omission occur in every period and genre. From the unspoken truths in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* to the concealed trauma in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, narrative details are withheld from readers. The theatrical power of the empty stage is attested by the jarring disappearance of Lear's Fool and by Godot's failure to materialise. Poems reach us through processes of omission: Emily Dickinson's poetry was edited posthumously, while Marianne Moore notoriously revised her own work. For Moore, 'Omissions are not accidents.'

These questions of omission are open for debate, and we look forward to discussing them further. This conference welcomes papers crossing all periods, genres, and disciplines, on themes including but certainly not limited to:

- Silence and empty spaces
- Lost texts, textual gaps and lacunae
- Palimpsests and erasure
- Annotation and filling in the blanks
- Editing, deletions, and revisions
- Censorship and self-censorship
- Memory and forgetting
- Falsehoods and lies of omission
- Unreliable narrators
- Anonymity
- Things lost in translation
- Use of and deviation from sources
- Works omitted from the canon
- Citizenship and statelessness
- Marginalised voices.

We welcome individual proposals for **twenty-minute papers** (250 words). Three-person panel proposals (500 words) are also strongly encouraged. Please send all submissions to omission.conference@ell.ox.ac.uk by **Friday 16 February 2018**. For more information, visit oxgradconf2018.wordpress.com or follow us at [@OmissionConf18](https://twitter.com/OmissionConf18).