

## Afterword: histories of women's higher education, time and temporalities

Joyce Goodman, Centre for the History of Women's Education, University of Winchester

### Abstract

*The Afterword focuses on the question of time and the temporalities, rhythms and tempos that thread through the special issue and shed light on change, contingency and continuity as women sought to become and to be academics and to belong in the academy. I deploy a notion of multiple temporalities in which time comprises both a singular whole and specific fragments that flow with varying speeds and intensities to constitute what Suzanne Langer terms the volume of time. The discussion attends to two aspects of temporality that Elizabeth Grosz argues are important for understanding the production of conceivable futures: (i) inventing new ways of addressing and opening up new types of subjectivity and new relations between subjects and objects; and (ii) understanding and addressing the force of the past and the present in attempting to pre-apprehend and control the new.*

**Keywords:** Time, temporalities, women's higher education, gender

### Introduction

The special issue illustrates how women pushed the boundaries of personal and professional lives in their quest to break into the academy, to traverse geographical boundaries across the academic world and to enhance their careers. It also illustrates how women fashioned new academic personae, as well as new disciplines/fields of knowledge. The articles highlight many "firsts": the first women who entered higher education in Greece; the first female lecturers at Spanish universities; the first five female professors who taught in Italy; the first three women professors at the University of New Zealand; an "early" woman professor in Ireland; and the first

deans of women in the USA.<sup>1</sup> This attention to women who arrived first, or early in higher education, whether as students, lecturers, professors, or deans, their engagement in the creation of new disciplines/fields of knowledge like household science and vocational guidance, and their establishment of organisations like the International Federation of University Women (IFUW/FIFDU) and the National Network of Deans of Women to drive women's careers in academia and beyond, points to the importance of time in histories of women's encounters with academia.

In the Afterword I focus on the question of time and the temporalities, rhythms and tempos that thread through the special issue and deepen our knowledge of change, contingency and continuity as women sought to become and to be academics and to belong in the academy. Time is not only a question of chronologies and dates through which to plot the flows, fluctuations and possibilities of women's careers inside and outside academia. In a more complex way it is a question of events,<sup>2</sup> and of emergence. It concerns the messy, moving temporal relations between past, present and future<sup>3</sup> that Helge Jordheim terms multiple temporalities.<sup>4</sup> From this perspective time has what Susanne Langer terms volume<sup>5</sup> and António Nóvoa and Tali Yariv-Mashal call a

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of articles in the special issue see Polenghi, Simonetta, and Tanya Fitzgerald. "Introduction: Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education." *Paedagogica Historica*, iFirst.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Grosz. "Histories of a Feminist Future," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 25, no. 4 (2000): 1017-21.

<sup>3</sup> For messy moving temporalities see Harry Harootunian, "Remembering the Historical Present," *Critical Inquiry* 33, no. 3 (2007): 471-94.

<sup>4</sup> Helge Jordheim, "Introduction: Multiple Times and the Work of Synchronization," *History and Theory* 53, no. 4 (2014): 498-518.

<sup>5</sup> Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953) [Sixth Edition 1976], 111.

width and thickness. Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal argue that thinking time through width creates a conception of temporality that is multidimensional. It means “conceiving the present not as a ‘period’ but as a process of transformation of the past into the future (and vice-versa)”. By the “thickness of time” Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal refer to how different temporalities overlap simultaneously so that “time is no longer a single ‘thread’ (the thread of time) but is represented with a string in which many threads are intertwined”.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Elizabeth Grosz describes time as braided, intertwined - a unity of strands layered over each other, which nevertheless partakes of a more generic and overarching time and makes it possible to locate times and durations relative to each other.<sup>7</sup>

A focus on time is not simply an academic exercise, however. Grosz writes that questions of time, and particularly how we conceive the relation of past and present, play into “the production of conceivable futures”.<sup>8</sup> In the Afterword I focus on two aspects that Grosz sees as central to “conceivable futures”: (i) inventing new ways of addressing and opening up new types of subjectivity and new relations between subjects and objects; and (ii) understanding and addressing the force of the past and the present in attempting to pre-apprehend and control the new.<sup>9</sup> In the first section I position first and early academic women in relation to the new and the untimely and I consider what the articles suggest about the force of the past and the present in attempting to control the new. In the second section I follow a temporal thread around becoming

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<sup>6</sup> António Nóvoa and Tali Yariv-Mashal, “Comparative Research in Education: A Mode of Governance or a Historical Journey?” *Comparative Education* 39, no. 4 (2003): 423-38, here 422, 423.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Grosz, “Thinking the New: Of Futures Yet Unthought,” in *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures*, ed. Elizabeth Grosz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 15-28, here 17-18.

<sup>8</sup> Grosz, “Histories of a Feminist Future”, 1018.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth A. Grosz, *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics, and Art* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 83.

that Suzanne Langer terms *passage* (or transience)<sup>10</sup> to look at what the articles indicate about the opening up of new types of subjectivity and the emergence of new disciplines/academic fields.

### Academic women: the new and the untimely

Time can be enumerated but is neither fully “present”, a thing in itself, nor is it a pure abstraction, a metaphysical assumption that can be ignored in everyday practice, comments Grosz.<sup>11</sup> It exerts its own force, as with the ageing process, but cannot be viewed directly.<sup>12</sup> Time, writes Grosz, appears only as an effervescence at those moments when our expectations are surprised positively or negatively: “We can think [time] only when we are jarred out of our immersion in its continuity, when something untimely disrupts our expectations”.<sup>13</sup>

Grosz describes untimeliness as a potential to disrupt the future. The special issue illustrates how the encounters of female students, lecturers, professors and deans who “knocked on the doors” of the university and appeared first or early on the higher education scene positioned themselves and were positioned in relation to untimeliness. Judith Harford notes that Mary Hayden lived an independent life and exercised more autonomy than women of her generation<sup>14</sup> and

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<sup>10</sup> Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 112

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth A Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 5.

<sup>12</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 249.

<sup>13</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 5.

<sup>14</sup> Judith Harford, “The Historiography of the Professoriate: Reflections on the Role and Legacy of Professor Mary Hayden (1872-1942),” *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

some of the women whom Consuela Flecha García tracks believed they were inaugurating a new world, where they could rid themselves of male dependence.<sup>15</sup> But in a higher education future they did not control, untimeliness brought with it a newness that raised anxieties that clashed with stagnating temporalities of accepted practice along gendered lines.<sup>16</sup> In explaining to the Robertson Commission why he blocked Hayden's candidacy for a Senior Fellowship at University College Dublin the College's president commented it was because "the appointment to the Fellowship carried with it the obligation of lecturing in University College to large classes of young men .. I, as President did not feel myself authorised to introduce so strange a novelty in a Catholic University College".<sup>17</sup> Simonetta Polenghi's account of the initial presence of women in the classrooms of Italian universities illustrates Grosz's point that lurking in the notion of newness are ideas of chance and indeterminacy, the unforeseeability of unpredictability, disorder or uncontrollable change that can unsettle ideals of stability and control.<sup>18</sup> Polenghi notes that female students were viewed as a source of disturbance to the male students and teachers and the idea that they would enter the professions and attain economic independence and prestige was wholly inconceivable because it implied tearing apart a social framework that kept women in a subordinate position.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Aurea L. Javierre Mur, *Mi ideal feminista* (Barcelona, 1902), 18, cited Consuelo Flecha García, "The First Female Professor in Spanish Universities," *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth A. Grosz, "The Untimeliness of Feminist Theory," *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 18, no. 1 (2010): 48-51, here 49.

<sup>17</sup> Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland. Appendix to the First Report, Minutes of Evidence (1902), 91, cited in Harford, "The Historiography of the Professoriate".

<sup>18</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 16.

<sup>19</sup> Simonetta Polenghi, "Striving for Recognition: The First Five Female Professors in Italy (1887-1904)," *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

Grosz remarks that power works to link newness as firmly and smoothly as possible to that which is already contained and to make the eruption of the event part of the fabric of the known.<sup>20</sup> As Polenghi shows, women's access to scientific culture and higher studies in Italy was premised on the argument that this route would be chosen only by a small number of women, who, because they were "masculine", would not marry and whose exceptional achievements would not represent a threat to the family and the established social order. In Italy anxieties around newness and untimeliness were managed through existing beliefs about male and female bodies that cast the male body as stronger and without the monthly weaknesses of the female and so better able to bear the effort and strain of prolonged difficult studies. In this argument, the female body was located outside higher education through cyclic rhythms and repetitions of female menstruation and reproduction associated with a timeless view of women as mothers that linked bodies and higher education and worked to retain male power.<sup>21</sup>

It was not only men who sought to manage anxieties around newness, however. Some women also sought to ameliorate visibilities that emerged in relation to untimeliness and troubled gendered relations of higher education. In Panagiotis Kimourtzis and Vicky Sigountou's description of the appearance of Elli Giarakou at classes in Greece, time past, present and future mingle in power relations of gender as Giarakou appeared at the University chaperoned by her elderly father, a colonel wearing his worn-out uniform replete with a sword that clattered on the pavement to the amusement of the male students.<sup>22</sup> As the first woman in Italy to be appointed a full

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<sup>20</sup> Grosz, "Thinking the New", 16.

<sup>21</sup> Polenghi, "Striving for Recognition".

<sup>22</sup> Panagiotis Kimourtzis and Vicky Sigountou, "When Protons were Gendered: Women in the School of Physics and Mathematics of the University of Athens (1922-1967)," *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

professor, Cesarina Monti adopted a nun-like persona that did not breach traditional codes of female behaviour, while Maria Montessori hid aspects of her life that would otherwise have contravened the accepted codes of femininity of her day.<sup>23</sup> Others worked to accommodate the “new” by tying it to the “known”<sup>24</sup> of existing gender relations as they sought to open academic spaces, disciplines and fields to women. Tanya Fitzgerald illustrates how, when establishing Home Science at Otago University College, Winifred Boys-Smith worked to “evaporate the untimely”<sup>25</sup> by building this newer area of scholarship around aspects of domesticity that turned the emerging academic field into a contradictory space that expanded women’s spheres of activity while not disturbing masculine hierarchies unduly.<sup>26</sup>

But women also established international and national organisations like the IFUW/FIFDU, the Irish Association of Women Graduates and Candidate Graduates, the Association of Greek Women Scientists and the National Network of Deans of Women to accelerate their research, their careers and their presence in academic spaces and to engender new forms of subjectivity. Kelly Sartorius charts how the National Network of Deans of Women organised to open new professional positions to female college graduates so that women could financially support themselves as independent individuals.<sup>27</sup> Marie-Elise Hunyadi notes that the IFUW/FIFDU saw research bursaries, residential centres and hospitality as a motor to advance women’s careers. The IFUW/FIFDU prioritised the advancement of careers over its commitment to internationalisation

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<sup>23</sup> Polenghi, “Striving for Recognition”.

<sup>24</sup> Grosz, “Thinking the New”, 16.

<sup>25</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Tanya Fitzgerald, “Claiming Their Intellectual Space: Academic Women at the University of New Zealand 1909-1941,” *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

<sup>27</sup> Kelly Sartorius, “Counseling U.S. Women for Economic Citizenship: Deans of Women and the Beginnings of Vocational Guidance,” *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

by focusing on whether a bursary would impact positively on a woman's position within her field.<sup>28</sup> Strategies to shorten timespans facilitated the type of temporal acceleration that Koselleck sees as the hallmark of a specifically modern experience of time.<sup>29</sup> In patriarchal environments the speed associated with temporalities of modernity could collide with backward-glancing slow tempos that harked back to "traditional" ideas about women's roles and place in society<sup>30</sup> to decelerate or block potentialities for change. But as a modality that aimed to make change happen faster, acceleration might also engender a sense of unfamiliarity through which to imagine a new future along lines that Suzanne Langer calls *passage*, or transience,<sup>31</sup> where time is conceptualised as opening to new ways of living and thinking beyond what has already been imagined.

In the next section I shift my gaze from women "knocking on the doors" of the university to the Deleuzio-Guattarian conceptualisation of the self as a door, which I view as a threshold located between notions of woman and the academy.<sup>32</sup> Here, my interest lies in what the special issue

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<sup>28</sup> Marie-Elise Hunyadi, "Des études à l'étranger pour promouvoir les carrières académiques féminines? La Fédération Internationale des Femmes Diplômées des Universités, entre paix et conquête d'un bastion professionnel masculin (1918-1970)," *Paedagogica Historica: Special Issue, Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education*, iFirst.

<sup>29</sup> Reinhardt Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Aleida Assmann, "Transformations of the Modern Time Regime," in *Breaking up Time: Negotiating the Borders between Present, Past and Future*, eds. Chris Lorenz and Berber Beveridge (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 39-56, here, 50.

<sup>30</sup> Harford, "The Historiography of the Professoriate".

<sup>31</sup> Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 111.

<sup>32</sup> For the self as a door or a threshold see Maria Tamboukou, "Machinic Assemblages: Women, Art, Education and Space," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 29, no. 3 (2008): 359-75; idem, "Re-Imagining the Narratable Subject," *Qualitative Research* 8, no. 3 (2008): 283-92.



suggests about processes and modes of becoming (something beyond what has already been imagined) as well as in processes of becoming that led to desired endpoints (of becoming a student, lecturer, professor or dean).<sup>33</sup>

### Academic women: processes of becoming

In feminist historical approaches time as becoming is dynamised as duration, “the coexisting moments where the virtual past - what was - inheres in the experience of the present - what is - and opens it up to virtual and radical futures - what will be”.<sup>34</sup> Grosz argues that in duration past and present coexist<sup>35</sup> and that the present “requires the past as its precondition” and is oriented towards the immediate future.<sup>36</sup> In this temporal mode there is one time, but also numerous times, “a duration for each thing or movement, which melds within a global or collective time”.<sup>37</sup> Duration is the braided, intertwined temporality that for Langer makes up the dense fabric of duration (its volume) and which Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal argue makes us live, simultaneously, different temporalities. These overlap in such a manner that “time is no longer a single ‘thread’ (the arrow of time) but is represented with a string in which many threads are intertwined”.<sup>38</sup> In the special issue uncertain temporalities of precarity, contingencies around career,

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<sup>33</sup> Grosz, *Becoming Undone*, 1, 51 differentiates between these two meanings of becoming.

<sup>34</sup> Maria Tamboukou, *In the Fold between Power and Desire: Women Artists' Narratives* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 4. A temporal sense of *passage* differs from the geographical sense of passage (ie through the University system or classroom) although the two interlink).

<sup>35</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 110, 175.

<sup>36</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 175, 177.

<sup>37</sup> Grosz, “Thinking the New”, 16

<sup>38</sup> Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal, “Comparative Research”, 433.

temporalities of the body, and the repetitive labours of daily life jostle with moments of recognition, temporalities of acceleration, temporalities of stagnation and deceleration, and linear notions of time as women desired and worked to play their part in academia.

Indicative of the discontinuous and fragmented temporalities of precarity and their entanglement with power relations of gender are the abandoned careers of the first female lecturers at Spanish universities that Flecha García charts. The temporal irregularities and uncertain futures associated with women's careers in an environment where male academics exercised power were not only the result of purges related to war or political upheaval; nor were they solely the result of women's resignation or dismissal on marriage, although marriage often played an actual or imagined role. Prior to the Spanish Civil War in 1936 very few women lecturers in Spain attained permanent status. Many remained as practical class assistants, filling-in on a temporary basis when a male professor was unavailable. Their temporary contracts were dependent for renewal on the approval of male professors who assumed that women would continue in post for short periods only until they married. On the rare occasions when a woman was assigned to a vacant Chair temporarily in the absence of a full professor this was no guarantee of a permanent position. In response, some women sought to create more certain futures by leaving academia for work in secondary education, libraries, archives or museums.<sup>39</sup> In Ireland the male-dominated politics of appointing fellows and examiners meant that Hayden's success as a Junior Fellow did not ensure ongoing employment in the University sector as it did for male Junior Fellows.<sup>40</sup> At the University of New Zealand, appointments between 1907 and 1961 were also untenured, short-term positions heavily focussed on teaching and mainly at demonstrator, assistant or lecturer level.<sup>41</sup>

Kimourtzis and Sigountou's analysis of women's encounters with scientific communities in Greece illustrates an elongated temporality of gendered precarity that operated through periods

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<sup>39</sup> Flecha García, "The First Female Professors in Spanish Universities".

<sup>40</sup> Harford, "The Historiography of the Professoriate".

<sup>41</sup> Fitzgerald, "Claiming Their Intellectual Space".

of unpaid research. Here, the benefits that accrued to male professors built on a long-standing familial model of patriarchal power and unpaid female labour. Women's activities were an integral part of the formation of scientific communities in Greece. They joined a university laboratory as a sub-assistant to a male professor during, or at the end of, their time as a student. They did so without pay in a situation that would have favoured women with financial support. Irrespective of the length of time a woman assisted his research, a male professor might not necessarily acknowledge her contribution in publication. While the results of public competitive exams, prizes and doctorates brought specific instances of recognition, for female sub-assistants even the moment of *habilitation* was not necessarily sufficient to earn a career in their university and in most cases hardly supported their brief presence. This was despite the recurrent rhythms of their daily presence laboratories and classrooms that enhanced the production and formation of their scientific communities.<sup>42</sup>

The discontinuous and fragmented temporalities of female precarity contrasted with the temporal continuities in male careers that underpinned the notion of the career as a ladder, where time was modelled through spatialised and measurable temporal rungs. As Hunyadi indicates, even women with "successful" careers might stress contingency and chance when reflecting on their lives rather than cite planned strategies to ascend the hierarchical rungs of a career. The American Edith Abbott, dean of the Graduate School of Social Service Administration, described her career as "a series of accidents" during which the "doors of opportunity" had been opened by chance. But, as Hunyadi comments, Abbott also painted her career as one of hard work.<sup>43</sup> When devising systems, routines, curriculum and examinations as she established Home Science at Otago, Boys-Smith also stressed the "strenuous work" that had left her "not strong enough to

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<sup>42</sup> Kimourtzis and Sigountou, "When Protons were Gendered".

<sup>43</sup> Hunyadi, "Des études à l'étranger pour promouvoir les carrières académiques féminines?"

tackle all the new problems” due to the additional time needed when working to define new disciplinary boundaries.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Hayden’s diaries gesture to a tempo of days filled with work and indicate just how much time she invested in seeking to become an academic, in working in academia and in facilitating the careers of like-minded women.<sup>45</sup>

As a single woman who became the subject of scrutiny because of her close relationships with prominent nationalist and political activists Hayden troubled (“transgressed”) intersections of age and generation that marked the boundaries of what were deemed to be “in/appropriate” sexual relations for her time and place. Time exerts its own force with the ageing process<sup>46</sup> but the notion of generation is an abstraction - a linear temporal enumeration and spatial emplacement that separates older and younger into discrete age cohorts measured by blocks of chronological time and/or dates. But, the notion of generation also includes the active temporal meaning of “to generate”,<sup>47</sup> which Laura Nash traces to the verb *genesthai*.<sup>48</sup> This conveys the fluid and processual meaning of coming into being that Hayden’s diaries illustrate through her descriptions of the refreshing nature of her easy association with younger men at Irish speaking weekends that contrasted with her growing dissatisfaction towards the Catholic hierarchy.

Temporal threads embedded in academic cultures also linked generational thinking to notions of career. In 1928 the IFUW/FIFDU differentiated junior bursaries for women aged under thirty and

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<sup>44</sup> Winifred Boys-Smith to Otago University Council, February 6, 1920, University of Otago, Records of Registry and Central Administration, 1919 AG-180-31/0081, DU, cited in Fitzgerald, “Claiming Their Intellectual Space”.

<sup>45</sup> Harford, “The Historiography of the Professoriate”.

<sup>46</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 249.

<sup>47</sup> Iris van der Tuin, *Generational Feminism: New Materialist Introduction to a Generative Approach* (Boulder: Lexington Books, 2014), xvii.

<sup>48</sup> Laura L. Nash, “Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought,” *Daedalus* 107, no. 4 (1978): 1-21.

senior bursaries for women aged 30 to 45 years. IFUW/FIFDU bursaries embraced a forward-looking momentum around the notion of individual promise. But the IFUW/FIFDU's administration of bursaries overlooked how intersections of gender and nation played out at various speeds in different national education systems. When asking for the age limit of the senior bursary be raised to 50 the German Federation of University Women argued that the best German candidates for bursaries were aged between 40 and 50 because of the time it took to move through the German higher education system. The IFUW/FIFDU bursary system brought together linear temporalities associated with generational thinking, a liberal feminist linear temporality of progress based on women's increasing access to higher education, an understanding of national associations based on national borders<sup>49</sup> and a regulation that a national association might be affiliated only when there was at least one indigenous graduate member. Together these situated some national associations of university women as more "advanced" along a path to the development of women's higher education and others as yet to follow in ways redolent of the temporalities of colonialism which relegated some countries to what Dipesh Chakrabarty calls the waiting room of history.<sup>50</sup> The upshot was that even after World War 2, the IFUW/FIFDU's bursaries preserved existing socio-economic and white privilege among women.<sup>51</sup>

Time spent away or in the company of like-minded women and their networks could provide opportunities that inspired women to implement experiments that led to the emergence of new

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<sup>49</sup> For the IFUW/FIFDU's conception of a national association see Joyce Goodman, "International Citizenship and the International Federation of University Women before 1939," *History of Education* 40, no. 6 (2011): 701-21.

<sup>50</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 8

<sup>51</sup> Hunyadi, "Des études à l'étranger pour promouvoir les carrières académiques féminines?"

disciplines/fields. Emergence is a “moment of arising”<sup>52</sup> when complex and multifarious processes surround the emergence of the event.<sup>53</sup> Sartorius’ account of the emergence of career counselling illustrates how newly-recognised disciplines and occupations and new forms of identity might emerge together with new networks, new strategies and new underpinning philosophies, all with the potential to flow with differing speeds and intensities in directions hitherto unforeseen. As academically trained women, and the networks they established, brought college career counselling to higher education before World War 1, this created conditions through which women could support themselves financially outside teaching, and where a future of independence might be imagined - one with an “untimeliness” that did not tether them to marriage and the household.<sup>54</sup>

Sartorius’ account illustrates how the experimentation of newly-emerging fields might accelerate and then stabilise as a field coalesced through networks and institutionalisation. A similar dynamic surfaces in Fitzgerald’s account of Home Science at the University of New Zealand as women sought to establish themselves as experts in a feminised scientific field that operated within a gendered domain. As Home Science surfaced as a transitional space it generated new opportunities, new terrains, new expertise and new areas of work for graduate women and exposed students to new ideas directed at reforming and modernising modern life, which together offered women possibilities beyond marriage and motherhood. Fitzgerald highlights temporal confluences at the point of Home Science’s emergence. The early days of the 20th century was a

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<sup>52</sup> Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” Trans. S Simon, in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 83.

<sup>53</sup> Maria Tamboukou, *Sewing, Fighting and Writing: Radical Practices in Work, Politics and Culture* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016), 23.

<sup>54</sup> Sartorius, “Counseling U.S. Women”.

specific moment of change in the industrial, social and political economy, marked by the emergence of a modern consumer society. There were public campaigns for health and nutrition as a direct result of a world war and an influenza epidemic; new occupations were being created for an expanded economy; capable women were pursuing higher education; increasing numbers of women had graduated from the University of New Zealand; women were forming new networks; consumer products were being developed to modernise households; and there were new occupationally focussed areas of work.<sup>55</sup> Each element in the confluence that Fitzgerald charts flowed with different speeds and differing intensities as they came together at the point when Home Science emerged.

### **Conclusion: new beginnings, conceivable futures**

The new beginnings and instances of emergence that the special issue highlights constitute significant moments in histories of women's encounters with the academy. But as Sartorius highlights for the historiography of career counselling in the U.S and other authors in the special issue also indicate, "new beginnings", particularly when appearing as short-lived, ephemeral moments, can be overlooked or misconstrued if historians gaze in familiar spaces and places through taken-for-granted and gendered understandings of historical process.<sup>56</sup>

Opening time to scrutiny in histories of women's encounters with the academy is not just a question of chronologies and dates, important though these are. Interrogating multiple temporalities enhances the potential to glimpse the emergence of subjectivities and disciplines/fields and the relation between the two, as well as to unpack the dynamic around the new and the untimely in

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<sup>55</sup> Fitzgerald, "Claiming Their Intellectual Space".

<sup>56</sup> Sartorius, "Counseling U.S.Women".

women's encounters with the academy. Exploring temporalities highlights how change is not random, for the force of the past and the present have worked to constrain the production of the new and the untimely where women and higher education have been concerned. The special issue illustrates how opening to the new, to becomings, and to questions of emergence confronts what Alfred North Whitehead terms the "stubborn fact which at once limits and provides"<sup>57</sup> whereby the new is a mode of emergence out of the already given.<sup>58</sup> While time as abstraction is a way of knowing that makes it possible to deal with the temporal flux of the world,<sup>59</sup> it is a starting point for analysis of the previously diverse elements<sup>60</sup> that have informed and produced the abstraction, its manner of construction and its operation.<sup>61</sup>

Attention to temporal threads with slower/faster tempos and certain/uncertain rhythms - and to forward- and backward-looking trajectories and their entanglement is important for understanding the flows, fluctuations and im/possibilities of women's lives and careers inside and outside the academy. In the space of the university and in the threshold between woman and the academy temporalities not only jostled in the braiding of time; they might clash as power relations of gender were transgressed and/or troubled. The untimeliness associated with the entry of women to the university jarred accepted rhythms and tempos of university practice in spaces controlled by men and presaged challenges to women's place in society. Temporalities of precarity ran counter to the desire of women for the long-term security that led to academic recognition. Transgressing temporal notions of generation that marked "in/appropriate" sexual relations by

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<sup>57</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, (New York: Free Press, 1985 [original 1929]), 129.

<sup>58</sup> Grosz, *Nick of Time*, 207.

<sup>59</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (New York: Free Press, 1968 [original 1938]), 196.

<sup>60</sup> For the entanglement of time, space and matter (which it is beyond the constraints of the Afterword to discuss) see Joyce Goodman and Sue Anderson-Faithful. "Turning and Twisting Histories of Women's Education: Matters of Strategy," *Women's History Review* 29, no. 3 (2019): 377-95.

<sup>61</sup> Michael Halewood, *A.N. Whitehead and Social Theory: Tracing a Culture of Thought* (London: Anthem Press, 2013), 153.



age could work counter to advancement through spatio-temporally emplotted rungs of the academic career.

As the introduction to the Afterword notes, attention to time is not just an academic exercise. Historicising the force of personal, institutional and conceptual temporalities, rhythms and tempos enables other virtual futures to be conceived with implications for the present. For, as Grosz notes, when we “do” histories [of women’s (higher) education], not only are we writing the event, we are producing it anew, writing it as an opening up to a life that is not exhausted in its pastness.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Grosz, “Histories of a Feminist Future”, 1020.