

# National Centre of Biography, ANU

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## Biography Workshop

### The Politics and Implications of Recent Life Writing

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Date: Thursday 11 July 2019\*  
Venue: Jean Martin Room,  
Beryl Rawson Building,  
13 Ellery Cres, ANU  
Time: 11 am until about 12.30 pm  
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Life-writing is a broad genre encompassing all manner of 'ego documents' including autobiography, diaries, journals, letters, memoirs, and oral testimony. It is not only an historical genre, but it is an increasingly interdisciplinary specialism. It is said to reflect extreme individualism of late modern societies. In this panel, Melanie Nolan will moderate a conversation on the politics and implications of recent autobiography and life writing, in general, as well as the recent work of panellists, Mary Besemer, Sinead McEneaney, and Rachel Robertson.



LLRungegordon, *Woman with pen*, 2011

([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woman\\_writing.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woman_writing.JPG))

DR RACHEL ROBERTSON, is a Senior Lecturer, Professional Writing and Publishing, in the School of Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry, at Curtin University. She is a creative writer whose publications also include critical consideration of motherhood, life writing, and the ethics of disability narratives.

DR MARY BESEMERES is a member of the ANU's School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics. Her research is concerned with contemporary cross-cultural and migrant autobiography and life writing. She was founding co-editor, with Maureen Perkins, of the Routledge journal *Life Writing*, and serves on its editorial board.

DR SINEAD MCEANEY will discuss 'Putting the "I" in Civil Rights: the ways in which we can read autobiography as an extension of protest, and the ways that civil rights activists' life writing acts as a specific kind of lens to challenge accepted narratives of the period'. Sinead, a Senior Lecturer in History at the Open University, Milton Keynes, UK, and a visitor in the Law School at the ANU, is an historian of the 'sixties' protest and activist movements.

Moderator: PROFESSOR MELANIE NOLAN is Director of the National Centre of Biography and General Editor of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* in the School of History at the ANU. She is currently writing about historians' biographical practices.

\* **NOTE:** The altered date of this out-of-session workshop