

Gender Equality in Contemporary Scottish Writing and Publishing

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The UK publishing industry has an equality problem. Recent research reveals systemic gender, ethnicity and class bias (Ramdarshan Bold 2021; Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor 2018; Saha and van Lente 2020; Marsden 2019). However, specific evidence is missing from the Scottish literary sector: while VIDA (2018, 2019, 2020) and the recent Ledbury Emerging Poetry Critics report have shown biases in UK reviewing, their work's scope does not include Scottish national newspapers; while Griffith (2015) has shown gender bias in UK and US literary awards, the dataset does not include Scottish awards; and although gender pay gap reporting in the UK showed stark average differences in pay between men and women "ranging from 11.3% to 29.69%" (Flood 2018), Scottish publishers were exempt from reporting as they comprise mostly small and medium enterprises (Ramdarshan Bold 2012). Focusing on gender, my doctoral thesis submitted in 2022 shows that Scotland is not exempt from inequality, despite ranking third in the world for female political empowerment (Paterson 2018). Drawing on my doctoral research, this brief presentation examines the quantifiable difference between men's literary sector output and that of women and non-binary people, using statistical analysis of gender distribution in publishing, reviewing, festivals (2017-2019) and prizes (1919-2021). Findings indicate continued gender inequality, with women and non-binary authors rarely exceeding 40% of authors published, reviewed, platformed or awarded with prizes.

Speaker Bio

Edinburgh-based researcher, bookseller and writer Christina Neuwirth is the recipient of an AHRC/SGSAH Creative Economy Studentship, and recently submitted their thesis for a PhD in Publishing Studies at University of Stirling, University of Glasgow & Scottish Book Trust. Their fiction and non-fiction writing has been published in various anthologies, journals and magazines in the UK, and their debut novella *Amphiban* (Speculative Books) was published in 2018. www.christinaneuwirth.com

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