

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### ***Beyond the White House: The First Lady in Film, Fiction, and Culture.***

This edited collection seeks to explore the representation of the First Lady in a range of different texts and media. The collection aims to examine the President's wife in a purely cultural context by investigating the ways in which she has been represented, embodied, characterised and commemorated in film, fiction, memoir, photography and portraiture, television, theatre, education, museum studies, fashion, and social media.

*Beyond the White House* is an original work that makes use of cultural interpretation to reconfigure the figure of the First Lady as a culturally authoritative individual possessing the ability to sway, change, inspire, and manipulate public attention and opinion. Moving away from biographies and histories, this is the first volume of its kind to consider the *representation* of the First Lady figure through the prism of popular culture - and therefore consider her impact upon 'cultural politics' - and the first to regard her as a strategically important socio-cultural figure.

Removed from the patriarchal hierarchy of White House politics and expectations, the First Lady emerges as a force of her own; she subtly carves out cultural agency and gender identity despite her (in)visibility in the public eye. Simply by being the 'First Lady of the United States' she possesses what MaryAnne Borrelli has labelled the "performance of descriptive representation" (*Women and the White House*: 229). The relationship between the woman and the office is paramount; the existence of the title 'First Lady' permits popular culture to tolerate or reject not only political and cultural manoeuvring, but also issues of gender, race, self, location, fashion, identity, satire, memory, authority, and even pedagogy. The office of the First Lady is what the woman makes it, and in *Beyond the White House* she has become a commanding cultural icon.

Possible topics might include (but are not limited to):

- The First Lady in film and on television (both fictional First Ladies and representations of real First Ladies, such as in the new *First Ladies* series from Showtime)
- First Ladies in fiction (this might be retellings of the stories of real First Ladies, or new fictional First Ladies)
- First Ladies and self-representation, life-writing and memoir (i.e. *Becoming* by Michelle Obama, *Hard Choices* by Hilary Clinton)
- First Ladies in education; how the role of FLOTUS is represented and taught in classrooms
- The First Lady on display; exhibitions, curatorship and portraiture of FLOTUS
- Photography and portraiture of the First Ladies (in magazines, photoshoots and journalism as well as official portraiture)
- First Ladies on stage and in theatre
- Fashion and the First Ladies (from inaugural gowns to Melania's 'I really don't care' jacket)
- Self-representation and social media; FLOTUS on Twitter and Instagram.

Please send 300-500 word abstracts, a short bio to Dr Anne-Marie Evans ([a.evans@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:a.evans@yorks.ac.uk)) and Dr Sarah Trott ([s.trott@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:s.trott@yorks.ac.uk)) by 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021.