Welcome to our Showcase.

We will be getting started very shortly so make sure your cameras and mics are switched off for now and make yourselves comfortable!

Fifty Words for Snow: A Festive Humanities Showcase

1-1:20pm	Welcome and Introduction to the department and sessions
1:20-1:50pm	'I'm Dreaming of a Dark Christmas': The Festive Uncanny in Christmas Literature
1:50-2:20pm	Written on Snow: A Creative Writing Workshop
2:20-2:50pm	Holidays are Coming: An Analysis of Festive Advertising
2:50-3:20pm	Buttered Scones and Serviettes: Linguistic Variation on the Dinner Table
3:20-3:50pm	Karl Marx's Communist Christmas: Die Hard and Christmas Vacation
3:50-4pm	Question and Answer Session

'I'm dreaming of a dark Christmas: Literature and the Festive Uncanny'

Dr Lucy Arnold

'There must be something ghostly in the air of Christmas, something about the close, muggy atmosphere that draws up the ghosts, like the dampness of the summer rains brings out the frogs and snails'

- Jerome K. Jerome

Nicholas Was…

older than sin, and his beard could grow no whiter. He wanted to die.

The dwarfish natives of the Arctic caverns did not speak his language, but conversed in their own, twittering tongue, conducted incomprehensible rituals, when they were not actually working in the factories.

Once every year they forced him, sobbing and protesting, into Endless Night. During the journey he would stand near every child in the world, leave one of the dwarves' invisible gifts by its bedside. The children slept, frozen in time.

He envied Prometheus and Loki, Sisyphus and Judas. His punishment was harsher.

Ho.
Ho.
Ho.
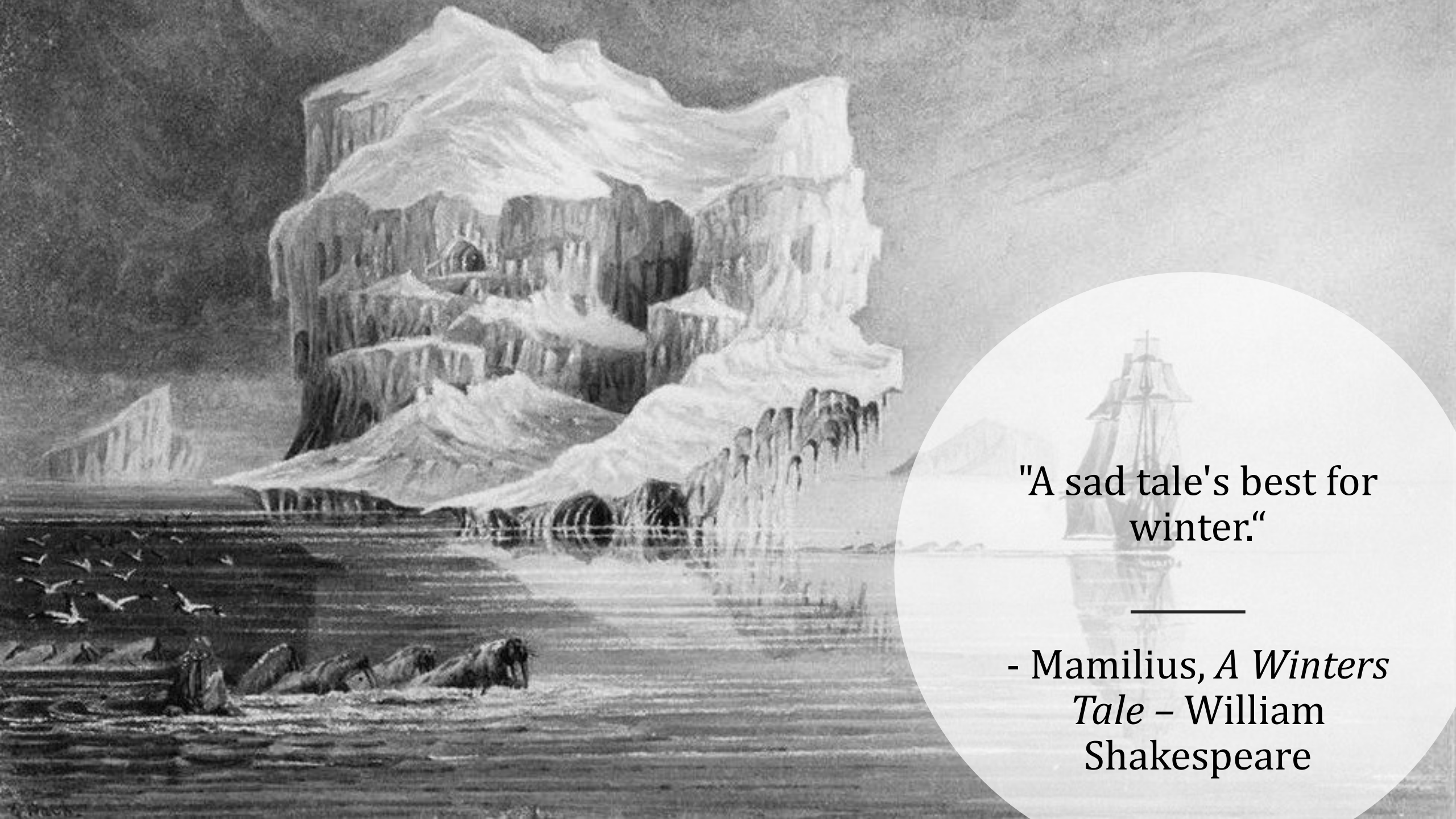
"A sad tale's best for winter."

———

- Mamilius, *A Winters Tale* – William Shakespeare

Context: Christmas is Creepy

——

'the night of the solstice, [is] the hinge of the year when things do not fit together as well as they should, the longest night. [. . .] It is Christmas Eve and [t]he malign door of the solstice still swings upon its hinges'

- Angela Carter, 'The Company of Wolves'

The Christmas Ghost Story

'The story had held us, round the fire, sufficiently breathless, but except the obvious remark that it was gruesome, as, on Christmas Eve in an old house, a strange tale should essentially be, I remember no comment uttered till somebody happened to say that it was the only case he had met in which such a visitation had fallen on a child.'

- Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

IN PROSE.

BEING

A Ghost Story of Christmas.

BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN LEECH.
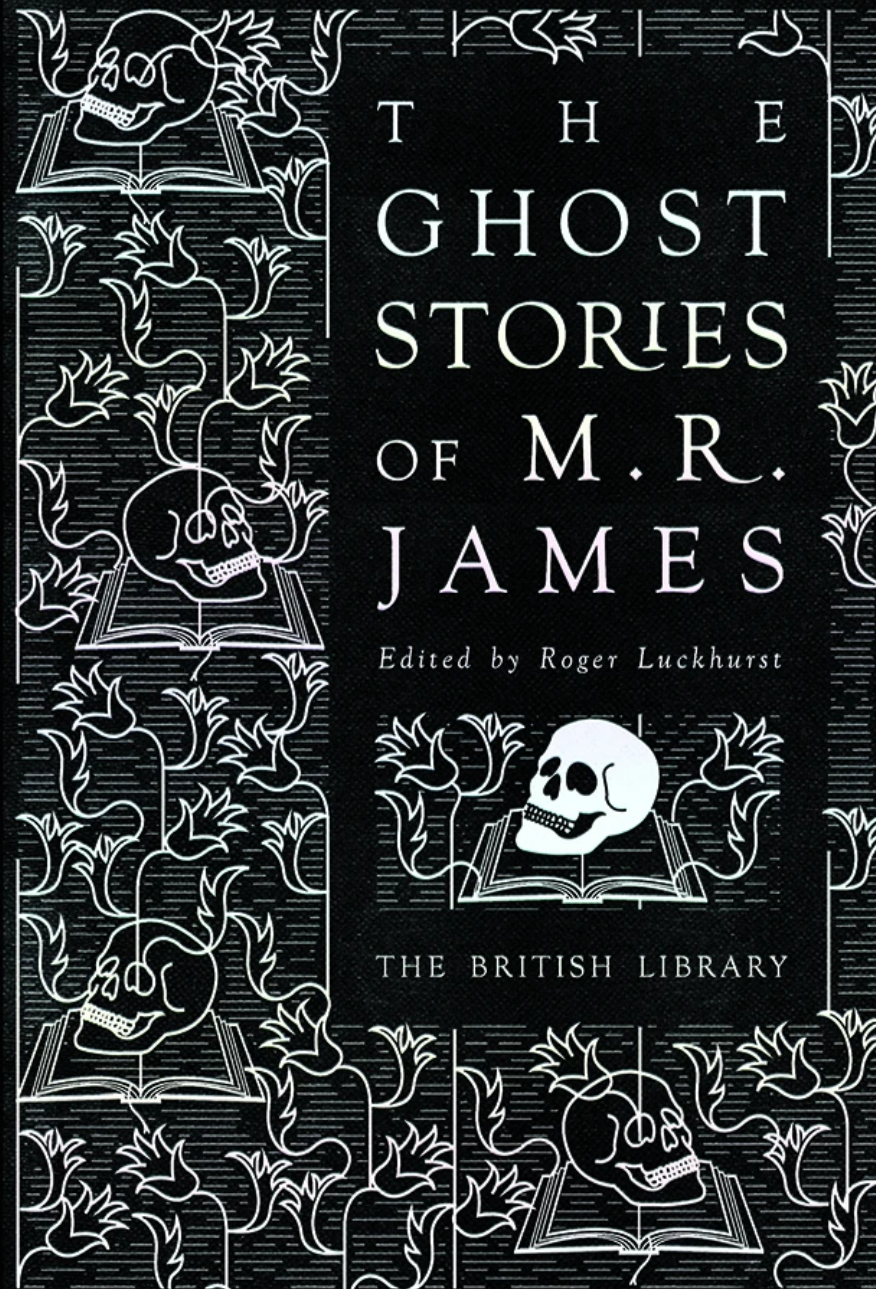
LONDON:
CHAPMAN & HALL, 186, STRAND.

MDCCCXLIII.

THE GHOST STORIES OF M. R. JAMES

Edited by Roger Luckhurst

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

Charles Dickens
A Christmas Carol

'Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change— not a knocker, but Marley's face.'

'Quite satisfied, he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. Thus secured against surprise, he took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his nightcap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel.'

A Christmas Carol and Hospitality

'by the lights of such a reading, the *Carol* [is] in fact [an] [antidote] to the holiday chestnut, a genre of foregone conclusions and sealed interiors. But we will not want to sever [it] entirely from the season with which [it is] so strongly identified. Insofar as it waits for a radical discontinuity in history—for a chance to welcome what has never yet been welcomed—the expectant temporality of Christmas remains central to [this story's] critical energies.'

- Paul K. Saint-Amour, "Christmas Yet To Come": Hospitality, Futurity, the Carol, and "The Dead", *Representations*, Spring 2007, Vol. 98, No. 1 (Spring 2007), pp. 93-117

James Joyce 'The Dead'

'after the death of their brother Pat, had left the house in Stoney Batter and taken Mary Jane, their only niece, to live with them in the dark gaunt house on Usher's Island'

'It was *always* a great affair'/'*Never once* had it fallen flat'/'*For years and years* it had gone off in splendid style, *for as long as anyone could remember*'
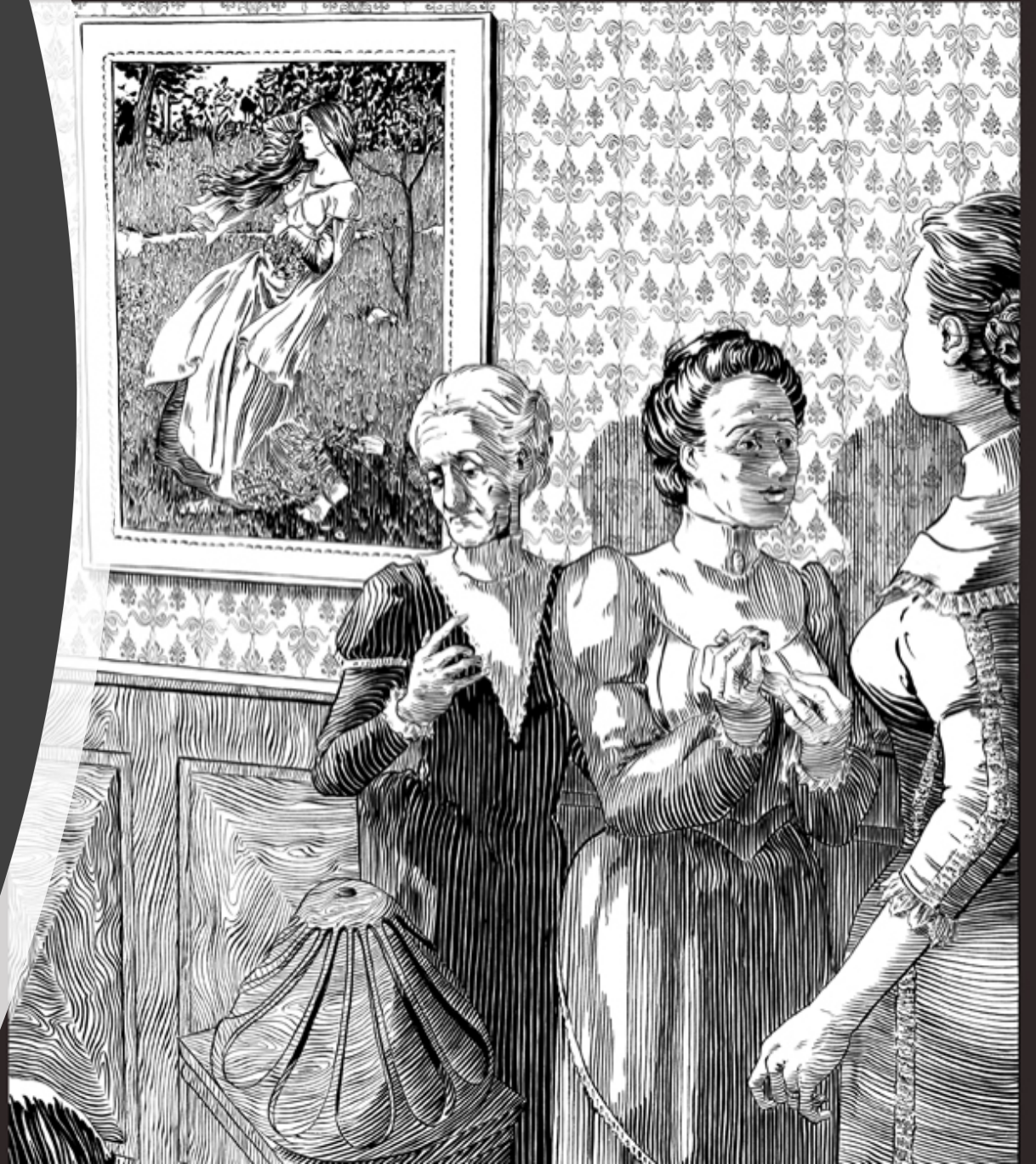
'A fat brown goose lay at one end of the table and at the other end, on a bed of creased paper strewn with sprigs of parsley, lay a great ham, stripped of its outer skin and peppered over with a crust of crumbs, a neat paper frill around its shin and besides this was a round of spiced beef. Between these *rival ends* ran parallel lines of side dishes: two little minsters of jelly, red and yellow; a shallow dish full of blocks of blancmange and red jam, a large, green leaf-shaped dish with a stalk shaped handle in which lay bunches of purple raisins and peeled almonds, a companion dish on which lay a solid rectangle of Smyrna figs, a dish of custard topped with grated nutmeg, a small bowl full of chocolates and sweets wrapped in gold and silver papers and a glass vase in which stood some tall celery stalks. In the centre of the table there stood, as *sentries* to a fruit stand which upheld a pyramid of oranges and American apples, two squat old-fashioned decanters of cut glass, one containing port and the other dark sherry. On the closed square piano a pudding in a huge yellow dish lay in waiting and behind it were *three squads of bottles of stout and ale and minerals, all drawn up according to the colours of their uniforms, the first two black, with brown and red labels, the third and smallest squad white, with transverse green sashes.'*

'His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence. His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling.

A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly on the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark, mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, on the living and the dead.'
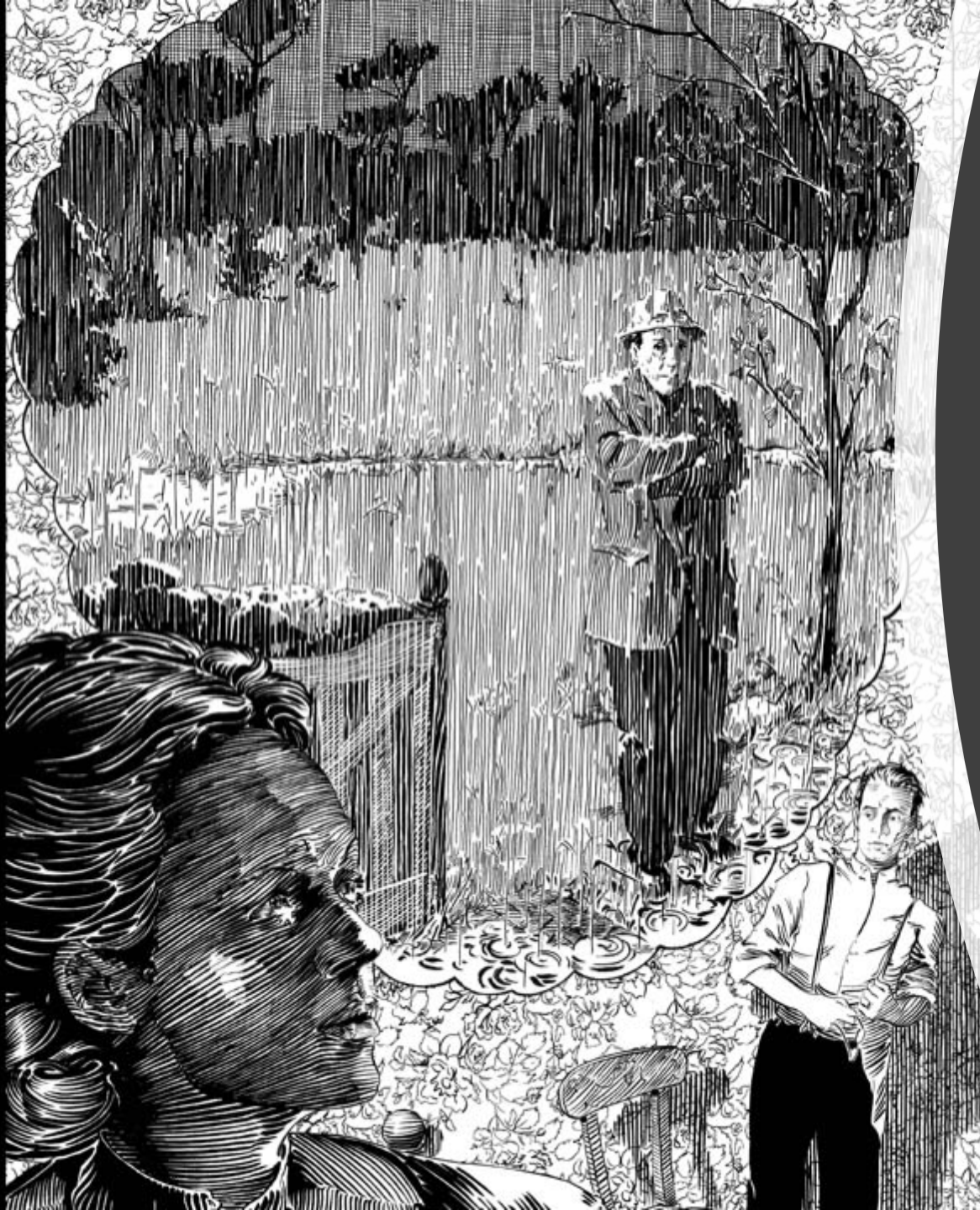
'"The Dead" never imbibes those Spirits to begin with: Gabriel's visitations involve strictly corporeal visitors, as if to insist that the surprises borne by the other are strange enough not to require the embellishment of the paranormal [. . .] *The Carol* invites us to act before the inevitable happens; "The Dead" asks us to be vigilant in case the unforeseeable should arrive.'

- Saint-Amour

Questions?

Written on Snow:
A Creative Writing Workshop

- Ekphrasis:

- "Description" in Greek. An ekphrastic poem is a vivid description of a scene or, more commonly, a work of art. Through the imaginative act of narrating and reflecting on the "action" of a painting or sculpture, the poet may amplify and expand its meaning.

Examples

- A notable example is "Ode on a Grecian Urn," (1819) in which the poet John Keats speculates on the identity of the lovers who appear to dance and play music, simultaneously frozen in time and in perpetual motion:

    What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
    What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?

Examples

- Another excellent example is the poem "Not my best side" by U.A Fanthorpe (1978), which is based on Paolo Uccello's painting 'Saint George and the Dragon' (1470).

- I have diplomas in Dragon Management and Virgin Reclamation. My horse is the latest model, with Automatic transmission and built-in Obsolescence. My spear is custom-built, And my prototype armour Still on the secret list.

- 1) describe and do no more
- 2) describe and go beyond the frame
- 3) make minor figures/creatures speak
- 4) voice the main figure (ventriloquise)
- 5) include the painter, make them speak
- 6) make objects speak
- 7) interrogate the scene, the painter, or yourself in response to the picture
- 8) discuss the encounter (in a gallery or where you first see it)

- Study the painting on the following slide and write an ekphrasis poem about it.

- ***The Hunters in the Snow*** also known as The Return of the Hunters, is a 1565 oil-on-wood painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

An analysis of festive advertising

- Ideas about advertising

- Two advertisements

- McDonalds Christmas advertisement 2020

- John Lewis Christmas advertisement 2020

Advertisements

- Moved from Information to persuasion
- Focusing on brands/brand identity
- Advertising as the art form of capitalism
- Advertisers are allowed to use exaggeration

Information → **Persuasion**

False needs

- Frankfurt school – false needs are imposed
- True needs are for nourishment, clothing, housing

Likewise, you can have perfectly **healthy teeth** which are off-white, yellowish or even brownish. There is even one type of stain that some researchers believe might protect against **tooth** decay. This is the dark edge you sometimes see along **teeth** at the margins of the gum line. It can look like a series of dark dots. 8 Dec 2017

www.bbc.com › future › article › 20171208-why-having-...
Why having white teeth doesn't mean they are healthy - BBC ...

Real needs

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- Genuine needs – deeply rooted in humans – that are appealed to
- Real needs misdirected towards the marketplace
- Manipulated towards products

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

- Self-actualization → Achieving one's full potential
- Esteem → Feeling of Accomplishment
- Love/Belonging → Intimate Relationships, Friends
- Safety → Security
- Physiological → Food, Water, Rest

The ads

- **John Lewis Christmas advertisement 2020**

The ads

- **McDonalds Christmas advertisement 2020**

Aristotle – persuasive communication

Ethos/Logos/Pathos

Ethos
- Trust
- Authority
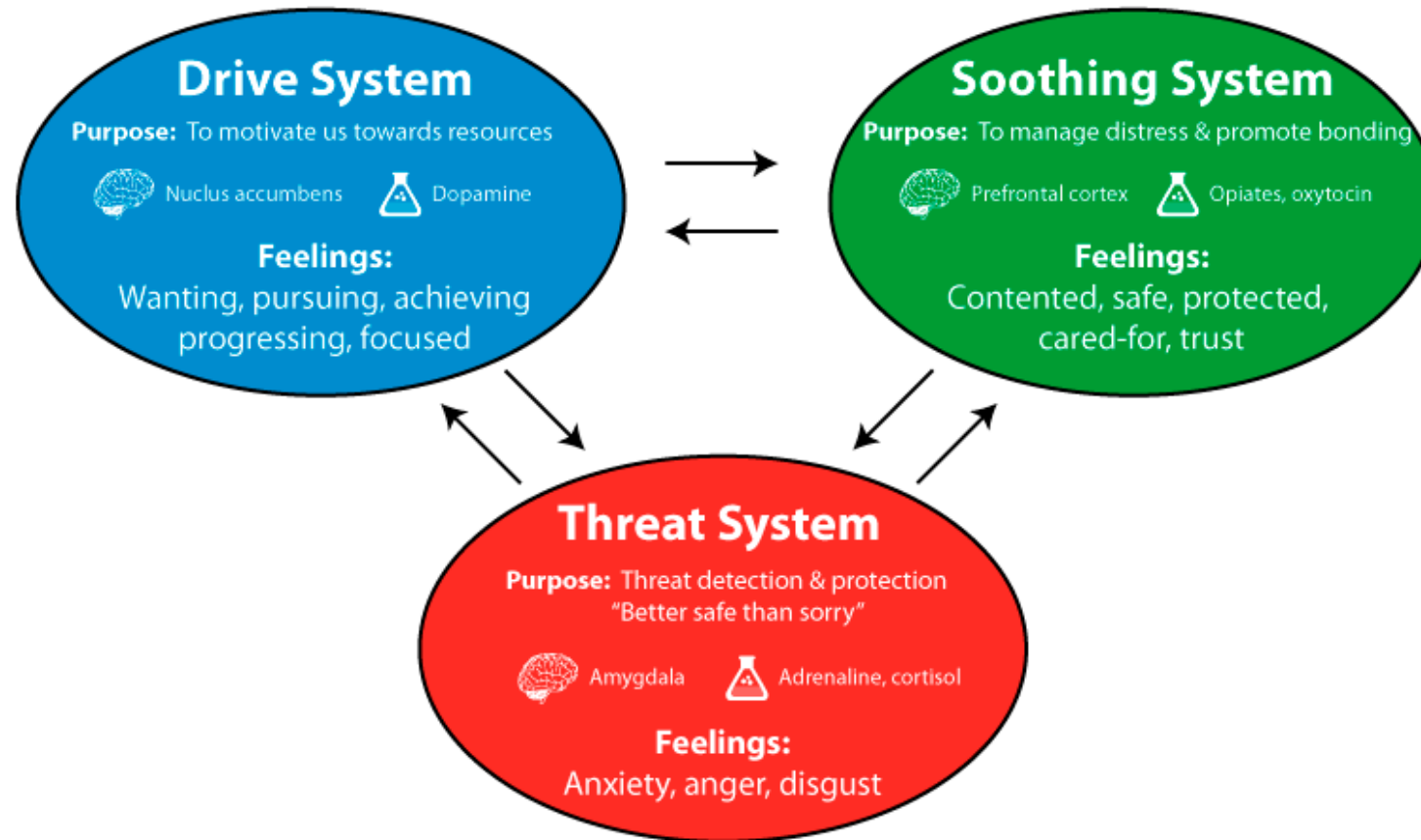
Persuasion

Logos
- Logic
- Reasoning

Pathos
- Emotion
- Beliefs
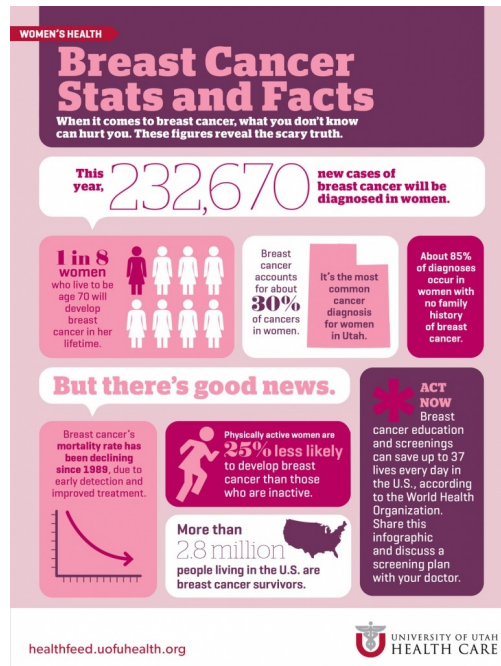
Emotional Regulation Systems

Paul Gilbert's evolutionary model proposes that human beings switch between three systems to manage their emotions.
Each system is associated with different brain regions and different brain chemistry.
Distress is caused by imbalance between the systems, often associated with under-development of the soothing system.

Drive System

Purpose: To motivate us towards resources

Nuclus accumbens   Dopamine

Feelings:
Wanting, pursuing, achieving progressing, focused

Soothing System

Purpose: To manage distress & promote bonding

Prefrontal cortex   Opiates, oxytocin

Feelings:
Contented, safe, protected, cared-for, trust

Threat System

Purpose: Threat detection & protection
"Better safe than sorry"

Amygdala   Adrenaline, cortisol

Feelings:
Anxiety, anger, disgust

Gilbert, P. (2010). *Compassion focused therapy: Distinctive features*. Routledge

Threats

Anger, Anxiety, Self-criticism, sadness

Soothing

Warmth, nurturing, support, encouragement, connecting with others

The ads want to make us purchase

- Ads are full of pathos – some ethos

- But they set themselves up to be the soothing system

- Real needs misdirected or false needs? What do you think?

Our Responses

- Professor Stuart Hall:

- Negotiated/Preferred/Oppositional

FACT CHECK: The 222 runs from Uxbridge to Hounslow and doesn't go anywhere near Tooting. Did you really think we wouldn't notice @johnlewis? #johnlewischristmasadvert #GiveALittleLove

Any questions/Comm

- Dr Barbara Mitra
- b.mitra@worc.ac.uk

Buttered scones and serviettes: Linguistic variation
on the dinner table
Lefteris Kailoglou
Dept. English, Media and Culture
e.kailoglou@worc.ac.uk

A series of questions…
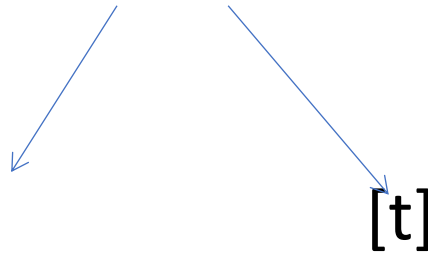

Picture: The Daily Mail

- What should we spread first, jam or butter?

- Phonology: scone, butteR
- Lexicon: Napkins, serviettes, tea/dinner
- The great bap debate

The concept of the variable

VARIABLE   (t)

VARIANTS   [t]   [?]

Linguistic factors: butter, light, terrace

Another example: butter /'bʌtə/ /bʊtə/

- When we have two ways of saying the same thing, we have a *linguistic variable*

- A variable has (at least) two *variants* (forms/realisations)

- Variation occurs in all levels of linguistic analysis

Examples

- Phonology : h-dropping, glottal stops, diphthong in LIKE etc

- Morphology: Come quick – Come quickly

- Lexicon: Lunch – Dinner, Dinner-Tea

- Syntax: I say – I says

- Discourse: (Quotative verbs) He says – He is like – He goes

Photo: Popsugar

The study of variation

•Correlation of **Independent** *Social* Variables with **Dependent** *Linguistic* Variables
•Aims: a) To <u>describe</u> linguistic variation b) To explain it
•A linguistic **variable** is a linguistic unit (of any level of linguistic analysis) which consists of <u>at least two</u> **variants**.
•The occurrence of each variant depends on linguistic (e.g. the linguistic context) and/or social (characteristics of the speaker, social context etc.) *conditioning factors*.

•Inter-speaker variation → Dialect (different speaker)

•Intra-speaker variation→ Style (different context)

•Linguistic variation **may** lead to language change, but language change **cannot** occur without the prior existence of variation!

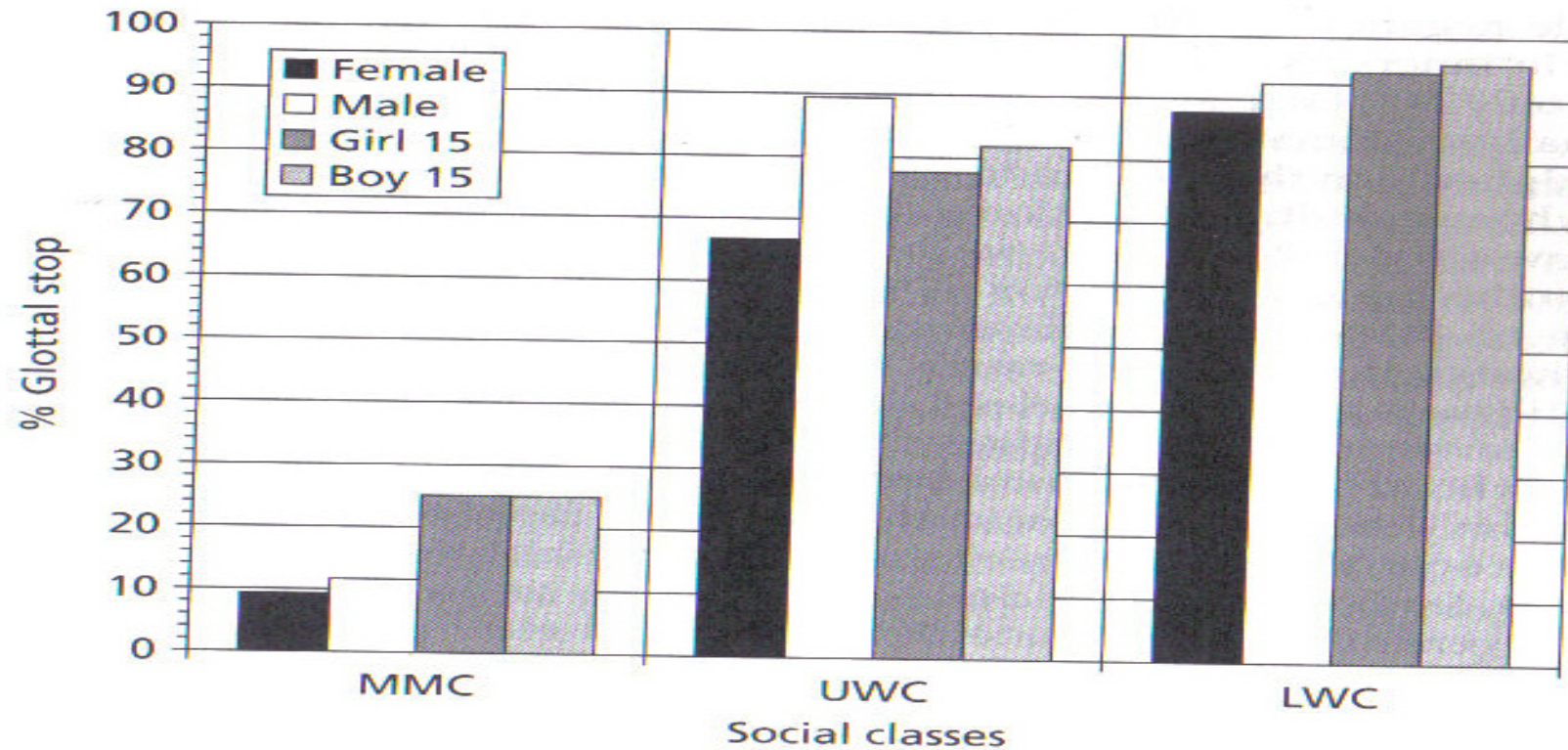| Social Variables		Linguistic Variables
Age		H-dropping
Social Class		Th-fronting
Sex	↔	Glottal stops
Ethnicity etc.		Quotatives etc.

Social Class

Figure 14.3 Glottal stops by male and female adults and 15-year-olds in three social classes in Glasgow
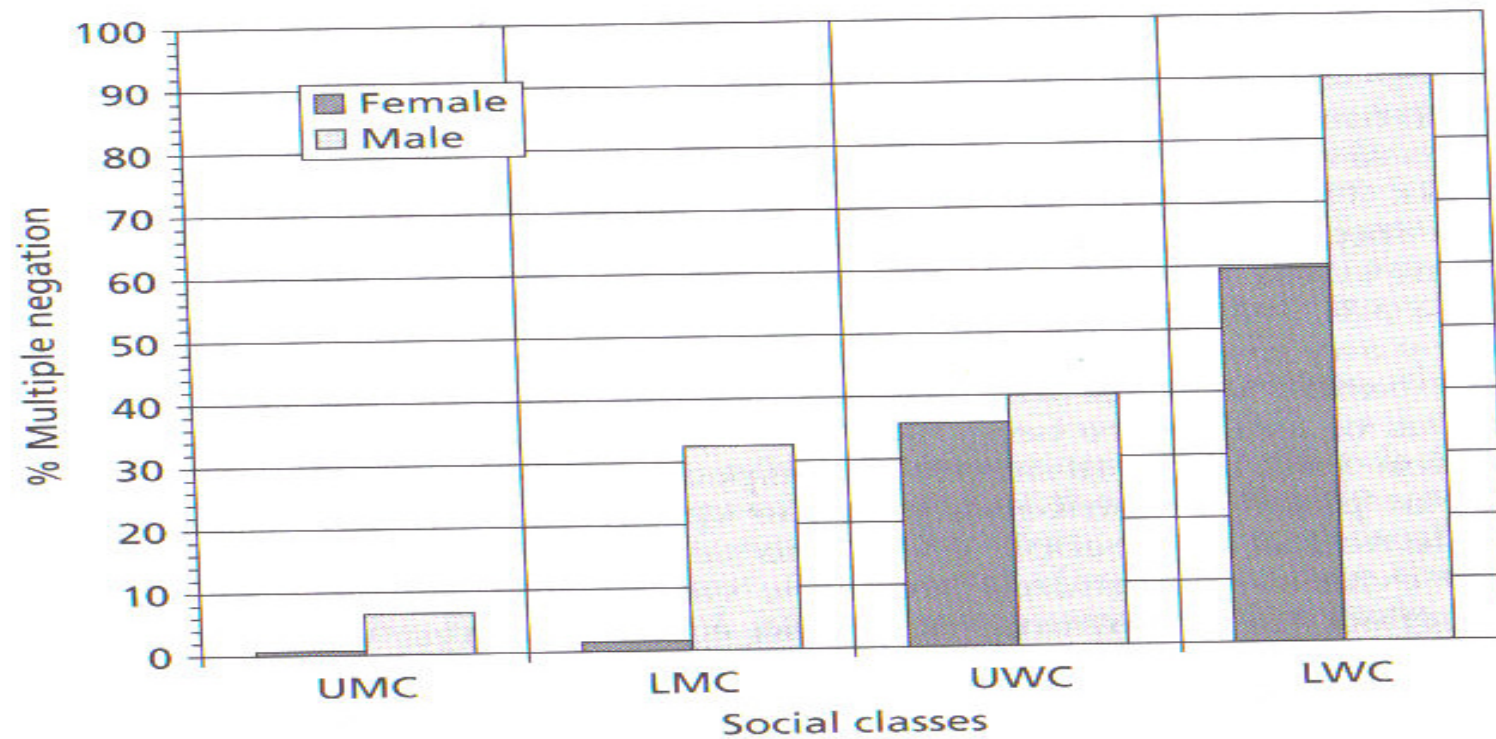*Source*: Macaulay (1977: table 16, 47)

Gender

Figure 14.2 Multiple negation by African-American women and men in four social classes in inner-city Detroit
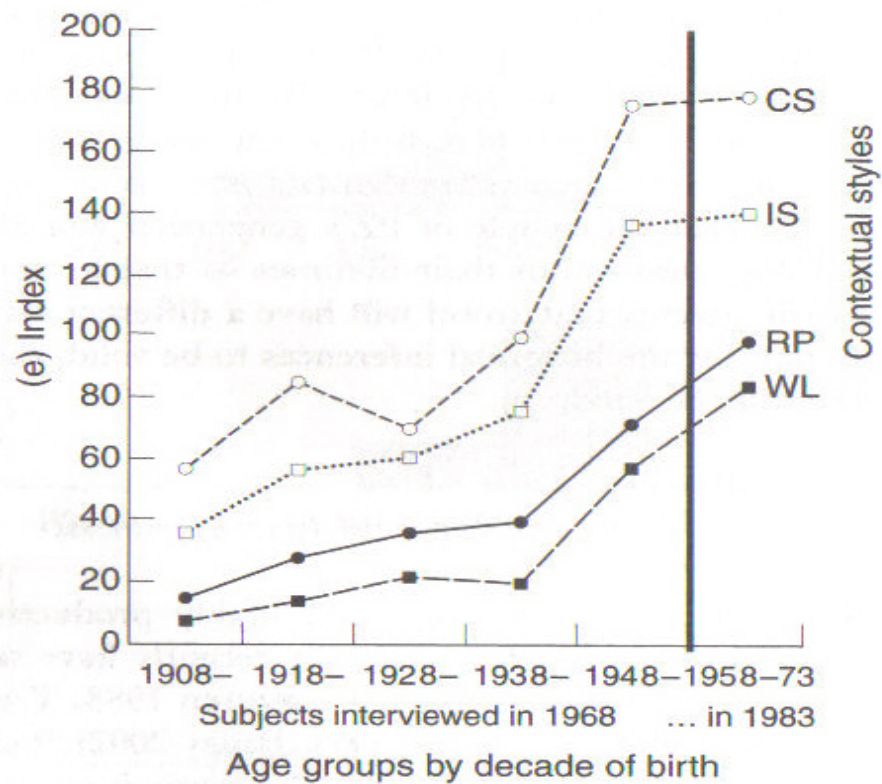
Source: Shuy (1969)

Age

Figure 4.9   Norwich (e) by age groups and style, in apparent time (left of heavy line) and real time (based on Trudgill 1988: figure 6, 47)

Taboo

Subjects and words (and links to swearing and slang)

How is slang different from dialect words?

And how about cookies and biscuits?

Picture: The Mirror

Swearing: When it is and when it isn't

- Expletives, taboo, profanity, obscenity, "bad language"
- The swearing paradox (frequency and offensiveness, Beers Fagersten 2007:14)
- The importance of context (relation speaker-listener): e.g. "racialized affiliative terms" for American- English (Bucholtz, 2011) and "güey" for Mexican-Spanish (Bucholtz 2009)
- Functions of swearing (Jay and Janschewitz 2008):

    a) polite, b) impolite, c) neither

General patterns

- Gender (males use more offensive and more often swearing than females)
- Age
- Mixed group vs single sex group (normally swearing more likely amongst same sex groups)

- Factors affecting the rate of offensiveness: speaker, location, and word type. Gender mattered but only for native speakers. Non-native speakers were more tuned to the literal, rather than the pragmatic/interactional function.

Inter-speaker Variation
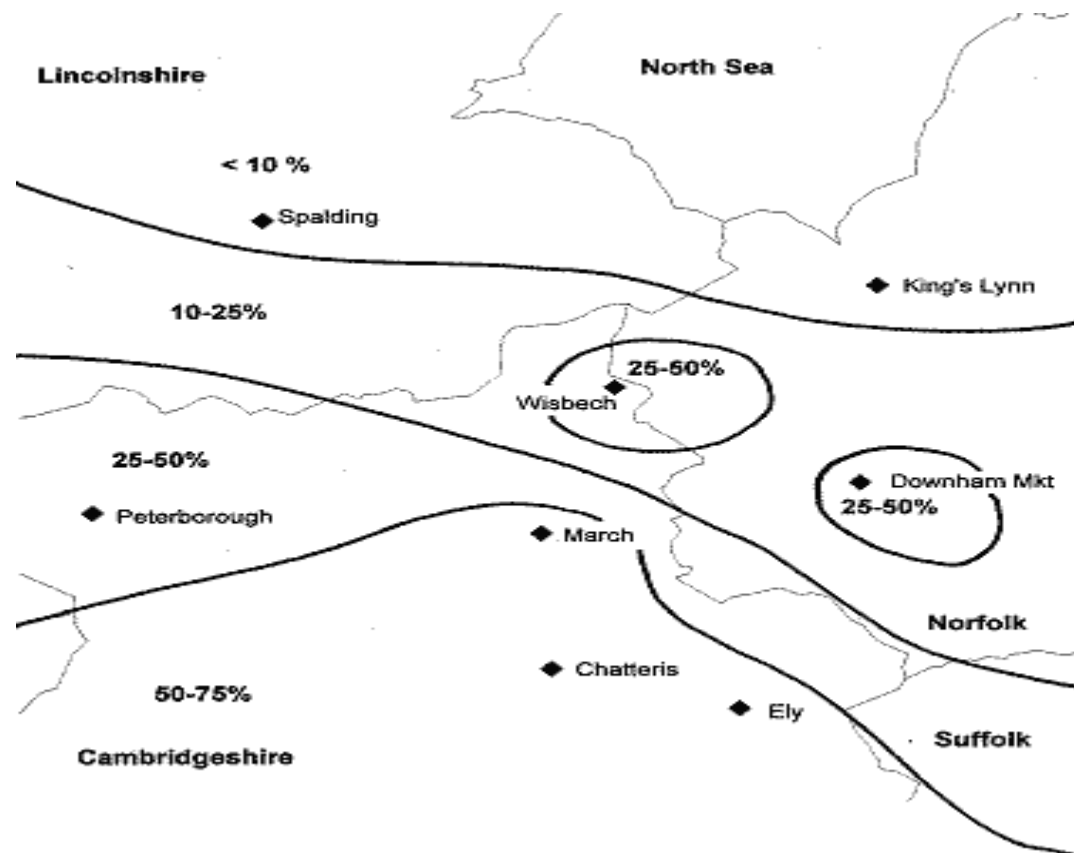
Traditional dialects

Mainstream dialect

Map: http://www.uta.edu/english/tim/

Dialect Maps (rhoticity)

Language Areas: An area characterised by the use of a linguistic feature

Isoglosses: The boundaries of a dialect area

Liverpool

Birmingham

London

Based on Trudgill (2000)

Variation (l-vocalisation, miuk/milk)

Source: D.Britain (2005)

South-West Midlands?

Main historical information

- SED (Orton and Barry, 1969)
- C19th pamphlets/glossaries (e.g. Kingsford, 1897)
- English dialect society (e.g. Chamberlain 1882; Salisbury1893)
- ➢ C19th: Sir George Cornewall Lewis places Worcestershire and Herefordshire in the **Midland counties**
- ➢ Leeds (1985) identifies **Herefordshire** as **South-West Midlands**
  - ➢ supported by a number of non-linguistic ties
- ➢ Clark and Asprey (2013) include **northern Worcestershire** in the **West Midlands**
- ➢ Trudgill (1990): Worcester as "marginal" between the Central **Southwestern** variety and the **West Midlands**
  - ➢ Sits on North/South isoglosses (cf. Britain's parallel work in the Fens)

Worcester Dialect Archive

Interviews
21 speakers
Recorded 2013-2016
c.40 mins

- **YF:** 11 young females (19-25)
- **YM:** 6 young males (19-25)
- **MF:** 2 middle-aged females (47, 51)
- **MM:** 1 middle-aged male (44)
- **OM:** 1 older male (67)

Students' findings from interviews (non-standard features)

Location of speakers

SED (red): ,Bretforton, Clifton upon Teme

Earl's Croome, Hanbury, Hartlebury

Offenham

WDA (blue): St. John's (5), Hallow, Barbourne (2), Bromyard (2), Worcester (3) Martley, Evesham (2), Northwick, Warndon Villages (2), Battenhall (2)

MMB: Cleeve Prior, Defford, Great Malvern, Kidderminster, Redditch, St Michael's, Wythall

Findings from Interviews (students)

-ing

[in]	
YF	78%
MF	74%
YM	88%
OM	91%

H-dropping

h-drop	
YF(1)	43%
OF(1)	10%

Glottalisation

| Glottal stops	
YF (n=7)	61-90%
MF (n=1)	59%
YM (n=4)	68-82%
MM(1)	76%

Findings from RAS (across years); A fudged situation (both fudged variety and variants)

BATH	1st response			2nd response		
(%)	[a]	[aː]	[ɑː]	[a]	[aː]	[ɑː]
Overall	37	37	26	42	27	31
Male	34	42	24	39	37	24
Female	40	33	27	45	17	38
Young	46	34	20	51	20	29
Old	25	42	33	31	36	33
N=120						

Historically [aː] in the region
- Only [a] in SED from Romsley (outskirts of Worcs, nearer Birmingham)
- Two [a] speakers in MMB are younger and from Wythall, Redditch (outskirts of Worcs, nearer Birmingham)
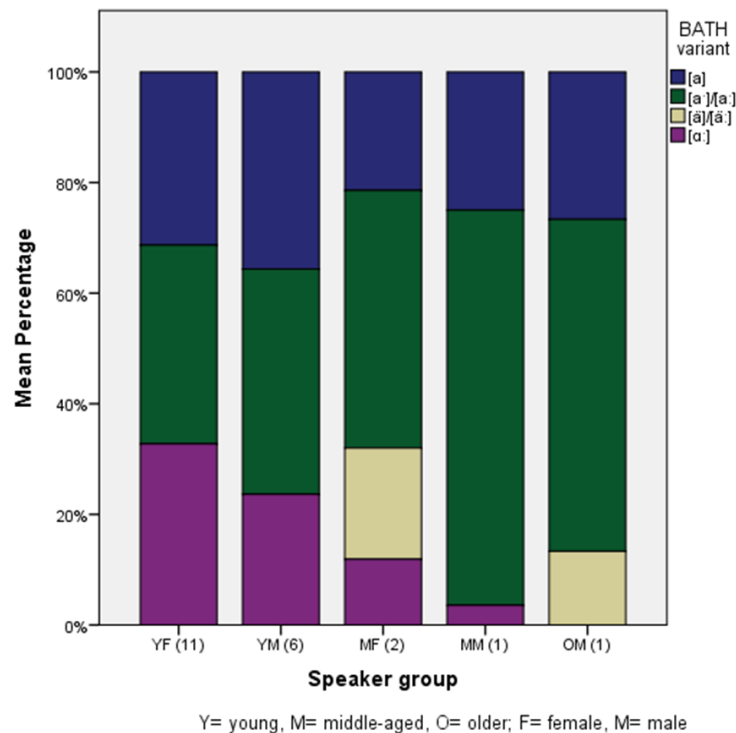
[a]
- 7/17 Young speakers consistent
→ all fairly 'city centre'

[a·] / [aː]
- 100% (or close) from 2/11 YF but technically Herefordshire (Bromyard)
- Others, with >50%: older, no YM

[ɑː]
- More than SED/MMB
- Class based rather than a change in progress (vs. Piercy 2011)?

[ä] / [äː]
- The older speakers: MF1, MF2, OF1

Mixed pictures for 7/21 speakers
(3 to 6 variants) → not lexically driven

Vs. **Piercy (2011),** who found
- Backing of BATH to [ɑː] via lexical diffusion
- More [ɑː] from younger speakers

Vs. **Britain (2015)**
- (O) [aː - a] (Y) [aː] Transitional Fenland but no intermediate length [a·]
- Sporadic mixing lexically driven for older speakers

The BATH/TRAP split in progress; Worcs as a "fudged" dialect (with Ella Jeffries and Esther Asprey)

One Phoneme Dialects	
/a/ TRAP, BATH, PALM, START	*Scottish English* *Northern Ireland English*
Two Phoneme Dialects	
/a/ TRAP, BATH /a:/ START, PALM	*Northern England English* *Welsh English*
/a/ TRAP /ɑ:/ BATH, START, PALM	*RP* *Southeast England English* *South African English* *Australian English* *New Zealand English*
/æ/ TRAP, BATH /ɑ(:)(r)/ PALM, START	*General American* *Canadian English*
Three Phoneme Dialects	
/æ/ TRAP, BATH /æ/ TRAP, BATH */ɑ(:) (r)/ PALM, START	*New York City English* *Philadelphia English*

PLOTS: Ledbury speakers

BATH backing in progress

Long BATH vowels for all speakers

Older speakers have variable rhoticity (but not in START vowel, START vowel backed)
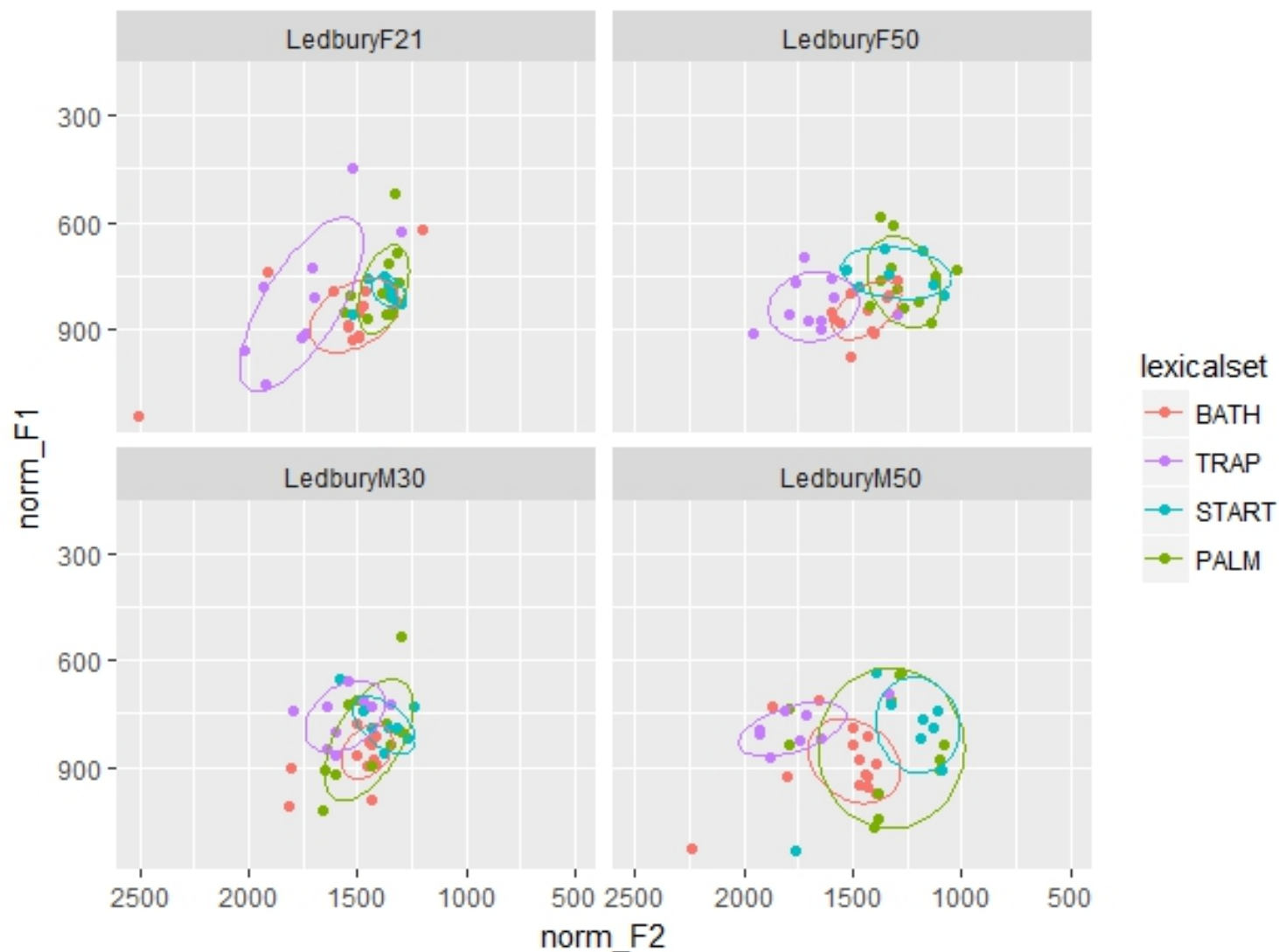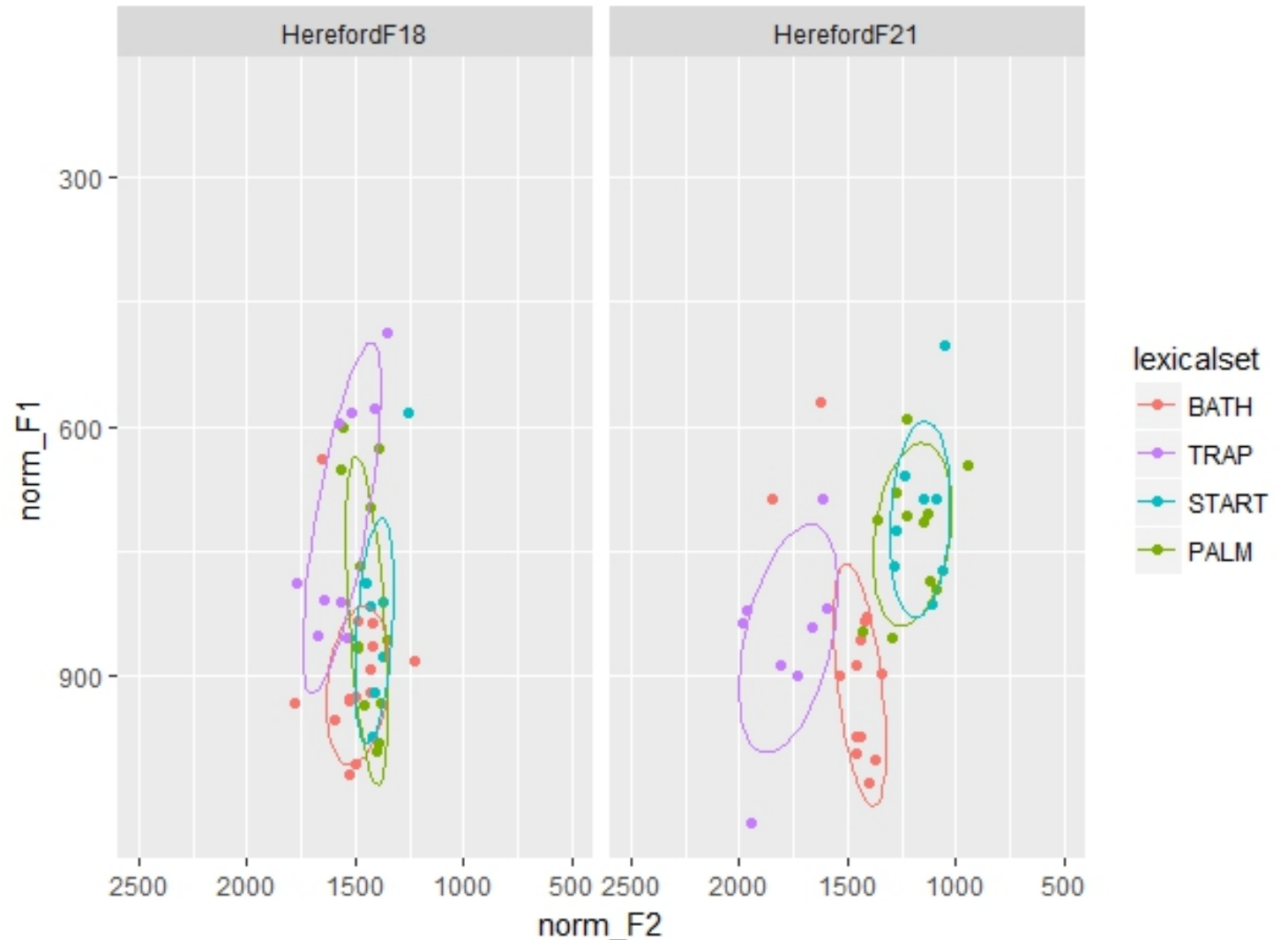
PLOTS: Hereford speakers

Hereford F18 has backed BATH but all vowels are fairly close together

originally depicted herself as MC but then 'admitted' WC occupations of parents
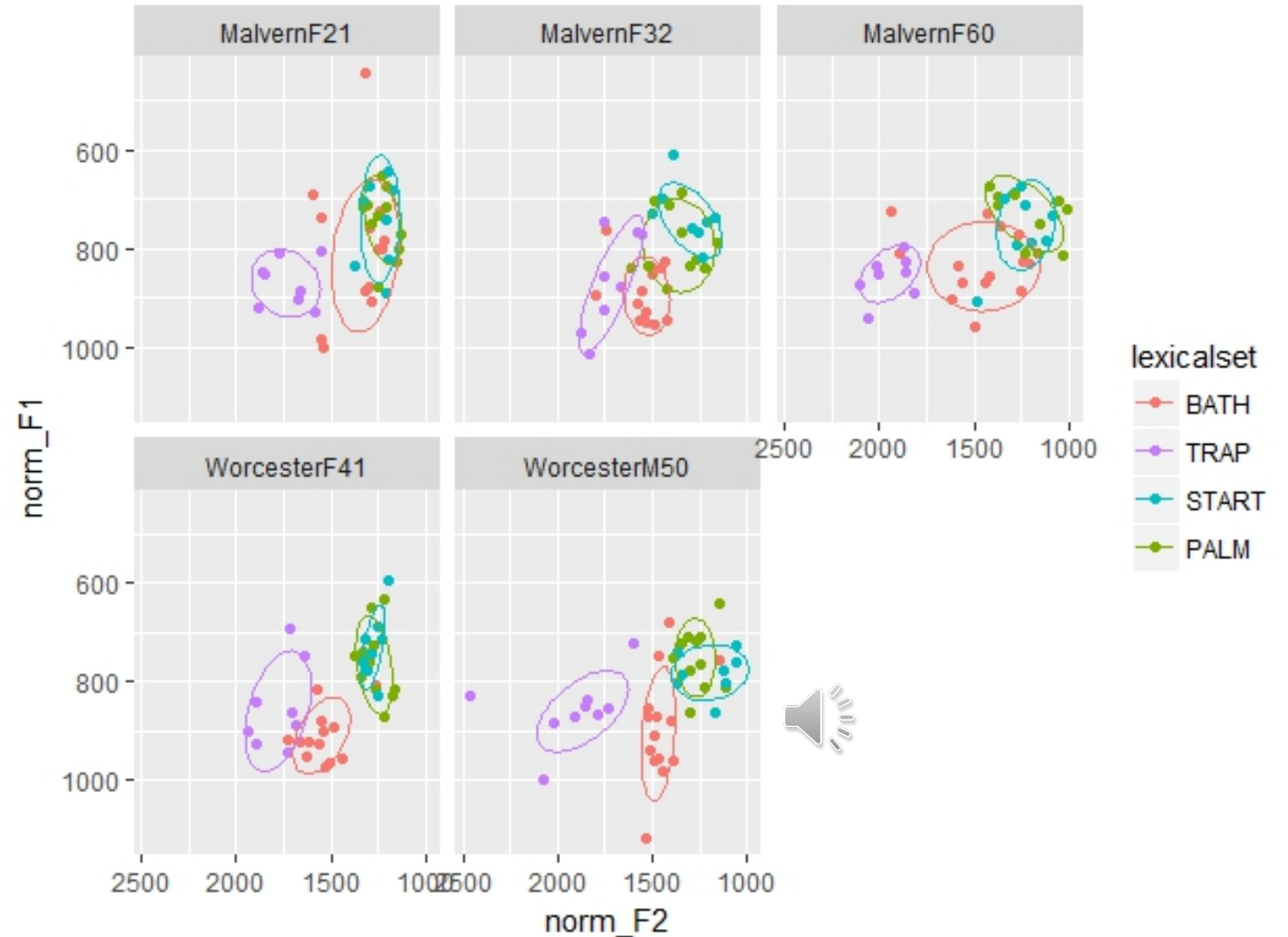
Hereford F21 patterns more like Worcester and Malvern speakers...

PLOTS: Worcester and Malvern speakers

BATH backing more variable

Worcester female has no backed BATH (only in the word *can't*)

- Our differences are not accidents, but part of a system, that we can study.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

YIPPEE-Ki-YAY!.
IT'S KARL MARX'S

AKA WELCOME TO FILM STUDIES

ALL I WANT FOR
CHRISTMAS

IS THE MEANS OF
PRODUCTION

HOW *DIE HARD* (1988) IS TYPICALLY READ

- American action hero defeats European threat (communism? Socialism?) to celebration of way of life (Christmas – capitalism – consumerism)

- Hans Gruber (right) part of 'Volksfrei', modelled after the radical leftist RAF (Rotes Armee Faktion)

- Triumph of the good American individual over the collectivist threat – 'Morning in America' – as the Soviet empire crumbles

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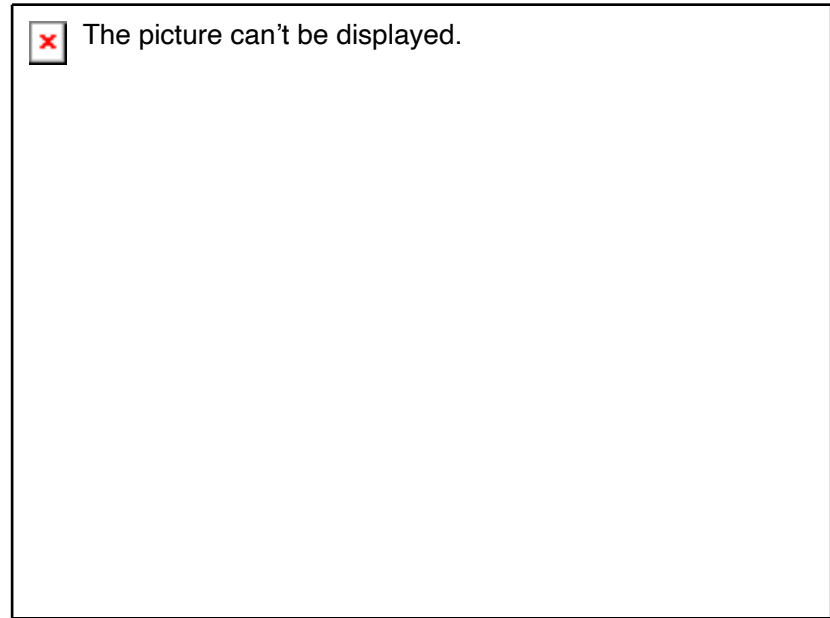
"I could talk about industrialisation and men's fashion all day but I'm afraid work must intrude."

Hans Gruber (Alan Rickman)

- West German
- Classically-educated
- Bourgeois, snobbish
- Informed about American media
- Literate – (Walther PPK)

ROBINSON
                    What do you wish for, Mister Gruber?

                                HANS
                    I have comrades in arms around the
                    world who are languishing in prison.
                    The American State Department enjoys
                    rattling its saber to its own ends...
                    now it can rattle it for me.

                                            INTERCUT:

242   MCCLANE   242

        Listening to this with expressions ranging from astonishment
        to dismay to outright derisive amusement.

                                HANS' VOICE
                    ...The following people are to be
                    released from their captors: In
                    Northern Ireland, the seven members
                    of the New Provo Front. In Canada,
                    the five imprisoned leaders of
                    Liberte de Quebec...

243   HANS' OFFICE   243

                                HANS
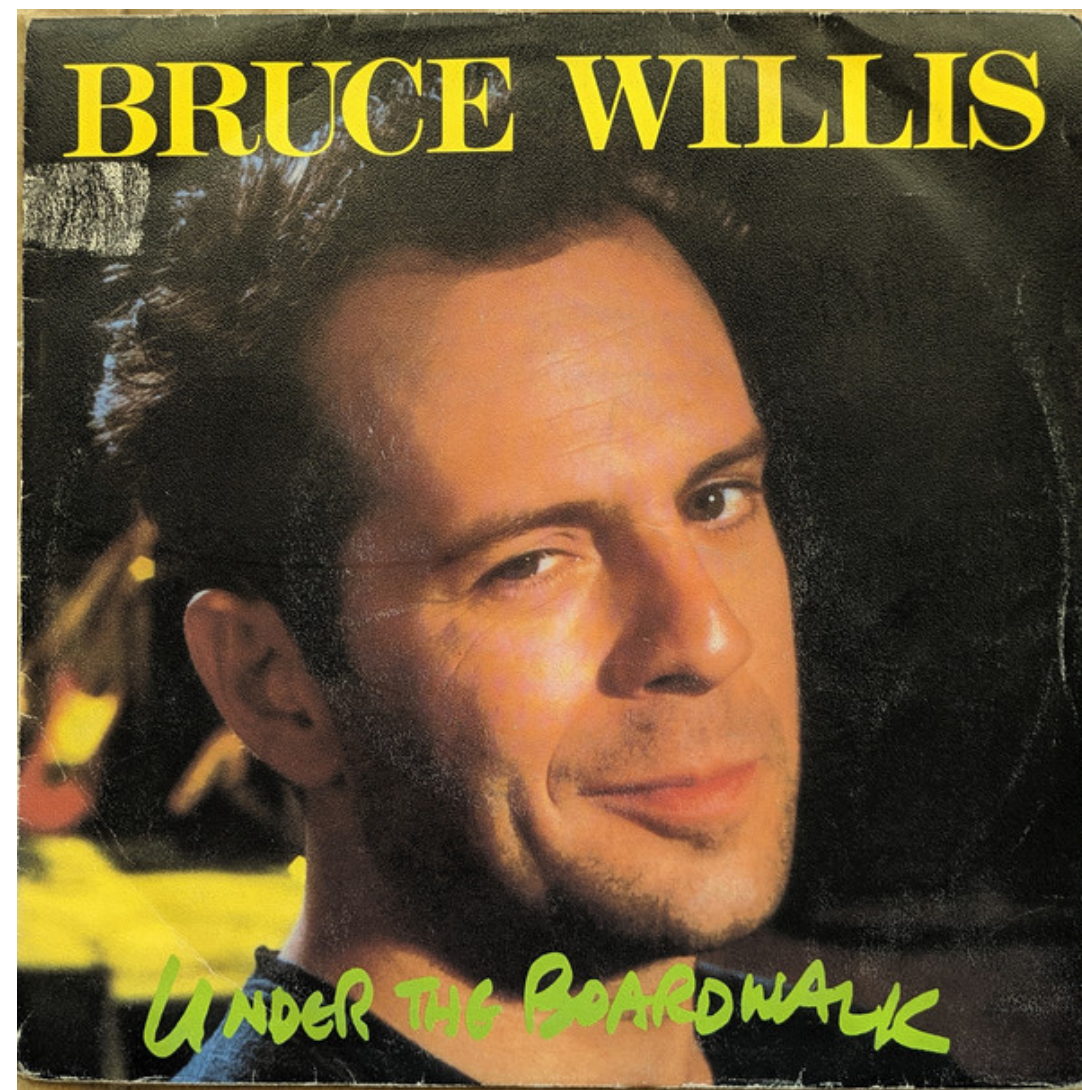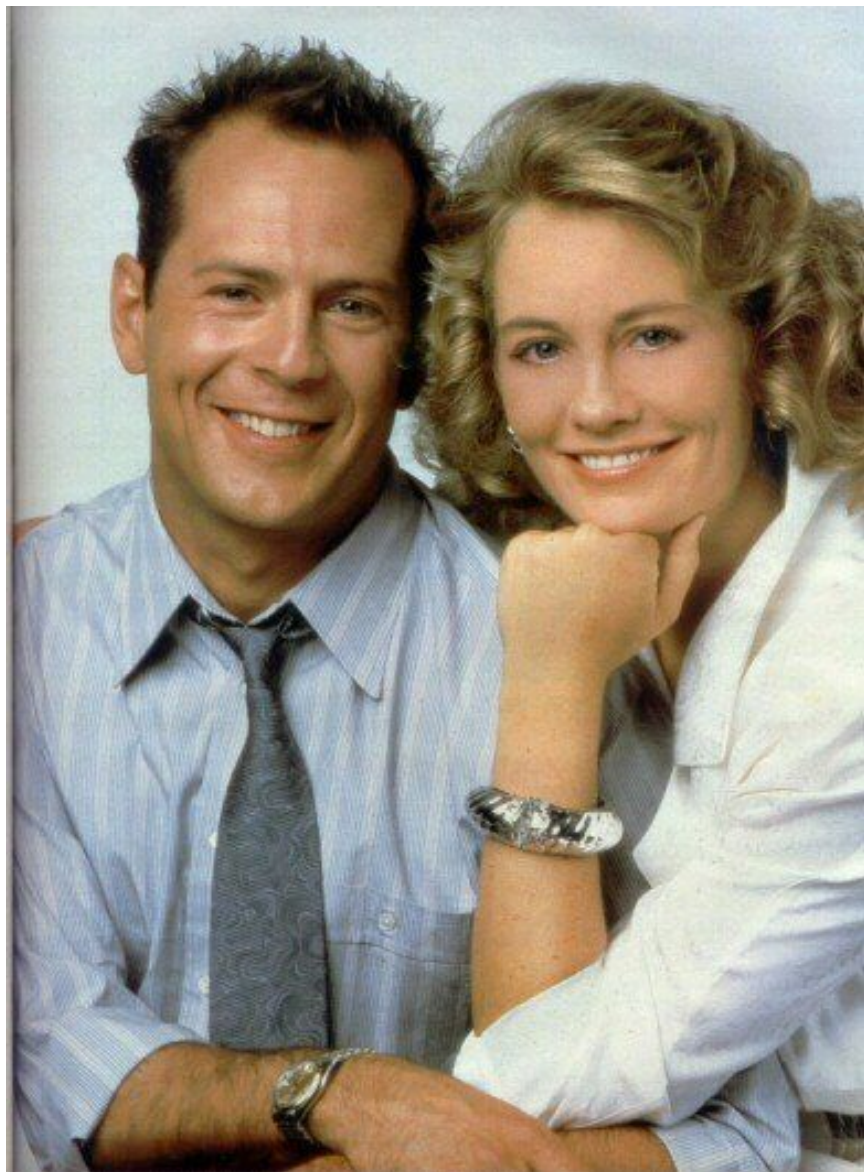   ...in Sri Lanka, the nine members
                    of the Asian Dawn movement...

                                KARL
                            (sotto)
                    'Asian Dawn Movement?'

                                HANS
                            (off-mike, a shrug)
                    I read about them in Time magazine.
                            (on mike)

BRUCE WILLIS

Under the Boardwalk

JOHN MCCLAINE (BRUCE WILLIS): THE EVERYMAN

The picture can't be displayed.

"John McClane doesn't like to fly. He's never been in a limo. He's trying to fix his broken marriage to wife Holly (Bonnie Bedelia), who now lives across the country in L.A. with their kids and who — much to McClane's disappointment — is now going by her maiden name. **In other words, he's just another guy, a flawed individual in a flannel shirt (and, later, a dirty wifebeater) trying to mend a busted-up life.** When Alan Rickman's debonair thief takes over the Nakatomi building and John jumps into action, it's not with gung-ho confidence but, rather, with disbelief, frustration, and anxiety. During shoot-outs, he screams and retreats while firing his weapon. He pleads with the cops outside to handle the situation so he won't have to. He's a man unwillingly thrust into taking matters into his own hands." (Nick Schager, *Vulture*. Feb 14 2013)

THE EVERYMAN IN SOVIET FILM THEORY

■ Pro-Marxist cinema believed in restoring heroic status to the people.

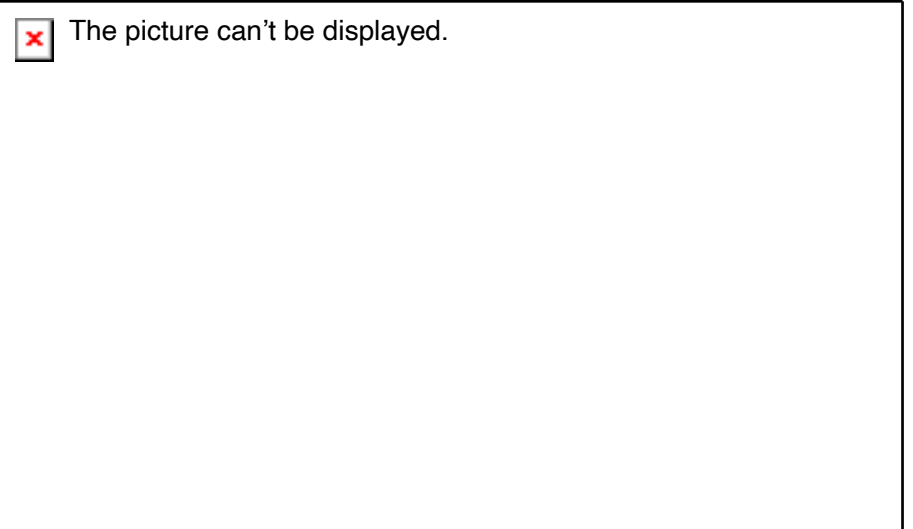■ Ideally a collective hero

■ The cause above the self

THE RESOURCEFUL EVERYMAN, DEDICATED TO THE CAUSE

- Works with people, uncomfortable with glamour
- Disempowerment leads to new solutions
- Often seen in positions of the working man: his base is a building site
- Historical anti-communist authority also defeated (FBI)

GRUBER'S UNDOING – HIS LOVE OF AMERICAN MYTHOLOGY AND THE REALISATION OF FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS

- McClane's wife is gifted a Rolex by Ellis (the Gruber lookalike)
- Gruber takes McClane's wife hostage and repeats McClaine's catchphrase back to him
- McClaine shoots Gruber – but he hangs on to the precipice by clutching the Rolex around McClane's wife's wrist
- They undo the clasp, losing the watch, but saving the day
- This can be read as the lifting of false consciousness

ANY QUESTIONS

- Film Studies can be used to make new readings of cinema thought "silly" or "one-dimensional"

- Amazing cross-disciplinary work with history, English, art, drama, screenwriting

- Email d.brookes@worc.ac.uk if you want to ask anything about this lecture or anything on film!