*1930s Women: Modernists or Iconoclasts*

In 1928, Eleanor Roosevelt pointed out that women might have received the right to vote, but in the early 1930s, this remained “a gesture without real power.” This panel will ask how this political gain but continued social opposition to women’s equality affected the reception and interpretation of writing published by women in the 1930s, many of whom have remained on the periphery of mainstream modernist scholarship. Positioned at the intersection of period, political, and aesthetic crosscurrents, and though consistently present at conferences and in anthologies – thanks in large part to the revisionary agenda of feminist scholars – women writers of the 1930s have yet to be treated as a formidable characters in the story scholars tell about modernism. Thus, the panel we are proposing, “1930s Women: Modernists or Iconoclasts,” will investigate the current position of more established women writers in modernist studies as a consistent yet still peripheral presence in collections, in conferences, and in the classroom. This panel will demonstrate that writers who do not fit neatly into the stories scholars tell about modernism actually have much to show us about the politics of modernism’s scholarly history.

We are particularly seeking transatlantic approaches, including those that engage issues of racial and sexual identity.