**Special Interest Group for PALA 2023**

***“The stylistic study of empathy”***

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My colleague Fransina Stradling and I organised this panel in PALA 2022. It was very successful, as we got very fruitful research/publication collaborations from it, so I would like to keep it running in 2023 as well. As a result of this panel, Fransina and I are currently co-editing a special issue for the *Journal of Literary Semantics* (due for publication in October 2023).

**Abstract** (295 words)

The topic of empathy is receiving widespread attention both outside and inside academia. Of particular relevance to stylisticians is the study of empathy in recipients’ engagement with literary and contemporary media. Stylistics has the potential to provide much-needed insight into the role of language in the elicitation of empathy.

The PALA community is currently seeing a growing interest in (narrative) empathy, as evidenced by the number of talks discussing this topic at PALA conferences in recent years. After a very successful Empathy SIG in PALA 2022, a SIG focussing on (narrative) empathy in 2023 will maintain a much-needed space for the exchange of ideas between scholars interested in the phenomenon and will continue to put the study of affective responses to text at the forefront of academic scrutiny within PALA.

The Empathy SIG aims to facilitate the exchange and development of ideas and research methods between stylisticians with an interest in (narrative) empathy within the PALA community. It furthermore aims to provide a forum that promotes dialogue and encourages interdisciplinary research between stylistics and other fields that study empathy, such as philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology, film studies, literary studies, cultural studies, etc.

The SIG invites papers focussed on the role of language in (narrative) empathy which may incorporate a wide range of text types, theoretical approaches and research methods, including but not limited to:

* Fiction or non-fiction;
* Affordances of empathy in different forms of media;
* Cognitive approaches to empathy;
* Figurative/metaphorical aspects of empathy;
* Production: the style of specific writers to foster empathy;
* Reception: reader response research;
* Mind style and empathy;
* Point of view and empathy;
* Characterisation and empathy;
* The role of textual and non-textual factors in empathetic responses.

This list is suggestive rather than exhaustive.

Please submit a 300-word abstract, including five key words by **January 31st**, to:

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