

Traversing the Field: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Walking and Thinking in Scottish Landscapes

University of Dundee, Saturday 30th April 2016



We welcome proposals for 20 minute papers, complete panels, round table sessions, or creative pieces on any aspect of walking in and cultural engagement with Scottish land.

Please email abstracts of 250 words to traversingthefield@gmail.com

by 1st March 2016.

With generous support from the Centre for Poetic Innovation, the Centre for Scottish Land Futures, and the Centre for Scottish Culture.

A rock outcrop, a hedge, a fallen tree, anything that turns us out of our way, is an excellent thing on a walk.

It is quite possible to refuse all the coercion, violence, property, triviality, to simply walk away.

Walking is egalitarian and democratic; we do not become experts

at walking and one side of the road is as good as another.

Walking is not so much romantic as reasonable.

The line of a walk is articulate in itself, a kind of statement.

Pools, walls, solitary trees, are natural halting places.

Thomas A. Clark, *from 'In Praise of Walking'*

Poets and philosophers, activists and archaeologists, climbers and cartographers, have all been drawn to walk and think in the Scottish landscape. Walking also figures importantly in the activity of many different artistic and religious practitioners. Scholarship across academic disciplines has engaged with walking – from Rebecca Solnit's discussion of the disappearance of pavements to Robert MacFarlane's dissection of the mountaineering impulse, to land reform, land ownership, conservation and beyond. In this one-day inter-disciplinary conference, we will explore the different uses to which walking has been put and the different meanings derived therein, with particular focus on Scottish contexts. Hear from researchers in other disciplines, and walkers from outside academia, about their experiences, and learn about other approaches to the Scottish environment.