Olga Albarrán Caselles PhD Candidate in Hispanic Studies French, Hispanic, and Italian Studies

FHIS Graduate Student Symposium, April 2018

## "The Figurations of the Maternal Self: The New Autobiographical Narrative of (Pro)Creation"

All new artistic work is included in an established practice and maintains a dialogue with other texts (or with all texts) but, how do you write for which there is no tradition? In the absence of a literature on procreation from the subject, women who write about it have tried different styles and forms that have historically been called feminine: diaries, letters, chronicles and testimonies, autobiographical texts that, as pointed out by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader (1998), have remained on the margins and produce a history of its own (6). Literary genres hold a prestige similar to that of bodies and have also been classified according to their masculine attributes (novel or essay, for example) or feminine (autobiographical forms) in a way that have originated two cultures: a "high" (male) and a "low" (female) as indicated, among others, by Stephanie Sieburth. In this way, narrative fiction has maintained a hierarchical relationship with autobiographical modes even though it used them indiscriminately as textual strategies, especially in autofictions (Alberca 150). However, from a gender perspective, autobiography would not maintain an unequal relationship with fiction, but, on the contrary, there have always been a series of exchanges and negotiations between them in texts written by women. In this paper I examine the tensions and characterisitics of what I consider a new autobiographical genre about (pro)creation in the contemporanean peninsular context.