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**In the Laboratory of the Spirits: Gendered Dichotomies of the Séance Space
in the Psychical Research of Dr. T.G. Hamilton, 1918-1935.**

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The paper investigates how interwar practices of spiritualism and psychical research transformed the *séance* room into a contested space. Caught between gendered dichotomies of masculine medical science and feminine psychic power, the *séance* room simultaneously reflected private domesticity as well as a more public medical and scientific culture. This is particularly evident in the *séances* held by Dr. T.G. Hamilton in Winnipeg Manitoba Canada between 1918 and 1935. Situated within a room in Dr. T.G. Hamilton's home, the *séances* encapsulated traditional spiritualist practice, complete with a circle of sitters holding hands in a darkened room. To meet masculine scientific standards, however, Hamilton attempted to reconstruct this feminine domestic space into a laboratory. He equipped the room with state of the art camera equipment, inspected the mediums' bodies according to modern medical practice and rigorously limited any factors that might compromise the scientific legitimacy of his paranormal investigations. Despite such efforts, the *séance* room and the practice of the sitters continued to resist such scientific order. As a consequence, the *séance* room remained within a state of flux, not giving way to either a wholly masculine or feminine paradigm.

Beth Robertson is a second year PhD candidate at Carleton University in Ottawa Ontario, Canada. Previously she has researched and wrote on woman's spiritual and personal narratives, nineteenth century women theologians, language, visual culture, modernity and memory. Currently, her research deals with spiritualism and psychical research in the interwar period. Particularly, it addresses issues of gender performance and identity, visual and material culture within the séance space, and the dynamic interplay between spiritualism and modernity following World War I in Canada.