The French literary sphere has recently been marked by scandals, accusations and lawsuits.  Christine Angot was found guilty of ‘atteinte à la vie privée’ and fined 40,000 Euros for basing characters of Les Petits on identifiable people.  Camille Laurens was accused of the same crime by her ex-partner over L’amour, roman, which includes characters whose first names correspond to those of the real-life (ex-)couple.  Marcela Iacub’s Belle et bête—replete with a caricature of a pig on the front cover—portrayed the author’s former lover, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, as a man of rapacious sexual appetite and dubious moral values and earned Iacub a fine of 50,000 Euros. Camille Laurens caused further scandal by accusing Marie Darrieussecq of plagiarism over Philippe.

This phenomenon calls into question the commercial success of life writing, and particularly that of autofiction, a label that may be applied to most of the texts at the heart of these scandals.  Moreover, while men have been involved in many such scandals (Patrick Poivre d’Arvor, Lionel Duroy and filmmaker Arnaud Desplechin were also sued, for example), many of the authors involved are female.  This panel will study the scandals that texts of life writing have engendered, seeking to understand the place of the law in life writing, the limitations that such scandals place upon autofiction, the specificities of ‘atteinte à la vie privée’, the messages that such scandals send to the public, to writers and to the publishing industry, and to the crucial category of gender.