

# ABSTRACT BOOK

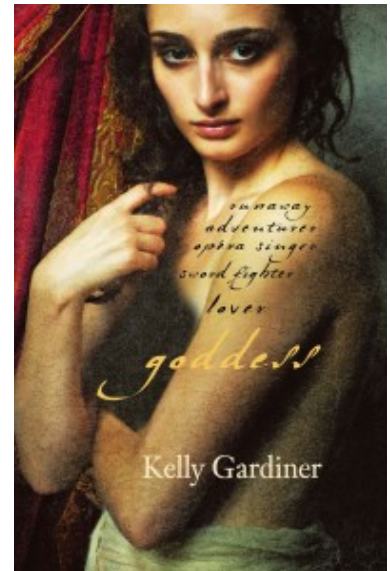
## Reading performance

*Kelly Gardiner:* Duelling, gender, and love in the court of the Sun King

*Goddess* is a work of metafiction/biofiction based on the life of the remarkable Julie d'Aubigny, known as Mademoiselle de Maupin – swordswoman, opera singer, runaway, cross-dresser, occasional nun, and seventeenth century superstar.

She has been portrayed over the centuries as the personification of beauty, of love, and of decadence, as a monster and heroine, as a Romantic ideal and a Queer icon, as virago and as victim. But who was she really?

*Goddess* is my answer.



### *Biography of Kelly Gardiner*

Kelly Gardiner is not only a lecturer in Creative and Professional Writing at La Trobe University, Australia, a podcaster about women and writing, and a member of the steering committee behind this symposium. Kelly Gardiner also writes historical fiction for readers of all ages.

Kelly Gardiner's latest novel is *1917: Australia's Great War*, recently shortlisted in the NSW Premier's History Awards. Her previous books include the young adult novels *Act of Faith* and *The Sultan's Eyes*, both of which were shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, and *Goddess*, a novel for adults based on the life of the seventeenth century French swordswoman, cross-dresser and opera singer, Mademoiselle de Maupin. It was shortlisted in the international Bisexual Book Awards.

Award winning Turkish-Italian director Ferzan Ozpetek devotes the diegetic space in his movies mostly to issues concerning gender and love. Through a thematic/visual analysis of his films “Hamam (*Turkish Bath*)”, “Harem Suare” and “Cahil Periler (*Ignorant Fairies*)”, I focus on how Ozpetek treats love as a gender bender and creator of fluid gender identities and explore how and in what ways gender identity is “only” temporarily fixed through a narrative of love.

In an interview Ozpetek says, “I do not see any difference between a straight story and a gay story. I am talking about the human condition, I don't like at all the words ‘gay’ or ‘homosexual’ because they are labels. It's as if you were talking about people from waist down, whereas a person is a lot more than that.” Throughout his films, time and time again, Ozpetek “shows” us that gender identity is not something to be described or labeled; the very attempt of it and its results seem to be all social constructs. In his visual narratives, gender identity is treated as a narrative identity temporarily fixed by “love”. However, when he, for example, tells us about the love affair of a black eunuch and the Sultan's concubine, he asserts that the “reality” of human condition, the very experience of love is complicated because it is not only essential, spiritual, and transforming but also almost always embodied. This paper, then, also explores the ways in which Ozpetek treats materiality of gender and love in his films and discusses how he takes a post-constructivist stance when he “shows” us that love is a story about bodies and neither love nor bodies exist “out-there” detached from discursive and *material* practices.

*Tobias Skiveren: Lost in Flesh: Methodological Meditations on Feminist New Materialism and Literary Studies*

In recent years, a new focus on the force of corporality has surfaced in contemporary Danish literature. While many literary scholars have noticed the emergence of this trend, few have acknowledged its methodological challenge to prevailing reading strategies within feminist literary criticism. Confronted by literary explorations of what it feels like to get lost in the flesh, the prevailing approaches informed by queer theory and constructionist notions of gender and corporality simply fall short. As much as these strains of thought might provide tools for evaluating the extent to which texts subvert or reproduce discriminating norms and discourses, they do not afford a sensibility for analyzing the intricate carnal experiences at play here.

The main aim of this paper is to outline the potential embedded in this trend for transforming established methods, conceptualizations, and attitudes within feminist literary criticism. By merging ideas from feminist new materialism (Mayra Rivera and Elizabeth Grosz), affect theory (Brian Massumi and Eve K. Sedgwick), and postcritique (Rita Felski and Bruno Latour), the paper sketches the contours of a “carnacriticism”, an alternative mode of reading that engages literature as an affective and imaginative site for witnessing what it *feels* like to live as a specific carnal configuration, subjected not only to the powers of discourse, but also to the uninhibited materiality of the flesh. A short reading of the many scenes of ecstasy presented in Niels Henning Falk Jensby’s homoerotic novel *Techno* (2016) will hopefully display the significance of such a revised approach.

New materialist frameworks have increasingly repudiated dualistic thinking and challenged representationalist views which hold that discursive practices mediate our access to the material world (a core tenet of social constructivism). At the heart of new materialism, then, we find that categories previously deemed binary, e.g. material/discursive, nature/culture, social/scientific, and even human/nonhuman (including 'machines'), are now held to be part of a complex co-imbricated ontology (think here of Donna Haraway and Karen Barad's work, for example). Studies such as these have given rise to more complex understandings of world phenomena, including gender. Anne Fausto-Sterling, in her article, "The Bare Bones of Sex", argues for instance that the body-complex shapes health, behaviour, culture, and also history (2005, 1495). As it has become clearer that the material cannot be considered inert, important questions concerning agency, politics and subjectivity have been raised. But while the significance of corporeality has been emphasized, Elizabeth Grosz, in an interview on her most recent book, *The Incorporeal*, notes that: "If materialism(s) cannot account for the immaterial events we experience and articulate, then it has a clear limit that it needs to address" (2017). An important question this raises in terms of the mutual conditionings of love, and one I will address, is: How do materialists understand the sense of love in terms beyond its materiality? Or, in other words: How can we account for the immaterial space and time tracings of love without negating the material in the process?

*Mie Birk Jensen: "When I drink, I feel like I can pick up the whole world": Explorations of intoxicated flirting among young adults*

In this paper, we focus on how sexual desire, love and attraction come to matter for young adults when they drink alcohol, become intoxicated, and party. Our paper originates from an on-going large-scale qualitative study on intoxication and gender carried out at Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research at Aarhus University, from which we make use of 140 qualitative interviews with young Danes between the ages of 18-25.

Inspired by Sara Ahmed's work on the cultural politics of emotions (2014), we explore how empirical intersections between intoxication and gender performance can offer new insights into the complexities of attraction on an embodied, affective and discursive level. Our preliminary analysis suggests that flirting seems to hold many different possibilities and limitations for the respondents when intoxicated both in terms of sex, affirmation, attraction, or achieving a certain type of *feeling*. As one respondent explains: *"(..) if you are a boy, and see a sweet girl, and you haven't been drinking, then you won't dare"*, and another one underlines that: *"when I drink, I feel like I can pick up the whole world."* Thus, flirting seems to invoke perceptions of bodily capabilities, intoxication, physical attraction, as well as cultural expectations to how, and with whom, one can or cannot flirt.

We argue that different experiences with flirting when intoxicated are important to explore, because they offer insight into how youth navigate between different expectations to their gendered and sexual 'doings', but also challenge and work on these, as they flirt, hook-up and make meaning of their experiences. In this way, intoxicated flirting comes to play an important role in how young adults understand themselves and others as gendered and sexual beings.

Mie Birk Jensen is the main author of the study behind the presentation. The study was co-authored with Assistant Professor Maria Dich Herold and Professor Geoffrey Hunt, both from the Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research, Aarhus University, Denmark

*Lea Skewes: How queer are we, and how does the tool we use to measure this affect the results? - An ethnographic study in how sex/gender categories interact with scientific measurements*

The psychologist Joel's research team has designed a gender questionnaire (Multi-Gender Identity Questionnaire) that assess three concepts; *gender identity*, *gender dysphoria*, and *gender performativity*, including sexual attraction and romantic relations (2013). Their motivation behind the questionnaire was that the standard criteria for the classification of mental disorders (DSM), defined by the American Psychiatric Association assumes that the "normative" population, in contrast to the "pathological" population, experiences gender as a binary and mutually exclusive category. In other words, one is either a man or a woman and performs gender accordingly. However, even though this assumption is built into the DSM as what separates transgender individuals from the "normative" population, this assumption has not been scientifically tested. Therefore Joel et al. intended to take the "pathological" questions to the "normative" population, so as to subversively bringing the pathological standard to the "normative" population. However in their sampling they targeted an unrepresentative group. Therefore, I set out to replicate their study in a representative Danish sample (representative on age, geography, and gender) with 756 individuals recruited through YouGov. Because the study in itself was intended as a subversive action I made ethnographic notes throughout the study to explore how, and by whom, sex/gender was being done in this research process.

## Keynote address

*Sara Davidmann: Transgender and love in Ken. To be destroyed and collaborative photography*

The keynote address will explore some of my photographic research carried out in the last ten years that addresses issues of gender and love. Specifically, I will discuss photographs from three projects - *Eve, Adam, and the Garden of Earthly Delights*, *Trans Relationships*, and *Ken. To be destroyed*.

In the first two projects, I worked collaboratively with participants from UK trans and queer communities. Through photography and oral history recordings, participants expressed their gender and sexual identities, and talked about their intimate relationships with others.

In contrast, in the project *Ken. To be destroyed* I worked with a family archive gathered together by my mother, Audrey Davidmann, from the late 1950's-1970's. The archive contains letters, papers, and photographs that tell the story of my uncle Ken and Aunt Hazel, and how four years after they married, in 1958, Hazel discovered that Ken was transgender.

Despite a lack of understanding of transgenderism in 1950s Britain, Ken and Hazel remained together until the end of Ken's life. In the privacy of the home, Ken was a woman but in public, Ken was a man.

In this paper, I shall draw a comparison between Ken's 1950s expression of his/her gender identity and relationship with Hazel, and some of the more recent accounts. Concerns of changing attitudes over time, the family, erasure, the visible and the unseen will be discussed. The role that photography can play in the processes of identifying with the image of another will be considered. As will photography's creative potential - through combining analogue, digital and alternative processes - to explore the marks of time and damage, re-image and re-imagine, and create new narratives.



## *Biography of Sara Davidmann*

Sara Davidmann is an artist/photographer. Since 1999, she has taken photographs and recorded oral histories in collaboration with people from UK trans and queer communities. Her work has been internationally exhibited and published. Her recent project, *Ken. To be destroyed*, has been exhibited at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London (UAL) (2017) and Schwules Museum Berlin (2016), both of these exhibitions were curated by the writer and curator Val Williams. *Ken. To be destroyed* was also exhibited at Museum of Liverpool (2014); Limewharf Gallery (2014); PARCspace, Photography and the Archive Research Centre at London College of Communication, UAL (2014) and at the Unity Theatre for Homotopia's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Arts Festival, Liverpool (2013). Exhibitions include *Extreme*, with Catherine Faulds, Glass Tank Oxford Brookes University, (2015), *Trans\*\_Homo* Schwules Museum Berlin (2012), *In/Visible Genders* LGBT Centre Paris (2009), *Somatechnics* Sydney (2009), *Transfabulous* London (2007). Publications include *Ken. To be destroyed*, edited by Val Williams, Schilt (2016), *Crossing the Line*, Dewi Lewis (2003), and she was guest co-editor of a Journal of Photography & Culture Special Issue *Queering Photography* (2014). She contributed a book chapter to *Transgender Experience* Routledge (2014) and with Elspeth Brown she co-authored a journal article *Queering the Trans Family Album*, *Radical History Review* (2015). She has been the recipient of numerous awards including a Philip Leverhulme Prize, Fulbright Hays Scholarship, four Arts and Humanities Research Council awards, an Association of Commonwealth Universities Fellowship and a Wellcome Trust grant. Sara is a Reader in Photography at London College of Communication, UAL and a member of the Photography and the Archive Research Centre (PARC) at London College of Communication, UAL.



*Right Bodies Wrong Bodies, 2006*  
© Sara Davidmann



Socio-cultural discourses on gender are often embedded in literary texts. The fairytale has been one such medium of socialisation and therefore one of the focal points of feminist scholarship studying social constructions. Fairytales have been identified as instrumental in instilling normative notions of gender (by repeated performance of traits socially designated as specifically masculine and feminine), and in presenting love as a gendered experience by fixing how men and women act in love, while valorising romantic love culminating in marriage as the golden end of achievement for women. However, as the linkages between love and gender play out in the topos of the stories, in the animal bridegroom group of stories—the Beauty and the Beast, the Frog Prince, Le Prince Marcassin/King Porco being well known examples in the West—another concern emerges from within the narratives which shifts focus to the materiality of love: on the sexual male body as experienced by the woman. While the stories overarchingly narrate a tale of female submission to male desire, the patriarchal/social/familial demand for female compliance has to deal with the material barrier of spontaneous female sexual revulsion to the physical male body. In my discussion, I will refer to an older version of the tale collected in India/Bengal, the tale of Princess *Kalabati*, which places the physical body at the centre of the story while also reconfiguring the patriarchal premise of the plot. Since storytelling is used as a means of organising experience, these texts have to be seen in the context of the ways love is constructed socially and experienced materially. My paper will discuss how text as constructed experience gives voice to lived material experiences of gender and love.

*Archana Rathore: The Study of Deconstruction of Gender and Love in Indian Hindu Mythology*

My paper endeavours to deconstruct the dimension of gender and love through the legends of Indian Hindu mythology of *Ardhnaareeshwar*, Brahma's falling in rapturous love with his own daughter *Saraswati*, the ten erotic love tales of Dandi's *Dashkumarcharitam* and the existence of live-in relationships as depicted in the Vedas. The union of *Shiva* and *Shakti* is represented symbolically in the form of the *Lingam* and the *Yoni*. It symbolises *Hieros-gamos* or the 'Sacred Union' between God and the Goddess that gives birth to creation. The same union is celebrated in Tibetan Tantrism where it is referred to as *Yab- Yum*. The roots of trans-gender could be traced from here. In another legend, Lord *Brahma* formed from his own immaculate substance a female *Saraswati*, the goddess of Learning, whom he himself found to be surpassingly lovely and immediately wanted to make love to. Another dimension of gender and love is delineated in the antique scripture of *Dashkumarcharitam* of Dandi and finally my paper seeks to highlight the presence of live- in relationships as depicted in the *Gandharva* type of Marriage (as prescribed in ancient Vedas), in which a man and a woman mutually consent to stay together. The paper, thus, attempts to address the cultural factors that condition our experiences, expressions, and representations of gender and love in one of the ancient civilisations of India.

*Johanne Virenfeldt Christiansen:*

*A Woman's 'Self-Wronging': Gender and Love in the Qur'anic Encounter between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*

In my paper, I examine the Qur'anic narrative about an encounter between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, famous in later traditions for her beautiful body, erotic appeal, and scheming mind. By taking a literary approach to the Qur'anic narrative itself (and not later interpretations as have been the focus of both the Muslim tradition and scholars in Qur'anic studies), I argue that the story not only presents a didactic Qur'anic conversion scene (from paganism to monotheism), but also that the story is permeated by gender related features. I show that two episodes in the story, the Queen's entry into Solomon's palace and her declaration of 'self-wronging' (*ẓulm al-nafs*; Q27:44) constitute protests not only against cultural expectations of her as an unbeliever, but also against expectations of her as a woman. While the Qu'ran often tries to regulate love and gender according to early Islamic cultural discourse, it also exhibits signs of adjustments to include complex individuals as they surprise positively. The paper finishes with an attempt at explaining the Qu'ranic interest in including a complex figure like the Queen of Sheba and an assessment of the role of gender as literary features for disseminating such inclusion.

*Louis van den Hengel: For Love of the World: Inhuman Intimacies in  
Ecosexual Performance Art*

“There is no love which does not begin with the revelation of a possible world as such, enwound in the other which expresses it.”  
– Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (1994, p. 261)

Starting from the assumption that the very process of life, as creation and difference, is constituted by love, this paper explores, and affirms, the capacity of contemporary art to take love – and love studies – beyond the figure of the human and into the more-than-human material world. The main aim of the paper is twofold. First, it seeks to analyse how love for human and nonhuman worlds is enacted through specific art practices. Second, it aims to actualize the potentiality of these practices to contribute to the development of radically non-anthropocentric approaches to love within contemporary gender studies. Drawing, on the one hand, on current scholarship at the crossroads of neo-materialist environmentalism and posthuman feminism, and, on the other, Gilles Deleuze’s scattered writings on love as an impersonal and inhuman force of differentiation, I will argue that the arts, as organized aesthetic activity and as what Karen Barad calls “active theory formation”, express the kind of conceptual creativity required to break away from established constructivist approaches to gender and love. To substantiate this argument, I will examine selected works of the American artist couple Beth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle, who in recent years have pioneered “ecosexuality” – a combination of visual art, environmental activism, sex-positive feminism, and genderqueer performance – as an imaginative strategy to foster more loving and more sustainable relationships between human and more-than-human life worlds. Specifically, I will demonstrate how their “ecosex weddings” to nature entities (including the Earth, the sea, the moon, snow, and the Appalachian Mountains) both enact and enable a process ontology of gender and love, or *eros*, as the ecology of life itself.

The figure of the golem first appears in the Babylonian Talmud, where it functions both as a demonstration of the sage Rava's mastery of mystical texts (Sanhedrin 65b); it later became embedded in Jewish legal reasoning as a test case for the boundaries of the human. In this capacity, the golem took on an element of gender, as its legal status was judged to be most closely equivalent to that of women, both understood to be not fully-formed versions of the human.

Modern science fiction and fantasy literature has developed the idea of the golem as a test case for the boundaries of the human, but unlike the *halakhic* literature, which is focused on questions of legal capacity, modern literature investigates questions of emotion: in the literary treatments reviewed, the golem is narratively acknowledged as an autonomous being when it exhibits the capacity for emotional attachment. This paper will consider the ways that gender and emotion interact within modern golem literature to interrogate the boundary between human and nonhuman, and the ethical stances which are prompted by such interrogation.

*Svala Vagnsdatter Andersen: Fetishistic Love – The Irreplaceable Replacement*

Working in my PhD thesis on the travelling concept of fetishism as it is presented in the diverse fields of religious anthropology, economics, medical pathology, psychoanalysis and philosophy, I attempt to disengage the concept from its metaphorical role and relocate as well as redefine it in the context of sexuality and arts. Positioned in sexuality the fetish forms a complicated relationship with the concept of love in a traditional romantic sense. I would like to elaborate on the partly paradoxical notion of fetishistic love.

Setting the stage with the earliest writings on sexual fetishism as it is introduced in Alfred Binet's *Études de psychologie expérimentale: le fétichisme dans l'amour* (1888) in which fetishism is formulated as 'spiritual love', I want to further analyse the idea of fetishistic love in Mario Perniola who like Binet – and remarkably few others - has touched upon the subject in his work *Sex Appeal of the Inorganic* (2004). Besides eclipsing a prevalent bipolar gender construction and introducing an alternative to our naturalistic model of sexuality (which is thereby questioned as a cultural model), Perniola describes an anti-essential idea of love without giving in to constructivism.

I would like to compare these historically differing texts that are nonetheless struggling to come to terms with the same set of somehow conflicting concepts. How is it possible to imagine the fragmenting, objectivising and substituting structure of fetishism connected with the romanticising feature of a lingering Western love ideal?

I expect to broaden our understanding of fetishistic love, perhaps even to generalise a connection which until now has mostly been treated as singular exceptions.



*Malakeh Shahizadeh:*

*Prosthetic love in the context of implant  
gender roles: A case study of Iranian new  
wave cinema*

At first, I, theoretically, try to demonstrate that how the mass media-technologies structure and circumscribe experiences and bring the texture and contours of prosthetic love into dramatic relief. Because the mass media fundamentally alter our notion of what counts as love experience, they might be a privileged area for the production and circulation of prosthetic love. The cinema, in particular, as an institution which makes available images for mass consumptions, has long been aware of its ability to generate gender standards and to install memories of love. Memories which become experiences that film consumers both possess and feel possessed by.

Then I try to read Iranian new wave cinema and its thematic prosthetic memories as an allegory for the power of the mass media to create feminine/masculine love experiences and to implant experience of love in a dogmatic context.

*Wernmei Yong Ade:*

*Make Love, Not War: Alternative  
Lovescapes in Angela Carter's  
The Passion of New Eve*

This paper argues for the significance of Carter's novel as a critique of violence as feminist strategy, but more importantly, for offering an alternative to the rhetoric of female revenge, violence and role-reversal which momentarily dominated feminist discourse in the 70's.

Carter's alternative to violence is to be found in love; nothing new considering how the history of the free love movement (most popularly associated with the sexual revolution and counterculture of the 60's and 70's) and the history of feminism are intimately entwined, specifically in the way both free love and feminism oppose ideas of forceful sexual activity and advocate for women to use their bodies freely based on their desires and for their own pleasure.

Carter's novel stands out in going beyond questions of desire and pleasure in its examination of loving relations, to suggest that equitable love can only come about when we are able to imagine gender identity differently. Without doing so, we remain trapped in old binaries (male/ female, active/ passive, aggressor/ victim), and our strategies limited to those of role-reversal.

Unlike her contemporaries who seemed to either see violence as revenge strategy, or else as an inevitable reality supported by heterosexual institutions like marriage which women had to reject (a rejection that formed the basis of the free love movement), Carter's novel provides an alternative to violence in a "re-vision" of love. In doing so, Carter also suggests ways in which love might become a radical force in politics, sexual and otherwise.

## Critical Masculinity Studies and the Question of Love

### (Preformed panel)

This preformed panel wishes to explore new interesting directions in critical masculinity studies that delve into the processes of mutual conditioning among masculinity, love, intimacy and the erotic. We wish to shed new light on the uneasy ontological negotiations of masculinity in relation to love and in relation to the erotic. The three papers will discuss a range of performances, some traditional and some anti-conformist, that re-groove but also resist hegemonic masculinity, troubling and expanding our understanding of the way in which gender intersects with love. They present a heterogeneous sample of some of the new and most exciting directions the field.

*Jonathan Allan:           The Pleasures of Masculinity: On Desire, Fantasy, and Consumption (part I)*

In my current book in progress, “Men, Masculinity, and the Popular Romance Novel,” I ask: “What then might we do with these novels, which are written by women for women, and speak to “their” fantasies, especially in terms of the masculinities they craft?” Another way of asking the question might be: what does it mean to call romance novels feminist, as many recent critics of popular romance have done, while these novels often also replicate and reproduce hegemonic forms of masculinity, which feminists and feminist-aligned scholars have critiqued? Indeed, Eva Illouz has similarly asked: “Why is traditional masculinity pleasurable in fantasy?” (58). These questions highlight, I would argue, an inherent paradox in the study of popular romance, on the one hand, some scholars have framed the popular romance as a feminist writing practice, and yet, on the other hand, hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995) has remained, I would argue, largely intact in the popular romance novel. How then can we, as critics, square this circle? How can scholars of the popular romance novel think about masculinity, especially in light of a significant body of scholarship that is feminist or feminist-inspired, which has rightly called into question the masculinities that popular romance fiction seemingly celebrates? This paper, thus, seeks to think through the ideas of “fantasy” and “feminism” in popular romance studies. To these ends, I will draw on psychoanalysis, queer theory, and porn studies.

*Serena Petrella: Intimacy on the Edge: Masculine Performances in  
BDSM (part II)*

My research focuses on the study of “erotic dissidence” adopting Foucauldian genealogical methodologies. I am particularly interested in analyzing how male kinksters, who self-identify as “sexual outlaws”, perform masculinity in the context of BDSM play and address the issue of intimacy in their exchanges. Research shows that gender structuration in kinky communities is articulated in what appears at first glance as a strict hegemonic hierarchy, with the majority of men, regardless of their sexual orientation, defining themselves as tops, and the majority of women identifying as bottoms. This presentation analyzes the performative ontologies of men, illustrating how highly stylized stereotypical enactments of male gender can be strategic acts to overcome deep gendered anxieties; yet, at times, they remain entrenched in predictable exchanges that re-grove the hegemonic positioning that some men feel are no longer available to them in life outside of BDSM exchange. I shall also address the concept of intimacy, which often is theoretically conceived as existing in the exclusive realm of loving relationships or of friendship. In BDSM, intimacy is not necessarily bound by affective ties. Instead, it ambivalently lives beyond love, but also in an uneasy relationship with the erotic. The paper will unpack the concept of “play”, as it can effectively allow kink, one of the most intimate exchanges, to exist outside the boundaries of committed relationships. Applying a phenomenological filter to the scholarly literature on BDSM, I have chosen to analyze ethnographies of kinky men specifically, precisely because the accounts found therein allow practitioners to define, in their own words, their subjectivities, desires and kinks.

*Chris Haywood: Intensity, Desire and Erotic Encounters: Masculinity, Dogging and the De-subjectification of Men (part III)*

Male sexuality is often understood through patriarchal and phallogocentric notions of masculinity. Such culturally ascendant models tend to connect men's sexual subjectivities to practices such as homosociality, homophobia and a predatory heterosexuality. However, this paper questions the analytical efficacy of reducing men's subjectivities to these conventional models of masculinity. It does this by exploring the 'dogging' experiences of 12 heterosexual men. Dogging involves heterosexual men and women driving to secluded locations to have anonymous sex with other men and women. The men in this research all had long term partners / wives and they juxtaposed their love for their wives and partners (demonstrated by rich and fulfilling love making) with that of physical and functional sex whilst dogging. However, during the research, men identified an erotic space of desire that fractured this love / sex binary. More specifically, their dogging encounters contained affective intensities that slipped through their initial juxtapositions. This paper explores these intensities by focusing on three pivotal features of the dogging encounter: the 'Anonymous Fuck', the hyperbolic sexual experience and the displacing of desire. The main argument of this article is that men in dogging encounters do not make, enhance or consolidate their masculinities. Instead, men actively participate in their own de-subjectification (Agamben, 1999; Foucault et al., 2011), and refuse to operate through gender and sexuality identities. In short, when men go dogging, they leave their masculinities at the car door.

*Stevi Jackson: Love in different climates: love, care and practices of intimacy among Hong Kong and British women.*

In this paper I draw on a comparative study of young adult women and their mothers in Hong Kong and Britain (conducted in collaboration with Petula Sik Ying Ho) to explore how the meanings of love and the ways in which it is performed or demonstrated are shaped by social-cultural context and differing gendered expectations. Our data derive from in depth interviews with 12 pairs of mothers and daughters in each location plus focus groups with the young women. It is widely accepted that love takes a number of forms including romantic/passionate/sexual love, conjugal, companionable love and love between parents and children. The data from our study enable us to address both love in romantic or marital relationships and love between mothers and daughters. While both forms of love are commonly understood as generating close and intense bonds, the normative expectations associated with them vary within, as well as between, cultural contexts. While we do not, through research such as this, have access to individuals' inner states, we do have access to how they talk about their feelings. In considering how love was discussed by our participants and how they represented their intimate relationships (both sexual/romantic/marital and mother-daughter) it was notable that the Hong Kong often talked far more about pragmatic concerns in relation to intimacy than the British women. This does not mean that affective bonds were any less significant to the Hong Kong women, but rather that the ways in which they were expressed and performed differed from those of the British women. Jamieson's (2011) concept of 'practices of intimacy' has proved useful in making sense of such differences and in understanding the ways in which expressions of attachment, care and affection can take many forms, bounded by gendered, generational and wider socio-cultural expectations.



*Djuna Violeta Hallsworth: 'Forget About Love': Reconciling Sexual Autonomy and Motherhood in Nymphomaniac (2013) and the Danish Welfare State*

The problematic concept of “mother-love”, the idea that maternal affection is both natural and inherent, is arguably undermined by the Scandinavian welfare states, which relocate traditional motherly care-giving duties in the public sphere. However, the extent to which women can realistically resist cultural pressure to be the primary care-giver for their own children is unresolved, particularly in countries like Denmark which favour the dual-earner model despite abolishing paternity leave in 2002. Signposted in its uncompromising tagline (“Forget About Love”) Lars von Trier's 5 ½ hour film *Nymphomaniac* explores the conflict surrounding a “non-maternal” woman, framing her struggle for personal contentment through her insatiable sexual desire. The controversial Danish director creates a collagic portrait of a woman who embodies the irreconcilability of sexual autonomy and the role of “mother”. Through presenting a mother whose apparently flagrant sexual experiences are retrospectively tainted by “this burden of guilt that could never be alleviated” of having abandoned her young son, *Nymphomaniac* complicates the idea of maternal instinct. More than a simply a graphic narrative about sex addiction, *Nymphomaniac* is the beginning of a conversation about inherent female responsibility of child-rearing as one which undermines the role of sexual autonomy in the construction of identity. Working with the notion that maternal guilt stems from the misrepresentation of “mother-love” as a criterion of female identity, this paper will grapple with the relationship between sex and motherhood, contextualising the conflicts foregrounded in *Nymphomaniac* in the Danish welfare state system as a site of contemporary debate.

*Deirdre C. Byrne: "Yet the old woman will not sleep": A matrixial reading of Ursula K. Le Guin's maternal poetry*

Mothers are conventionally perceived as the source and object of the purest love known to human culture. Despite this, the figure of the mother is traditionally one of profound and passionate ambivalence. Culturally, mothers are venerated as icons of pure love for their self-sacrifice and unconditional giving to their children; but within a Freudian paradigm, they are perceived as embodying the lack of the phallus, as well as corporeal unruliness, and even the abject. This ambivalence also appears in the writing of celebrated fabulist Ursula K. Le Guin. In Le Guin's later fictions, mothers are even more powerfully ambivalent: Willow, the mother of Stone Telling in *Always Coming Home*, is neglectful and prone to romantic mistakes, while Amata, the mother-figure in *Lavinia*, becomes caught in an Oedipal vortex when her daughter, Lavinia, refuses to marry her object of desire.

These nexuses of love, hatred and emotional attachment are carried into Le Guin's poetry, which contains a significant body of poems about motherhood. The poems depict and address Le Guin's historical mother, Theodora Kracaw Kroeber Quinn, attempting to resolve the poet's relationship with her. My paper will use Bracha Ettinger's theory of matrixial subjectivity in an attempt to unravel the interface between love, social construction, creativity and unattainability in the poems, in the light of Theodora's correspondence with her daughter.

*Mustafa K. Topal:*

*“The woman, who fights, becomes free”:  
Redefining Gender and Love in the Kurdish  
Political Movement*

The female soldiers from the Kurdish Women's Movement in the Middle East have a life philosophy/ideology that says:

The woman, who fights, becomes free!  
The woman, who is free, becomes beautiful!  
The woman, who is beautiful, becomes loved!

These women believe that you cannot liberate society, without liberating women first. The main question is; what happens to love, when these women in their struggle break the feudalistic identities, and build new identities that are completely independent and demonstrate the androcentric bias.

We are dealing with women who completely reject the patriarchal and capitalistic societies' mutual relationship between gender and love. In war/combat the women reject to practice in an intimate relationship with a man, therefore postponing all individual needs and plans till after the war, due to one's life being sacrificed for the national struggle. These women only speak about love, and want their relationship with a man to be a revolutionary relationship. In the meantime, the personal love is powered by the strengthening of national struggles and comradeship, as well as adaptation to nature. Adaption to nature is very important, since it is believed, that you cannot be free, beautiful and loved without being a part of it. You first have to desexualize yourself, before you can be part of a revolutionary relationship.

In my presentation, I will underline some new developments among Kurdish women and men, and some of the aspects of newly emerging identities and gender roles, which builds on the importance of the intersectional perspective. I believe that there is a need for developing more complex theories of how gender is created, and exchanges with other categories as body, sexuality, love, comradeship and ecological life. The development of new categories has the potential to change the standardized categories that are connected to the normative.

*Serena Petrella: The end of "Big Love"? The Fiscal and Criminal Prosecution of Mormon Celestial Marriages in British Columbia, Canada*

Over the years and my involvement with the *Gender and Love* conferences, I presented papers that examined sexual regulation in Canada, and specifically focused on the re-criminalization of Mormon Polygamy and the de-regulation of Polyamory. In 2011, the British Columbia Supreme Court adjudicated that polygamous celestial marriages were not protected under the "Freedom of Religion" clause of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in Canada and thus remained criminal offences. I predicted that a crackdown on Mormon Polygamy might be imminent, and this indeed has been the case. This presentation explores the prosecution of Mormon love in Canada. The Canadian state, in an unprecedented show of draconian power (polygamy has not been prosecuted in 127 years!), has proven that it is not interested in relinquishing its material control on those relationships it deems unfit for sexual citizenship. The prosecution of Mormon polygamy has been waged on two fronts, on fiscal grounds as well as on criminal grounds. In 2013 the Mormon community of Bountiful was stripped of its "special religious status", a standing that afforded it tax breaks and in July 2017, the two Mormon leaders of the community, Mr. Winston Blackmore and Mr. James Oler were each convicted with one count of polygamy, the penalty for which is incarceration for a period of five years. It is likely that these sentences will launch a constitutional challenge to the validity of the criminal Laws against polygamy, thus the case is far from over. This presentation will make evident that sexual governance is "heterotopically" administered (Foucault 1981): we should not assume that, in late phase capitalist and post-modern times, it is solely managed through normative platforms; rather, it continues to be managed, in direct and repressive ways, in any instances in which relational love does not align with the neo-liberal goals of the state.

*Jennifer Slater: Gender and Love in Africa: a contentious environment for theological, cultural and human rights discourse*

It is a presumed opinion that Gender and Love mutually condition one another, and that this presumption ought to be enhanced by cultural norms, theology, human rights and the ethic of freedom. In addition the notion of mutual conditionings, presupposes a healthy, ethical human environment that facilitates the free dynamic interaction between Gender and Love. However, Gender and Love in a *diastratically diverse* post-colonial country such as South Africa, takes on additional strands of complexities. This paper intends to interrogate the essential ethic of freedom in relation to mutual conditionings of gender and love, because gender and love are experienced in the light of legal, social, cultural and ethical environments that moreover accommodate, foster, promote as well as inhibit and avert healthy mutual conditioning environments. While the South African constitution makes provision for freedom and diversity of human expressions of gender and love, the multiplicity of cultural norms and perspectives do not make provision for the practical reinforcement of that same human right. The interacting and intra-acting of gender and love, inevitably come face-to-face with cultural, legal, social and moral milieus that often hamper or even contradict the mutual conditionings of gender and love.

This paper seeks to explore mutual conditionings of gender and love within the diverse cultural constructions within the new liberal living conditions created by a political regime change, but which has not infiltrated the diverse cultural domains where gender remains an entity without cultural freedom and thus undermines the process of mutual conditionings of gender and love.

Rethinking Butch is conceived as a short work of auto/biography and cultural history, informed by literary and feminist theory, created specifically for the conference.

It takes one form of being, of gender performance, and surveys its literary representations. How do we now understand and embody identities of female masculinity? From early crossdressers to 1950s sharp suits, from 1990s androgyny to tomboy chic, how has butch represented the material and fluid, overt and covert, performer and spectator?

Rethinking Butch responds creatively to questions raised by the conference theme and in recent thinking about gender: Does female masculinity enact transgression? Is it an expression of the limitation or the fluidity of gender? Or both? How does it interact with subversive forms of femme? What do these questions mean – on the borderlands of gender and love, identity and desire; in the margins, in community? How do we experience them, live them, imagine them, re/create them? How are they expressed in gendered bodies that are queer, bodies that love, bodies that are visible? What might it tell us about fluidity and about the future?

More broadly, how can the materiality of life writing, through interpretation of our felt reality, affect writers, readers, and spectators, and create rich new understandings of the mutual conditionings of gender and love?

An experiment in life writing and affect, Rethinking Butch will be a performed reading of text, interwoven with curated and original images, muddying another dualism: that of writing as a form of permanence, and performance as ephemera.



*Marianne Schleicher: Material protests against gender norms among queer Jews in Israelite-Jewish religion*

Given inconsistencies between constructivist claims that discourses construct our gender, agency, and subjectivity and the bodily experiences of falling outside the norm among queer people in love, this presentation will analyse material protests against gender norms among queer Jews in Israelite-Jewish religion. The source material includes religious texts and websites that testify to terminological endeavours to signify the complexities of the material world in cases of intersex conditions, transgenderism, and same-sex love, reflections on the legal rights of queer people, normative stances on surgical and social sanctioning; but also a conditional willingness in culture to accommodate deviating genders and lovers. Accordingly, the presentation will look for impetuses among queer lovers to protest in the source material. It will inquire about the agency and latitude for subversion in the wake of these protests and ask if/how Israelite-Jewish culture and the material protests of queer lovers intra-act. Answers to these questions will be sought in dialogue with new materialist and posthuman perspectives on gender, agency, and subjectivity as formulated by Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, and Elizabeth Grosz on how nonhuman nature and the human body affect, facilitate or resist constructions.