BPS Psychology of Women Section Annual Conference
9-11 July 2014

Cumberland Lodge, The Great Park, Windsor, UK

Women and Power
Feminism and Humour
Doing Feminism
Bodies and Embodiment

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BPS Psychology of Women Section
Annual Conference
9-11 July 2014
Cumberland Lodge, The Great Park, Windsor, UK

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Floor Plans</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference abstracts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Registration (Tapestry Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Welcome: Rebecca Lawthom (POWS Chair)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14:15-15:15| **Keynote:** (Flitcroft) Humour, embodiment and use of space: Agency and resistance in young people who have lived with domestic violence  
*Dr Jane Callaghan, The University of Northampton* |
| 14:30-15:30| **Parallel Session 1** **Individual Papers:**  
- Deconstructing Disability  
  Room: Flitcroft  
  Chair: Lindsay O’Dell  
- ‘Doing’ Feminist Research  
  Room: Sandby  
  Chair: Jane Callaghan  
- Agtent Feminism and Moral Choices  
  Room: Hodgson  
  Chair: Jemma Tosh |
| 15:30-16:00| Disability studies and feminism:  
*Rebecca Lawthom, Manchester Metropolitan University*  
- Knowing the weft and warp: bodies of research  
  *Jenny Fisher, Manchester Metropolitan University*  
- Sexual morality and other national anxieties. Indian cinema and the morality of the nation  
  *Sonia Soans, Manchester Metropolitan University* |
| 15:00-16:00| Gender as a Disability in Rural Pakistan  
*Ruhi Khalid & Ishba Rehman, BNU Lahore*  
- Putting our work ‘to work’: tackling injustice through research process and product  
  *Octavia Calder-Dawe, University of Auckland*  
- Dreadful choices: Women’s role in mass violence-victim, complicity or perpetrator?  
  *Julia Kay Horn, Independent practitioner/researcher* |
<p>| 16:30-16:45| <strong>Break:</strong> Tea &amp; Coffee in the bar                                                       |
| 16:45-17:45| Undergraduate &amp; postgraduate prize winners presentation (Flitcroft)                      |
| 17:45-18:45| <strong>POWS Annual General Meeting - Everyone Welcome (Flitcroft)</strong>                           |
| 19:00-19:45| <strong>POWS Welcome Reception:</strong> Book launch &amp; Poster Session with wine &amp; nibbles (Ante Room) or Pre-dinner Tour of Cumberland Lodge (Meet in Drawing Room) |
| 19:45-21:00| Dinner - Followed by Drinks &amp; Chat with Open Mic (9.00-late, in the Bar)                 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>(Tapestry Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:15 - 09:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 09:30</td>
<td>Parallel Session 2</td>
<td>Individual Papers: Doing Feminism in the Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Room: Flitcroft</td>
<td>Chair: Jane Callaghan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 09:30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Papers: Construction of Sexual Subjectivities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Room: Sandby</td>
<td>Chair: Jemma Tosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:30 - 10:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Papers: Negotiating Food and Feminist Identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Room: Hodgson</td>
<td>Chair: Sandra Roper</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 - 10:00</td>
<td>Gendered Language in the Workplace</td>
<td>Subconscious Inequality?</td>
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<td>Katy Schnitzler, Kingston University</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 - 10:00</td>
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<td>From asexual to sexually agentic: The sexualisation of ‘older’ women’s bodies in the media</td>
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<td>Sharron Hinchliff, University of Sheffield</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 - 10:00</td>
<td>I should be a mum before I'm a police officer. But I'm obviously not’ – Negotiating and resisting feminine working identities within the confines of post-feminism</td>
<td>Lucy Thompson, Leeds Metropolitan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 - 10:30</td>
<td>Victims, Perpetrators and the Silent Witness: Staff identity dynamics in women’s homeless hostels during the process of closing down services</td>
<td>Alison Bareham, Dr Abigail Locke &amp; Dr Tracey Yeadon-Lee, University of Huddersfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Expatriate women leaders in the UAE: A phenomenological study on the experience of womanhood</td>
<td>Bridgette Rickett, Leeds Metropolitan University</td>
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<td>Rape as a perversion of gender: Psychiatric constructions of sexual violence</td>
<td>Jemma Tosh, University of Chester</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:15</td>
<td>Tea &amp; Coffee in the Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15-12:15</td>
<td>Keynote (Flitcroft)</td>
<td>Constructing (and resisting) the 'good parenting' mandate</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15-13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Symphony: Technologies of the body: Projects in Reshaping Corporealities, Identities, and Practices</td>
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<td>Individual Papers: Constraints and Potential of Feminine Subjectivities</td>
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<td>Individual Papers: Feminism and Humour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parallel Session 3</td>
<td>Room: Flitcroft</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Convenor: Maria Gurevich</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00-13:30</td>
<td>Paper 1: Technosex</td>
<td>Promoting recreational sexual enhancement</td>
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<td>Medication use</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:30-14:00</td>
<td>Paper 2: Treating the binge or the (fat)</td>
<td>Body?: Representations of fat bodies in a gold standard treatment manual for binge eating disorder</td>
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<td>14:00-14:30</td>
<td>Paper 3: Embodiment and shame consciousness</td>
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<td>Constraining Feminine Subjectivities: Constraints and Possibilities for Young Women in Neo-liberal Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30-15:00</td>
<td>Paper 4: Masculine “champions”:</td>
<td>Embodiment through casual sex scripts and strategies</td>
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<td>Laugh it up or Laugh it off; The Use of Humour within the Fire Service as a Way of Constructing,</td>
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<td>Managing and Coping with Emotionality</td>
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<td>The Big Fat (Hetero) Sextist Quiz of the Year</td>
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<td>One Does Not Simply Sample The Internet: On Coding The Race of Pokémon and Other First World Problems.</td>
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<td>A Thematic Analysis of Popular Internet Memes.</td>
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<td>“I don’t just want to be known as someone’s wife or as someone’s mother. I didn’t come to university for that”: A narrative exploration of British Pakistani Muslim women’s engagement with higher education</td>
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<td>The Use of Humour within the Fire Service as a Way of Constructing,</td>
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<td>Managing and Coping with Emotionality</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00 - 16:00</td>
<td>Parallel Session 4</td>
<td>Using Imaginative Variation as a Technique to Understand the Lived Experience of Gender &amp; Sexuality</td>
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<td>Emma Turley, Manchester Metropolitan University</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 - 16:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:30 - 17:30</td>
<td>Parallel Session 5</td>
<td>CRAFTIVISM PAULA</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17:30 - 18:30</td>
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<td>Keynote (Flitcroft) 'Doing Feminism' Reni Eddo-Lodge</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:45 - 19:45</td>
<td></td>
<td>NETWORKING EVENT: Doing Feminism (Flitcroft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:30 - 19:00</td>
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<td>Break: Take time to relax and prepare before the evening events</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:45 - 21:00</td>
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<td>Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:00-late</td>
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<td>Live Comedy with Ava Vidal (Drawing Room) followed by an informal disco</td>
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<td>08:00 onwards</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>08:15-09:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00-10:00</td>
<td><strong>Parallel Session 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Room: Flitcroft&lt;br&gt;Chair: Jo Neale &lt;br&gt;Individual Papers: &lt;br&gt;<em>Women and Violence: Empowering Feminine Subjectivities</em>&lt;br&gt;Individual Papers: &lt;br&gt;<em>Individual Papers: Embodied Ontologies of Womanhood</em>&lt;br&gt;Individual Papers: &lt;br&gt;<em>Art &amp; Media: Perceptions of Womanhood</em>&lt;br&gt;Issues of power, care and control for survivors of Domestic Violence within the MARAC process&lt;br&gt;<em>Dr Rachel Robbins, Debbie Thackray &amp; Claire Bellamy, Manchester Metropolitan University</em>&lt;br&gt;A fertile source drawn from infertile bodies: The embodied construction of prospective adoptive motherhood&lt;br&gt;<em>Donna Peach, Dr Abigail Locke &amp; Prof Adele Jones, University of Huddersfield</em>&lt;br&gt;Arts as a ‘way to take your inside out’ - Turkish women’s agency in creating individual femininities&lt;br&gt;<em>Kristin Klindworth, Turkey</em>&lt;br&gt;Making the Case for Victims’ Meaningful Participation in the Development of Domestic Abuse Services&lt;br&gt;<em>Jo Neale, University of Bedfordshire</em>&lt;br&gt;Fleshy ontologies of birth: shifting constructions of body-self relations in women’s childbirth stories&lt;br&gt;<em>Rachelle Chadwick, University of Cape Town</em>&lt;br&gt;Picture perfect? The use of photo enhancement on social networking sites&lt;br&gt;<em>Dr Lisa Lazard, Dr Rose Capdevila &amp; Tania Laurance, The Open University</em>&lt;br&gt;Introducing a Bystander Intervention Programme for violence against women students in English Universities&lt;br&gt;<em>Dr Rachel Fenton, University of the West of England (UWE), Dr Helen Mott, UWE and Bristol Fawcett</em>&lt;br&gt;Intense, gendered and heightened sensorial experiences of female boxing embodiment&lt;br&gt;<em>Dr Helen Owton, De Montfort University</em>&lt;br&gt;The Media Construction of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME: Scepticism and the Hysterical Woman&lt;br&gt;<em>Rebecca Murray, Dr Abigail Locke, Dr Alison Rodrigues &amp; Jane Tobbell, University of Huddersfield</em>&lt;br&gt;11:00-11.30</td>
<td>Tea &amp; Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30-12.30</td>
<td><strong>Keynote (Flitcroft)</strong>&lt;br&gt;The politics of embodiment: gender, 'queer bodies', health&lt;br&gt;<em>Dr Katherine Johnson, University of Brighton</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30-13.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Conference End: Thank you for your participation. See you next year!</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Posters
(Wednesday 6.15-7.00pm, Drawing Room)

Young Men, Drugs and Health Care in Brazil:
A Feminist Study on Men and Masculinities
Edna Granja, Instituto Nacional de Saúde da Mulher

The Adorned Feminine Body:
A Qualitative Exploration of Media Representations of Tattooed Women in the UK
Charlotte Dann, University of Northampton

Comparing Body Esteem in Asexual and Sexual Women:
An Online Survey Study
Emily Hill, The University of Buckingham

Women on the Move:
Rurality, Gender, Production, and Subjectivity Production
Rita de Cassia Maciazeki Gomes, University of Porto, Portugal
Victims, Perpetrators and the Silent Witness: Staff identity dynamics in women’s homeless hostels during the process of closing services down

Alison Bareham, University of Huddersfield, Dr Abigail Locke University of Huddersfield & Dr Tracey Yeadon-Lee, University of Huddersfield

Objectives: To explore the identity dynamics of women working in the homeless sector in the context of hostel closures, and reflect on implications for homeless sector services.

Design: This paper draws on data from field notes and photo-production interviews from an ethnography of women’s homeless hostels.

Method: Individual participants volunteered from a purposive, voluntary sample of a not-for-profit organisation providing temporary housing for women and children in the North of England. The organisation had lost funding for three services and was closing them down during the research. Ethnography involved observations and informal interviews around 5 days per week, April -June 2013 (staff n=9; residents n=13). Photo-production interviews were embedded in the ethnography (staff n=7; residents n=7). Staff references to hostel closure, organisational and staff dynamics were selected from field notes and interviews, and analysed using elements of a constructivist grounded theory approach.

Results: During the loss and closure of homeless services, victim and perpetrator dichotomies were negotiated by staff. Staff tended to position themselves as disempowered in relation to funding, job security, continued service provision and welfare of hostel residents. The researcher was positioned as a ‘silent witness’ of events.

Conclusions: In the current UK climate homeless service contracts are temporary and competitive in the quasi-market sector. Therefore, the termination of services, closure of hostels and job insecurity may be ongoing issues within the homeless sector. Staff appeared disempowered and conflicted during this process. This paper will reflect on the implications of these findings in relation to training, policy and procedures.

Academic-Activism: Caring for ourselves and each other

Dr Meg Barker, The Open University, UK

Purpose: The primary objective of this workshop is to engage participants in a reflection upon the importance of caring for ourselves and others when engaged in queer/feminist academia/activism, and to explore ways in which we might build such caring practices into our everyday lives.

Method/Key Points: This workshop argues that care for ourselves and for others are intertwined and invites attendees to reflect upon:
  • Whether self-care is important and, if so, why
  • Ways in which they currently care for themselves
  • Other forms of self-care which may be possible
  • How these can be built into academic/activist spaces and cultures, and into everyday life
  • How self-care relates to care of the other (for example in tuning into our experience and the experience of others during difficult real-life and online conversations)

Conclusions: During the workshop, the facilitator will collect examples of caring practices, and key points about the tensions and challenges involved in implementing these, as well as other points that emerge from conversation. These will be displayed for other conference attendees.
Ms Nicole Cormier, Ryerson University

Anti-fat discourses are deeply entrenched within North American culture, where fat bodies are ostracized, medicalized, and (psycho)pathologized (Tischner, 2012). Inscribed with moral failure, fat bodies are incompatible with the neoliberal ideal of a responsible, disciplined, slim body (Malson, 1998). Fat people are assumed to move too little, eat too much, lack self-control, and engage in negligible health practices (Probyn, 2009). Synonymous with the medical notion of ‘obesity,’ fat is viewed as a disease linked causally to myriad health conditions, signifying a problem necessitating corrective intervention (e.g., dieting, bariatric surgery), despite a growing body of critical literature problematizing the research and rhetoric underpinning these claims (e.g. Rothblum & Solovay, 2009). Moreover, fatness is increasingly identified as a psychiatric condition. Binge Eating Disorder (BED), which is positively correlated with fatness, was added to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). In addition, anti-fat biases and stereotypes have been identified among mental health professionals (e.g. Agell & Rothblum, 1991).

Our discourse analysis explores anti-fat representations embedded within a “gold-standard” psychological treatment manual for BED (Agras & Apple, 2007), an intervention expressly aiming to help people cope with overvaluation of body size and weight. Our analyses are guided by the following central research question: What messages about fat bodies are embedded within and communicated through this treatment manual?

This project joins a burgeoning body of critical scholarship positioning fat as a primarily sociocultural rather than medical or psychological issue (e.g. Boero, 2007; Campos, 2005).

Wednesday Parallel Session 1 Presentation

Putting our work ‘to work’: tackling injustice through research process and product

Octavia Calder-Dawe, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Critical qualitative researchers put their work ‘to work’ for social justice in two distinct ways. Firstly, through disseminating the analytical products of inquiry: writing articles, giving talks and circulating findings among participants and communities. Secondly, through the research process itself: using our time with participants to share critical analysis, challenge hegemony and open out transformative perspectives. Although qualitative research teems with possibilities for tackling injustice through both research process and research product, critical and feminist researchers rarely explicitly set out to achieve both simultaneously; much published material is silent on the former (with the notable exception of participatory action research; see Fine & Torre, 2004).

In this paper, I argue for the ethical and analytical strengths of methodologies that house the transformative promise of participatory research within ‘conventional’, researcher-initiated projects. I make my case by presenting my own research into young New Zealanders’ negotiations of sexism, gender and feminism in media and everyday life.

Drawing on action research, critical pedagogy and liberation and feminist traditions in psychology, I worked with 23 participants to collaboratively explore social assumptions about gender, sexism and feminism in three-day and one-day workshops prior to follow-up interviews. This methodological approach created breathing space for collective reflection and re-imagination while yielding rich, highly elaborated data addressing my own interests and questions. By reframing encounters with participants as sites for sharing practical and theoretical tools as well as generating data, we can take up opportunities for ‘doing’ feminism through the research process as well as through its products.

Thursday Parallel Session 5 Workshop

Doing feminism: Working with children’s histories of domestic abuse

Dr Jane Callaghan, University of Northampton, UK, Dr Lisa Fellin, University of Northampton, Prof Judith Sixsmith, University of Northampton

Psychological research on children in situations of domestic abuse focuses overwhelmingly on individual pathology. The notion of children as people who cope, who manage, who respond creatively and resistively to domestic violence is largely unconsidered in professional literature on this subject. In the project ‘Understanding Agency and Resistance Strategies’, our aim is to consider young people’s capacity for resistance and resilience, in families where domestic abuse takes place. In this workshop we explore semi structured and photovoice interviews with 100 young people.
in the UK, Greece, Italy and Spain, as well as focus groups with carers and with professionals who work with young people. With workshop participants, we will consider how we think about the impact of domestic violence and abuse on young people. We consider the idea of ‘voice’ and its practical implications in research with young people who might be considered ‘vulnerable’. We think about how adult attitudes to young people might function in gatekeeping ways that make it harder for young people to be represented in research and policy contexts. We work with participants to explore how children’s voice can be better ensured through local policy and practice. We consider the implications of these understandings of children’s lives to therapeutic, social and policy initiatives intended to support young people who have lived with domestic abuse.

Friday Parallel Session 6 Presentation

Fleshy ontologies of birth: shifting constructions of body-self relations in women’s childbirth stories

Dr Rachelle Chadwick, University of Cape Town, South Africa

There is a large body of cross-disciplinary feminist research on childbirth. Feminist psychological research has been more limited, with more studies looking at the antenatal (pregnancy) and postnatal (postnatal depression/mothering) periods than the birthing experience itself. Furthermore, despite the fact that the birth experience is an undeniably visceral and bodily event, there has been little research (across the social sciences more broadly) which has focused on the embodied aspects of women’s birth stories. This paper focuses on the ‘fleshy ontologies’ or ‘embodied narratives’ that emerge when women tell stories about childbirth. Drawing on a corpus of 60 South African women’s birth stories, the aim of the paper is to focus on the body-self configurations reproduced in women’s birth narratives. The paper shows the complex and multiple forms of body-self relations constructed in women’s birth narratives, including ‘clockwork bodies’, ‘embodied selves’, ‘undecidable bodies’ and ‘alienated bodies’. Different modes of birth (i.e. caesarean section or home birth), quality of relational care and dominant ideologies of birth are shown to shape and constrain the body-self constructions in women’s narratives. Being able to construct an ‘embodied self’ in/through the birth experience was found to be associated with positive and empowering birth stories.

Thursday Parallel Session 3 Symposium

Masculine “champions”: Embodying masculine identities through casual sex scripts and strategies

Stephanie Cosma, Ryerson University, Canada

This paper uses a discursive-analytic approach to examine a popular Toronto-based television show that aired in North America, “Keys to the VIP,” where each episode male contestants would compete to pick up women while having their “technique” critiqued by four other male “expert pick-up artists.” As part of an ongoing Masters project on examining how sexual activity with multiple women is positioned as valuable to men, this analysis addresses how embodied masculine identities materialize through enactments of gendered scripts (Hall, Hockey & Robinson, 2007). While there is a growing body of research investigating instructional texts for men on methods for achieving frequent sex (Farvid & Braun, 2009), few scholars have examined the ways in which these scripts are being implemented by men. Accordingly, this paper aims to further explore the previously identified “strategic man” discourse, which constructs a man as interested in obtaining casual sex through calculated techniques, whose success provides him a standing of esteemed status amongst his peers (Farvid & Braun, 2009).
Extending this interpretation, this analysis touches on cultural productions of dialogue, practices, self/other surveillance (Butler, 1990; Foucault, 1978), the psychosocial significance of casual sex with multiple women, and how it is positioned as a primary means to accrue social capital and power (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). Here, the practice of obtaining sexual attention from women is framed as a “manhood act” to bolster one’s masculinity (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009), and as a mechanism by which to perform masculinity through the use of female bodies (Butler, 1990).

**Poster**

The adorned feminine body: a qualitative exploration of media representations of tattooed women in the UK

Charlotte Dann, Lisa Fellin, University of Northampton, UK

In this study, we explore how women with tattoos are portrayed in digital media. With a focus on the construction of femininities, we present a media analysis of digital articles and associated imagery published between September 2013 and February 2014 where women with tattoos are discussed or portrayed. A comprehensive search was conducted, with twenty five articles identified. The poster will focus on five of those articles, which are analysed through the means of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Our analysis explores how women with tattoos are constructed, analysing textual and visual representations in the digital media, to consider its implications for our understanding of femininities and embodiment in contemporary neoliberal British culture. The findings of the study contribute to our understanding of women with tattoos, by considering the ‘fashion’ aspect of body art, and the notion that there is a right and a wrong way to be tattooed. There is also a clear difference between tasteful, discreet tattoos, and tattoos that are considered inappropriate. This links to ideas of self-expression through decoration of the skin.

**Poster**

Women on the move: rurality, gender, production, and subjectivity production

Rita de Cassia Maciazeki Gomes, University of Porto, Portugal, Ana Clotilde Coutinho Barbosa, Federal University of Paraíba Pessoa, Brazil

This study is located within the critical perspective of social constructionism and aims to contribute to the discussions and productions in Social Psychology that deal with rurality, gender and social movement. Its purpose is to understand how the process of subjectification of working rural women that are social movement participants in the south region of Brazil occurs. It is a qualitative study of an exploratory kind, in which 15 rural workers that are country social movement participants were interviewed. The produced data was discussed using the theme analysis perspective. The results aim to questions referring to the following thematic pillars: family, work, health, religion and political participation. Starting from data preliminary analysis, one can say that women that live in rural areas and that participate in social movement possess greater awareness and organize themselves to fight for their rights. Simultaneously, they have got a daily routine of intense activity that is centered in the importance of work in their lives. This fact often creates difficulties that prevent these women from having an even bigger involvement and participation on social movement. This study points out production in Psychology targeting space and place issues, associated with social, historical and political context landmarking, as a powerful tool for the study of subjectification processes.

**Thursday Parallel Session 3 Presentation**

Funny Business: deconstructing female lawyers’ experience of humour and power in the workplace

Rachel Densham, University of East London, UK

Women comprise almost half of the legal profession in the UK and over 60% of all law students, but these numerical gains have not yet yielded equivalent increases in advancement and promotion to the top. The profession has long been associated with stereotypes of masculinity, power and hierarchy. While humour can be used to support such stereotypes, it can also be used to subvert them. The primary objective of this research was to explore the ways in which female lawyers working in the City account for the use of humour in their workplaces.

The researcher conducted hour-long, semi-structured interviews with each of the five female participants, all of whom have practiced as solicitors in City law firms. The five participants responded to an email invitation sent by the researcher to former colleagues. They were offered
no material incentive to take part. They were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason and that all data would be anonymised.

The research took the form of a Foucauldian discourse analysis. By focusing on the contradictions that arose in the different discourses employed by the participants, the analysis sought to unmask the more pernicious, “hidden” aspects of humour in the legal workplace, revealing the dominant discourses that serve to maintain women’s marginalised position while at the same time helping to construct new, empowering subject positions for women that contest and parody existing stereotypes.

Recent research on Internet memes is grounded in the fields of networking or mathematics, with little to no analysis of the content of the memes (e.g. Bauckhage, 2011; Coscia, 2013). Expanding upon existing research on more traditional forms of Internet humour (e.g. Billig, 2001; Shifman & Lemish, 2010), a thematic analysis of popular Internet memes was conducted. A total of 240 memes were downloaded from three meme generation websites, and analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) from a feminist standpoint.

Thematic analysis proved a useful method for analysing such a large (and unusual) sample of images with textual captions, and the results are a refreshing departure from perhaps more traditional studies where interview and focus group data takes centre stage. The analysis revealed two themes for discussion – Technological Privilege and Others. These themes encompass the construction of an ideal (masculine) technologically “privileged” identity, and the denigration of women more generally. This paper will argue that the humour in the memes is being used to privilege certain activities and identities, whilst othering a range of possible alternatives.

The term meme is a biological metaphor, tracing it’s roots back to the work of Dawkins (1976) and Blackmore (2000). An Internet meme is an idea or concept, usually created for entertainment or humour, propagated via the Internet in various formats. One particular format is the image macro, where an image is blended with humorous captions. Memes in this format are easily created and shared via meme generation websites.

Objective: The current paper adopts a discursive psychological approach to explore the themes of discourse and strategies used to construct gender and sexuality through humour. As no clear line between ‘sexist’ and ‘innocent’ humour prevails, the current paper explores the discursive negotiation of parameters.

Design: A qualitative design was used to allow for a detailed understanding of the way in which arguably sexist and heterosexist jokes are constructed.

Method: After receiving negative press for being ‘crass and misogynistic’, the 97-minute long Channel4 comedy quiz: ‘The Big Fat Quiz of the Year 2012’ was chosen for analysis. The current paper applies Discourse Analysis to examine the use of gender-based and sexual humour in this male dominated comedy panel show (consisting of 6 males and 1 female).

Results: Four gender-based strategies were identified: 1) sexual objectification; 2) ‘masculine voice’ construction through expletives or derogatory sexual language; 3) mocking gender-role violations; and 4) mundane heterosexism by ridiculing homosexuality. Gender-based humorous events were ‘normalised’ by inclusion of techniques commonly found in comedic performer’s discourse: characterisation, exaggeration, and themes/subject repetition (re-incorporation).

Conclusion: Constructing gender through humour provides an opportunity for domination and oppression, often becoming harder to dispute by drawing upon societal expectations about biological sex and gender roles. Findings are discussed with reference to the power of humour to reject or reinforce traditional gender roles, and associated social stigmas. The current paper examines humour for gender-identity negotiation, and findings will be
developed beyond the single comedy panel show during later works with broader corpora.

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<th>Friday</th>
<th>Parallel Session 6</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
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| **Introducing a Bystander Intervention Programme for violence against women students in English Universities**

*Dr Rachel Fenton, University of the West of England*

*Dr Helen Mott, University of the West of England and Bristol Fawcett*

Rape, sexual assault, domestic abuse and sexual harassment are a fact of life for women students. Historically in the UK the systemic nature of this problem has been minimised and incidents have been brushed under the carpet (Scott, 2014). However there is increasing pressure - driven by a range of factors - for our universities to show that they are addressing violence against women. In this session we introduce a resource developed by UWE for Public Health England, that will be published in summer 2014. “The Intervention Initiative” is a course for students that draws on classic social psychological theory, feminist activism, and a range of programmes created for colleges in the USA. The course promotes the development and deployment of bystander intervention skills in the student population to address sexual coercion and domestic abuse.

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<th>Parallel Session 1</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
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| **Knowing the weft and warp: bodies of research**

*Dr Jenny Fisher, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

In this paper, I aim to consider how embodied and reflexive fieldwork can facilitate an understanding of social experiences and relations. I have drawn on ethnographic doctoral research that explored women’s everyday experiences of participating in church-based social activities in an urban area. Through an embodied engagement with the material and sensory nature of the spaces, I reveal that everyday church based activities provided care, well-being and belonging for most of the women. Examples from my reflexive fieldwork diaries are presented to illustrate how sensory experiences led me to uncover how social encounters are bounded yet facilitated by the space in which they take place.

I consider how issues of self-representation and subjective experience can enhance the research within the mundane space of a church hall, and render the unfamiliar familiar. However, these often unacknowledged aspects of the research process also produced troubled and troubling insights for myself as researcher. This paper highlights how we come to know about everyday encounters, the materialities and practices through which our research practice is embodied in community spaces. This knowing is situated in the context of a paradigm shift within the social sciences that focuses more closely on bodies, senses and how these inform the production of richly textualised and materially experienced stories of everyday life. The metaphor of weaving, predominantly a woman’s occupation worldwide, is used as an organising framework throughout the paper.

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| **Young men, drugs and health care in Brazil: a feminist study on men and masculinities**

*Edna Granja, Instituto Nacional de Saúde da Mulher, Brazil, Dr Romeu Gomes, Instituto Nacional de Saúde da Mulher, da Mulher, Dr Conceição Nogueira, University of Porto, Portugal, Dr Benedito Medrado, Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife-PE, Brazil, Rita de Cássia Maciazeki Gomes, University of Porto, Portugal, Ana Clotilde Coutinho Barbosa, Federal University of Paraíba, João Pessoa-PB, Brazil*

This project is part of the movement to claim an array for feminist studies on men and masculinities. Bearing this in mind, it is proposed to discuss the relationship between masculinities and drug use in youth, from the Policy of Integral Attention to Users of alcohol and other Drugs (BRAZIL, 2004). The referential landmark set will meet the theoretical assumptions, methodological and political project of this thesis, as starting point, considers that: 1) The greater vulnerability of young men to problems related to the use of drugs and the difficulties of access and/or linking to services is an issue of gender; and 2) How discussions of gender presented in Public Policy influence how the young men are recognized, accessed and are welcomed by the services of the network. Therefore, we propose a survey of qualitative order, which claims as
methodological strategies the thoroughly text study and the analysis of interviews with interlocutors, who participated in the process of elaboration and implementation of the Policy. As a methodological and analytical framework, we will work with Foucault’s discourse analysis (Willig, 2013). As the project is still developing, we will present here the preliminary results that discuss the “no place” of young men in Politics and the reflections on gender, from the crossing reference of the analysis of official documents and interviews with 11 key informants. We will discuss these results, focusing on the effects of the lack of specificities recognition of this population in what concerns the guarantee of health.

**Thursday Parallel Session 3 Symposium**

**Technologies of the body: Projects in reshaping corporeal ities, identities, and practices**

*Dr Maria Gurevich, Ryerson University, Canada*

Alterations to self-image, practices and bodies are a key part of self-transformation projects that typify contemporary Western culture. Consistent with the deployment of choice as both a right and an obligation of the neo-liberal citizen (Giddens, 1992), contemporary social theorists emphasize the increasing tendency to conceive of the body as an ‘unfinished’ surface requiring ongoing transformation to fulfill identity obligations (Featherstone, 2000; Turner, 2008). Among the cultural mediators that both represent and reconfigure bodily and identity norms and practices are media, marketing and medical authorities. In this symposium, we examine such identity projects in the context of several corporeal technologies, analysing representations of the following: men’s popular instructional texts and techniques for attaining multiple and frequent sexual female partners; anti-fat discourses embedded within a ‘gold-standard’ psychological treatment manual for binge-eating disorder; medical and popular depictions of recreational sexual enhancement medication use; and queer male embodiment in its connection to shame consciousness. These projects represent growing scholarship on the increasingly blurred demarcation between medical and social conditions (Flower, 2004) or ‘disease and discontent’ (Stipp & Whitaker, 1998).

**Thursday Parallel Session 3 Symposium**

**Technosex: Promoting recreational sexual enhancement medication use**

*Dr Maria Gurevich, Ryerson University, Canada*

Discourses of ‘sexual entrepreneurship’ promote an approach to sexuality characterized by self-improvement and goal-setting (Harvey & Gill, 2011). Such sexual labour relies on experts who adopt a managerial lexicon to direct sexuality towards performance evaluations and skill-building (Tyler, 2004). Men’s sexuality is required to be efficient, competent, and controlled (Cortese & Ling, 2011). Women’s sexuality is likewise expected to be prepared, proficient and practicing (Gill, 2007; 2008). The rise in recreational use of sexual enhancement medications (SEM), such as Viagra, by increasingly younger consumers (Bechara et al., 2010; Harte & Meston, 2011) marks a significant turn in the context of sexual technologies aimed at enhancing this ‘sexual mode of production’ (Hawkes, 1996; Rogers, 2005). As part of a growing focus on embodiment in the context of functional physicality (Monaghan, 2001), we present a discourse analysis of medical and popular depictions of SEM (sex-advice blogs and industry advertising), as key sites for the installation of idealized sexual bodies and consumer adoption of expert knowledge about sexuality (Fishman & Mamo, 2002; Fishman, 2004). Erectile difficulty is positioned as both common and a condition requiring remediation through medication. The penis is presented as the canary in the coalmine, with erectile potency equated with both general health and healthy masculinity. The ideal user is increasingly younger and variously represented as: the Man of Leisure (Viagra), with connotations of athleticism, exclusivity, and men’s shared secrets; the Modern Man on the Move (STAXYN), with signifiers pointing to a contemporary urban, fast-paced life; and the Professional Fit Man (Cialis), with emphasis on health, fitness and physical strength.

**Poster**

**Comparing body esteem in asexual and sexual women: An online survey study**

*Emily Hill, The University of Buckingham, UK*

Objectives: To test the hypothesis that asexual and sexual women experience similar levels of body esteem, therefore furthering existing literature exploring the role of sexual orientation on body image. Examining asexual women’s body esteem
may further our understanding of the interaction between active sexuality and body image.

Design: An online survey design was used to facilitate recruitment of asexual women, since this group is thought to represent only 1-2% of the general population. An online design allowed participants ready access to the study.

Method: Asexual participants (n = 105) were recruited from an online asexual community (AVEN). Women who reported a sexual orientation (n = 97) were recruited via social and other online media. Participants completed an online survey, giving demographic information along with a measure of body esteem (Body Esteem Scale: Franzoi & Shields, 1984). Participants were aged 18 and over, and those with self-reported eating disorders or related psychopathology were excluded.

Results: There was no significant difference in body esteem as measured by BES scores between asexual and sexual women.

Conclusions: These findings support socio-cultural perspectives on body image which posit that all women are exposed to oppressive female beauty ideals via media and society more broadly, and that such messages may have a negative effect on their body esteem regardless of their sexual orientation.

Purpose: This paper examines the ways that sexy ‘older’ women have begun to be represented in contemporary media. It draws on the work of feminist scholars to elaborate a theoretical framework for understanding constructions of ageing female sexualities.

Background: In television and film, female sexuality has traditionally been connected with young bodies rendering older female sexuality invisible and taboo. Yet a recent shift has seen ‘older’ female characters, particularly women at midlife, represented as sexually agentic, desiring, and desirable.

Key points: The disconnection from asexuality is a positive step as women are no longer denied an autonomous sexual voice. However, tensions arise when youthful standards of beauty and ‘sexiness’ are applied. It seems that ‘older’ women can be sexy but, along with their younger counterparts, only if they are slim, attractive, able-bodied, and heterosexual. In this highly visible culture, there remains clear disdain, and pathologisation, of ‘older’ female bodies and thus their display is heavily policed.

Conclusion: The traditional media representation of ‘older’ women as asexual is being renegotiated and redefined, but competing discourses about sexuality and ageing for women remain. The attention currently paid to ‘older’ women’s bodies within media culture is a continuation of the surveillance faced by younger women: one that has simply moved further along the lifecourse.

From asexual to sexually agentic: The sexualisation of ‘older’ women’s bodies in the media

Dr Sharron Hinchliff, University of Sheffield, UK

Dreadful choices: Women’s role in mass violence-victim, complicity or perpetrator?

Dr Julia Kay Horn, Independent practitioner/researcher, UK

Using written sources the author searches for the invisible woman as assistant, colluder and perpetrator within genocide and Mass Violence, and describes the results of this unseen action. Previous studies suggest that women circulate through these roles. When they have power the potential for oppression exists; when they are oppressed they are described as victims. Using documentary analysis (Smith 1990) of mass violence provides sense of the dynamic nature of the process. This facilitates potential to reduce the intensity of future conflicts and locate historical conflicts. Mass violence continues although more people than ever consider themselves pacifists. Various levels of analysis bring aspects of this violence into focus (Gadd & Jefferson 2007). Psychological, social or political explanations are useful; those drawing on the environment, lack of resources provide an added dimension. Economic issues have an impact. In each case of mass violence, the economic landscape shifts. Possessions belonging to the oppressed group become the property of the oppressors. Without understanding women’s roles mass violence appears as isolated outbreaks of hatred. To understand who benefits we must consider society as a whole. Shute (2012, p 3) suggests “...given criminology’s tendency to be complicit in exclusionary binary discourses of the normal and pathological, all approaches are capable of seeing the normal in the pathological and vice versa.”
Traditional narratives describe women and children as “innocent victims”. Non combatant men are ignored. Society is less likely to consider a “warrior age” man a victim. Modern masculinities leave men vulnerable. Feminists question the dubious benefits of patriarchy for both men and women. Men in war zones are killed while others benefit from their absence. This presentation considers the process.

Thursday Parallel Session 3 Presentation

“I don’t just want to be known as someone’s wife or as someone’s mother. I didn’t come to university for that”: A narrative exploration of British Pakistani Muslim women’s engagement with higher education

Ifsa Hussain, Dr Sally Johnson, Dr Yunis Alam, University of Bradford

The research to be reported in this presentation aimed to understand how British Muslims participate in everyday university life and explore the accounts of Muslim student identities and experiences. The increase in the participation of ethnic minority students in higher education is evident and for many their participation in higher education has become a major success story. Following a period of participant observation in phase 1, phase 2 of the research involved narrative interviews with five British Pakistani Muslims, who studied at the University of Bradford. The aim of the interviews was to understand how students negotiate their identity as Muslims within the higher educational context and in what manner they negotiate their identity between the educational public sphere and their family in the private sphere. The presentation will focus on the narrative interviews of three women and whether higher education opportunities for these women are enabling different narratives to be told. As more British Pakistani Muslim women are entering higher education, they are also adopting and re-working new gender identities as they embrace alternative life choices such as developing a career and working. The presentation will begin by explore why these women chose to pursue higher education and the routes taken to get to university. It will then discuss how in the negotiation between the public and private spheres has opened up a position for them to develop new gender identities. Finally their educational and career aspirations for the future will be critically considered.

Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation

‘Feminism forces men to compensate with muscles’: The sexism of researcher and participant’s accounts of men’s appearance concerns

Glen Jankowski, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

In recent times, a neoliberal discourse that depicts men as victims of sociocultural beauty pressures which equal or surpass women’s, has flourished. Many researchers working in the field of men’s embodiment simultaneously refuse to acknowledge (and challenge) patriarchy as a cause of women’s appearance concerns as well as larger systems of oppression that surround beauty and health ideals (e.g., racism, weight stigma). In this presentation, I outline my own research journey around men’s embodiment from uncritical acceptance of this discourse to disillusionment with what I now view as an elitist, limp and ego-driven (m)academia. I draw upon focus groups with 21 young university men exploring their accounts of embodiment and in particular their tendency to essentialize, blame and Other women. I demonstrate that these themes are reflected elsewhere in men’s accounts, media coverage and researcher’s own conceptualizations of this topic. Specifically, I focus on the three oft cited ‘causes’ of men’s appearance concerns: The Pushy Mother, Vacuous Girls and Feminism. I outline the feminist, intersectional and critical approach to researching men’s appearance concerns; one that acknowledges patriarchy as well as the wider commodification of the body in a capitalist society. For example, there has been a recent call for appearance concern interventions to tackle boy’s sexual harassment of girls (Levine & Smolak, 2006). I conclude this approach is more likely to result in actual alleviation of the precise appearance concerns of men (and women) that researchers so fervently highlight.

Wednesday Parallel Session 1 Presentation

Gender as a Disability in Rural Pakistan

Dr Ruhi Khalid, Beaconhouse National University (BNU), Lahore, Pakistan, Ms Ishba Rehman, BNU Lahore

This study examines how being a female child, is manifested as a form of disability. It explores challenges young girls face in the lesser developed parts of the world, particularly those in the Northwestern Rural areas of Pakistan. It takes into
consideration factors such as female education, career prospects, adequate nutrition and medical care as well as public attitudes towards female autonomy, social mobility and violence. It further investigates the specific conditions that distinguish the lives of girls and boys from the rural and urban areas of the country.

The theoretical underpinnings of the study are based upon the analogy between the disabled and the oppressed and how this perspective of disability corresponds with the Social Theory of Disability. Structured interviews were carried out with 400 young girls and boys (aged 14-16 years) and their mothers, from both rural and urban households; to explore parental and societal responses at the birth of a female child; and to examine how the recent sociopolitical scenario is disabling the girl child and curtailing her freedom.

The results revealed that female gender is a disabling factor that limits girls’ development. Rural girls’ felt more excluded from the privileges enjoyed by their male counterparts and by their female counterparts residing in the urban areas. Girls’ perceived threat of violence more frequently and their social mobility was more harshly and frequently restricted by the elders than that of boys. They also expressed their concern over the negative impact of these restrictions for their future aspirations. Implications of these results for the quality of a girl child’s life in Rural Pakistan are discussed.

**Arts as a ‘way to take your inside out’ - Turkish**

**women’s agency in creating individual femininities**

*Dr Kristin Klindworth, Turkey*

Offering a complex reading of the ways in which women negotiate, appropriate, resist, and transform existing discourses of ‘femininity’, this article particularly focuses on how Turkish women narrate their own spatial stories of resistance to, and adoption of, dominant discourses of ‘appropriate’ femininity within the urban spaces of Istanbul. Based on semi-structured interviews, recordings, observations, photo diaries and various documents collected in Istanbul in the year 2010, outcomes of the study deepen our contemporary understanding of the complex intersections between gender, bodies, and discourse in general; particularly, our understanding of socio-cultural issues, gendered power dynamics and discourses that shape femininity and feminine agency in Turkey. Within an analytic approach that is grounded in a Foucauldian feminist post-structuralist discourse methodology, women illuminate a connection between ‘power’, ‘femininity’ and ‘culture’ in terms of women’s positions that is far more complex from the one constructed in Western literature on Muslim women. Women’s empowerment in this project has been affected and constructed through cultural resources used in order to create spaces allowing them to ‘lead’ in a male-dominated world. In this way, normative and ‘natural’ discourses of femininity are significant but they operate as symbolic features that participants adopt in making sense of their practices and in ‘(re-) styling’ its development. Femininities are used as an exclusive possession that nobody can control or take away. Reference is made to some embodied practices Turkish women use to show how local authorities can facilitate the cultural integration of Muslim women. It is concluded the need for more alternative spatialities / temporalities, more experimentation and expression and not the production of controls on the latter.

**Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation**

**Cracks in My Armour: Digital Storytelling with Young Women “in” Eating Disorder Recovery**

*Andrea LaMarre, University of Guelph, Canada*

**Purpose:** In this presentation, I explore the ways in which arts-based research practice conducted from a critical feminist standpoint opens up new possibilities for knowing and engaging with participants.

**Background:** Critical feminist researchers are encouraged to think reflexively and to engage with participants with an acknowledgment of our own embodied, socially situated selves. Acknowledging and problematizing the divides between researcher/researched, mind/body, and evidence/anecdote, however, can be challenging in an academic culture that privileges “objective” ways of knowing.

**Key Points:** As a part of my Masters thesis research, I held a digital storytelling workshop for young women in recovery from eating disorders. I reflect on the possibilities of digital storytelling as a research methodology that allows for deep engagement with participants in the co-creation of artistic narratives of lived experience. As a
researcher who identifies as having lived experience of disordered eating but who has “come out the other side”, this process brought me face to face with the problematics of setting up a divide between researcher and researched. Spending three consecutive days with participants engaged in the creation of art, “cracks in my own armour” surfaced; as boundaries shifted between researcher and researched, so too did the line between recovering and recovered blur.

Conclusions: The digital storytelling workshop provided an unparalleled opportunity to filter my reflections on eating disorder recovery through an analytic lens provided by participants’ expertise. By engaging in embodied critical reflexivity and arts-based practice, we can begin to become open to new ways of knowing.

Wednesday: Parallel Session 1: Presentation

Disability studies and feminism: A posthuman manifesto

Prof Rebecca Lawthom, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

This paper explores the human through disability studies and the theories of the feminist thinker, Rosi Braidotti. We ask: what does it mean to be human in the 21st Century and in what ways does disability and gender intersect with these meanings? In addressing this question we seek to work through entangled connections of nature, society, technology, medicine, biopower and culture to consider the extent to which the human might be an outdated phenomenon, replaced by Braidotti’s posthuman condition. We then introduce disability and feminism as a political category, an identity and a moment of relational ethics. Disability studies and feminism may be more at ease with the posthuman because they has always asked for and presented more than that which is given by the traditional classical human. From this we examine the ways in which disability, feminism and posthuman work together, enhancing and complicating one another in ways that raise important questions about the kinds of life and death we value. We consider three of Braidotti’s themes in relation to feminism and disability: I. Life beyond the self: Rethinking enhancement; II. Life beyond the species: rethinking animal; III. Life beyond death: Rethinking death. We conclude by advocating a posthuman disability studies and feminism that responds directly to contemporary complexities around the human whilst celebrating moments of difference and disruption.

Friday: Parallel Session 6: Presentation

Picture perfect? The use of photo enhancement on social networking sites

Dr Lisa Lazard, The Open University, UK, Dr Rose Capdevila, The Open University, UK, Tania Laurance, The Open University

This paper reports the early findings of a qualitative examination into young women’s use of photo enhancement apps (e.g. facetune, perfect 365, retrica) on ‘selfies’ - images of themselves - that they upload to social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or twitter. Current scholarship has identified gendered patterns around the upload and circulation of photos on social networking sites indicating that, in comparison to men, women display a greater number of photos, are tagged in photos with greater frequency and also report untagging themselves, often citing dissatisfaction with their appearance as the primary reason. Moreover, research also indicates that in Western culture, women’s bodies are ever more understood as an on-going ‘betterment’ project in which what is considered to be ‘improved’ is heavily shaped by parameters of social acceptability for bodily appearance. Group interviews with young women (18-25) were conducted around reported practices and experiences of photo enhancement apps. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts, along with the recordings themselves, were thematically analysed with some attention to discursive features. This paper brings this preliminary empirical investigation together with the aforementioned bodies of literature to interrogate how these apps are taken up and negotiated when constructing online femininities and how virtual identities become reconciled with women’s understandings of their ‘offline’ body image.

Friday: Parallel Session 6: Presentation

The Media Construction of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME: Scepticism and the Hysterical Woman

Rebecca Murray, University of Huddersfield, Dr Abigail Locke, University of Huddersfield, Dr Alison Rodrigues, University of Huddersfield & Jane
To be

University of Huddersfield.

Objectives: Due to an elusive aetiology, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS/ME) is a contentious chronic illness which has a prevalence of over 200,000 in the UK. The aims of this paper are to illuminate the media construction of CFS/ME whilst also exploring the impact of the ‘psychogenic tag’ on those with CFS/ME.

Design/Method: A media analysis of CFS/ME was conducted in order to establish the media construction of CFS/ME and to observe if and how the media construction of CFS/ME has evolved since the inception of CFS/ME in the 1990’s. The search engine PROQUEST was used to explore CFS/ME within UK publications between 1998 and 2012. The data were synthesised thematically.

Results: The ratio of women to men featured was 9:1, which illustrates how the UK print media represent CFS/ME as predominantly a woman’s illness. The analysis revealed a gendered media construction of CFS/ME. The representation of the ‘action men’ robbed of their physical prowess and essential maleness as a result of a physical illness was in stark contrast to that of the beaten down, stigmatised, emotional wrecks of CFS/ME women whose symptoms were moreover considered psychogenic.

Conclusions: One of the most important things we can do as researchers is make these implicit assumptions about CFS/ME explicit and in so doing challenge the print media to implore more thought in how they represent CFS/ME. We call for a renegotiation of the CFS/ME identity as to dispel myth and enable coping.

Making the Case for Victims’ Meaningful Participation in the Development of Domestic Abuse Services

Jo Neale, University of Bedfordshire, UK

This paper forms part of my ongoing PhD research. Drawing on feminism and social constructionism, I wished to critically examine the ways in which abused women’s choices are influenced by their perceptions of self, and by the context in which those choices are made.

Data is taken from interviews, using free association narrative method, with fourteen women who have been in relationships with abusive men. Using Marianne Hester’s (2011) ‘Three Planet Model’, I will talk about my participants’ experiences of seeking help, and negotiating the contradictions and competing priorities of agencies that focus on a) the abuse, b) child protection, and c) child(ren)’s post-separation contact with the perpetrator.

I will argue that, in order to effectively address this form of violence against women, domestic abuse services must be informed by the voices of those who have experienced it. Finally, I will suggest a model of service user involvement that will improve agencies’ responses.

Unraveling our PhD selves and finding direction: Personal Development and Reflection (PDR)

Dr Helen Owton, De Montfort University, UK

Merleau Ponty (2002) describes reflection as not withdrawing from the world’s basis: it steps back to watch the forms of transcendence fly up like sparks from a fire; it slackens the intentional threads which attach us to the world and thus brings them to our notice; it alone is consciousness of the world because it reveals that world as strange and paradoxical (p, xv).

Self-awareness and deliberate self-reflection opens up the research process as well as the direction of personal processes and paths. During a PhD, some can experience what McAdams refers to (1996) as ‘nuclear episodes’ which are: A declaration of change, a person may single out a particular event as an epiphany, throughout which the Me experienced rather sudden or decided transformation, as I a ‘loss of innocence’, a ‘fall from grace’, a ‘lucky break’, and so on (p.309).

It might be that PhD students can experience these ‘moments’ because they start to realise and/or fear that the field is far more demanding and competitive than they had previously realised. Indeed, increasingly, academics are finding that the university life they chose has not been what they expected or bargained for (Sparkes, 2007).

This is another chance to find out what academics do on a day-to-day basis and ask yourself if this is something that you would like to do. Often the purpose of being an academic (doing research or teaching – depending on your focus) is often at odds with the work that academics find themselves doing. Whilst becoming an academic means flexible hours, the chance to contribute to a specialist field,
and the chance to help others develop, you also need to consider the impact that such an uncertain career (short-term research or teaching contracts that might not lead to a permanent position) has on your life.

The aim of this workshop is to do work on personal development and reflection of the paths of PhD students. We will engage in a group discussion around the demands and changing environment of higher education, whether you feel that academia is the right path for you and consider other possible paths for a life outside academia. We will engage in various self-reflective tasks (e.g. and then work in groups to understand how to develop short-term (6 months) and long-term plans (1yr, 2yrs & 3yrs). This will be aimed at figuring out where you would like to focus your energies.

This workshop will appeal to those who are considering a PhD, in the middle of doing a PhD, coming to the end of your PhD or early career academics who would like to reflect on their career direction and personal development. We will also be suggesting ways of how you can continue this kind of practice during your career.

**Friday Parallel Session 6 Presentation**

**Intense, gendered and heightened sensorial experiences of female boxing embodiment**

*Dr Helen Owton, De Montfort University, UK*

This paper draws upon data generated by an autoethnographic research project on sporting embodiment within the physical cultures of boxing. In October 2012, the researcher, H, actively started participating in women’s boxing in the Midlands (UK) with an aim to become a fully-fledged insider member of a boxing club. The methods of data collection and analysis included keeping very detailed and critical field notes in personal logs and reflective journals. These collected data were subjected to a phenomenological and thematic narrative analysis. Commensurate with a phenomenological approach, lived, corporeal experiences of boxing are portrayed through the use of vignettes and poems. Key findings of my own account are grounded in my female lived-body, with a focus on the gendered dimensions of embodiment, as well as the intense and heightened sensorial forms of embodiment encountered in the physical and masculinist cultures of boxing.

Analyses of the findings draw upon this previous research which includes rich detail of carnal experience to explore the intense and heightened sensorial aspects whereby the hard-contact, bloodying, bruising, sensory dimensions of boxing strongly emerge. Findings of this research offer a greater understanding through a critical analysis of female sporting embodiment with an aim to generate potent insights to the female boxing experiences as lived and felt in the flesh.

**Thursday Parallel Session 3 Presentation**

**Constructing Feminine Subjectivities: Constraints and Possibilities for Young Women in Neo-liberal Culture**

*Marie Paludan, Open University, UK, Dr Jean McAvoy, Open University*

Current social and cultural conditions can be seen to require young women to navigate a ‘Quadruple bind’ between a demand to avoid victimhood, a demand to resist social pressures, a demand to be ‘sexy’ and a demand to be successful. As young women are attributed with capacity and hailed as empowered, talk of structural inequalities and disadvantage appears to have become taboo in a wider trend of avoiding victimhood. My PhD research aims to develop an account of constraints and possibilities for young women, and engages with current debates around ‘agency’, ‘choice’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘sexualisation’.

The research uses interview data and takes a qualitative approach based on social constructionism, critical discursive psychology and narrative analysis in psychology.

Data from interviews with 5 18-21 year-old female university students each interviewed twice are discussed here. Preliminary findings suggest ‘race’ and ‘class’ were drawn on by women identifying as working class and mixed race, but while both were framed as making their lives harder than for white middle class people, this was also framed as individual problems for individuals to overcome through personal improvement. Likewise, while ‘gender’ was talked about in terms of appearance related pressures to be withstood and the future motherhood anticipated by some was spoken of in terms of personally chosen obligations and career breaks, neither was framed in terms of structural inequalities. This is in line with neoliberal ideologies that silence discursive resources for framing racism, classism and sexism as anything other than issues requiring individual efforts to overcome.
A fertile source drawn from infertile bodies: The embodied construction of prospective adoptive motherhood

Donna Peach, Dr Abigail Locke, Prof Adele Jones, University of Huddersfield, UK

Objectives: Despite legislative changes to make adoption more inclusive, there remains a dire shortage of adoptive parents, with 15,300 children waiting to be adopted. Since 1997, the British Association for Adoption and Fostering has used the annual National Adoption Week (NAW) to recruit prospective adoptive parents. This study explored the discursive construction of prospective adoptive parents within 2012 and 2013 NAW newspaper campaign.

Design: The social constructive design of this study used qualitative textual data to identify discursive repertoires which were thematically analysed.

Method: A search of the NEXIS database using the term ‘National Adoption Week’ during the 2012 and 2013 campaigns identified 184 newspaper articles. A cyclical approach facilitated the identification of thematic discourses, which constructed prospective adoptive parenthood.

Results: Adoption was often embodied as a means for women to fill a childless life. Other emotive discourses affirm those who became an adoptive parent were ‘selfless’ and ‘caring’ with critical undertones evident for those who were too ‘nervous’ to take on the responsibility. Despite a prominence in the discourses of heterosexual coupledom, adoptive fatherhood remains less visible.

Conclusions: The gendered construction of prospective adoptive parents resonates with the historical development of adoption being a route to motherhood for couples who were infertile. Such repertoires constrain the availability of subject positions available to potential adopters and reaffirm dominant cultural views of familyhood. Awareness of the limitations in current discourses is important if future NAW campaigns are to engage a wider audience.

Expatriate women leaders in the UAE; A phenomenological study on the experience of womanhood

Dr Bridgette Rickett, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK, Dr Linzi Kemp, American University and Sharjah UAE

This paper explores the lived experiences of ‘becoming a leader’ for women in leading/highly successful roles in different business and commerce settings in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The study focuses on a starkly under researched sample of ex-patriot women leaders (classified as either those who are sent by an organisations to work for a short period overseas or as being ‘self-initiated’ expatriates) that comprise 89% of the female UAE population. We conducted one-to-one interviews with a sample of 12 expatriate women leaders across a section of nationalities and focused primarily on what each woman felt were the important life experiences that influenced them to become a women leader in business and commerce. Our findings were organised around three main themes; ‘experiences of other woman as role models’ ‘the important skills gained and owned that enabled me to become a woman leader’ and ‘the experience of motherhood and successful leadership as a binary’. These themes illustrated the heavily gendered, and economically and politically located basis of experience around becoming a women leader in the UAE. We hope our findings allude to the importance of attending to the social, political and economic influences that shape women’s lived experiences to enable us to work towards an in-depth and wider understanding of how to promote, engage and sustain women leader in business and commerce both inside and outside of the UAE.

Issues of power, care and control for survivors of Domestic Violence within the MARAC process

Dr Rachel Robbins, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Debbie Thackray, Manchester Metropolitan University, Claire Bellamy, Manchester Metropolitan University

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) are a key tool in the protection of victims of domestic violence, with remit for those at high risk of domestic homicide or significant harm. This
paper uses data collected during a NIHR (School for Social Care Research) funded project looking at the effectiveness of adults’ social care contribution to the MARAC process, and is concerned with the themes of power, care and control that were uncovered by this project.

Design: This project adopted a mixed methods approach involving: a systematic review of literature, analysis of nationally and locally recorded MARAC data, semi-structured interviews with MARAC subjects and MARAC agency representatives. However, this paper will concentrate primarily on the experience of interviewing women (n=20) who had been referred to the MARAC process and where appropriate highlights comparisons with the views of ‘professionals’ from the domestic violence field.

Results: The interviews with the women showed a tentatively positive attitude towards the MARAC process, but was tainted with concerns about control and representation. Many were uncertain about the role MARAC had played in their support and questions about attendance and recognition were to the fore. The results also highlighted issues of control and power for social work researchers in relation to child protection issues.

Conclusions: This paper will argue that issues of power and control in the lives of survivors of domestic violence are complex, with systems designed to support such women holding an ambivalent position to the women’s agency. By drawing on examples where issues of child protection posed dilemmas and points of reflection for researchers it will point to the ‘discomfort’ of such situations as an ethical resource.

Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation

Gendered Language in the Workplace: Subconscious Inequality?
Katy Schnitzler, Kingston University, UK

Objectives: To qualitatively investigate whether gender differences were evident within everyday speech within the contemporary workplace.

Design: A single case study, in order to capture a typical mixed-gender team meeting, acquiring rich data of a true situation, yielding high ecological validity. This was feasible and could still offer extrapolation (analytical generalisation to the wider context).

Method: Discourse Analysis (DA) of a meeting allowed for insight into natural conversations, and subtleties to be revealed. The entire meeting (conducted within a college) was recorded and transcribed, information relating to the research questions, notably interruption, modaliser and pronoun use and other emerging themes were coded. A pilot study with field notes was also conducted.

Results:
• Males were more likely to utilise interruption, particularly against females.
• Women were found to stutter more than men, and to delegate tasks softly.
• Women frequently referred to senior colleagues when giving instruction.
• However, one female adopted considerable rates of interruption, proposing that other factors may need to be considered alongside gender, such as age and experience.

• Females utilised modalisers and collaborative pronouns more than males overall. However, some males were also found to frequently use modalisers.

Conclusion: These findings could hold resonance across all workplaces, if women frequently utilise language which ascertains doubt, they could hinder themselves. Furthermore, if men uphold traditional male linguistic strategies, they could also hinder themselves because these archaic speech patterns are arguably not aligned within the new desired transformative leader.

But I don’t want to be a good girl
Sophie Smailes, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

In the process of engaging with feminist autoethnography around my relationship with my fat body, identity and dieting what emerged for me was my complex responses to doing, and being, what is constructed as ‘doing what is good for me’? By this I mean the dictates of dieting, neoliberal messages of being a responsible, socially active citizen managing their life style choices in such a way as to limit the burden on a struggling NHS and society as a whole. Interwoven within these messages are those of sexist objectification, which positions women’s bodies as objects on which to represent particular constructs of beauty and slimness – and therefore value and meaning.
Women’s bodies and their eating behaviours have been subject to a great deal of critical observation concerning how and what we should look like, and what we should be eating and not eating. Within these dictates of restraint and control are also the messages of nurture, provision and indulgence, all rather neatly wrapped up in commodification and consumerism. While I struggled with all of these positions, what particularly emerged is how I often did resistance. Thus, resistance ranged from adjusting my eating habits so that there was no misunderstanding about whether I conformed or not, as well as the way in which I did adjust, but on what I believed were my own terms. What struck me here is how do women respond to these messages of good and bad; when is bad, naughty and therefore playful and acceptable; when is good, over controlled and restricting and, therefore unfeminine and bad? Throughout this discussion is the practice of body dissatisfaction and its normalisation, indeed

Thursday Parallel Session 3 Presentation

_Heroine nation- The association between drugs, women and nationalism in India_

_Sonia Soans, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK_

Addiction/alcoholism are typically construed in gendered terms. It is a widely acknowledged fact that women alcoholics/addicts face discrimination arising from the nature of the condition their sexuality brought into question. Though classified as a disease addiction is treated as a psychological phenomena a disease of wills. Through most of its history, addiction has been thought of as a condition affecting men. Women alcoholics/addicts have to contend with their sexuality being brought into account. Images of women addicts are sexually provocative and build upon the ideas of bad mothers and destructive to national cohesion. Despite the neutrality of diagnostic systems cultural variations of addiction narratives play an important role in shaping our understanding of the condition.

Working with women in a rehabilitation facility in India the author encountered prejudice from the staff and fellow patients against these women who were subjected to physical and sexual abuse. Nationality was often cited as a factor in ‘correcting’ this problem. Ideas of modernity and ‘westernisation’ affecting the domestic sphere have been problematic in the Indian context. Addiction is one of those problems thought of as being western. In the case of India nationalism borrows heavily from certain acceptable forms of western influence it chooses selectively.

This paper looks at how the condition of addiction has acquired different meanings over time, nations and communities and the manner it is gendered.

Wednesday Parallel Session 1 Presentation

_Sexual morality and other national anxieties. Indian cinema and the morality of the nation_

_Sonia Soans, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK_

Cinema has been a powerful means of communication and entertainment in India both pre and post independence. Keeping up with social and technological changes it has gained international popularity and recognition at times gaining more popularity than Hollywood. Post independence India espoused values of reform, social change and unity. These are reflected on screen in the way characters interact with each other. Over the decades a shift in economic and national trends has also changed the narrative of films. No longer propagating ideas that could be construed as secular or feminist it has become a means of entertainment which titillates a male audience and reaffirms prejudices in Indian society. When presenting women on screen it exploits their sexuality. Sexually explicit scenes are not allowed by the Indian Censor Board. Directors find a way around these constraints by depicting scenes of women in wet clothing singing or prolonged rape scenes, which are hinted at by a woman’s screams. Contradictions of this kind find their way in which Indian society positions women and allows them to certain freedoms but dictated by ever present patriarchal norms.

Sexuality though not spoken about openly makes its way into depictions of women that are sexualised. A false sense of decency and morality are presented on screen which finds its way in everyday discourse. This paradox in the presentation of gender and sexuality have posed problems unique to the Indian context. This subversive sexualisation shapes the way women and their bodies have become sites of national preoccupations.

Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation

_I should be a mum before I’m a police officer. But I’m obviously not’ – Negotiating and resisting_
feminine working identities within the confines of post-feminism

Lucy Thompson, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

The objective of this paper is to explore discourses around feminine identity in the context of the UK police organization. The aim of the research was to identify how women spoke and positioned themselves in relation gendered discourses around the ‘ideal’ worker.

19 police officers participated in the research. The study formed the final phase of the research, which was broadly based on the methodological framework set out by Saukko (2008). Following this framework, a number of key discourses identified within previous analyses of organisational texts were brought to focus group discussions with police officers in order to explore the ways these were negotiated.

Based on a feminist concern for voice and the mediatory functions of discourse in expressed experiences (Saukko, 2008), a Feminist Relational Discourse Analysis (FRDA) method was developed which combined elements of Carol Gilligan et al’s ‘Listening Guide’ with poststructuralist discourse analysis (Gavey, 1989).

Four broad discourses were identified. This paper discusses one of these discourses: ‘I should be a mum before I’m a police officer. But I’m obviously not’ – Negotiating heteronormative femininity within the confines of post-feminism’. This discursive pattern alluded to the regulatory power of post-feminist discourses in relation to organisational identities, and resistance to contemporary post-feminist expectations that women can ‘have it all’ within the context of their working lives (Hughes, 2002).

The paper concludes that, in contrast with previous literature, women resisted traditional expectations around ‘having it all’, instead privileging their organisational identities before all others. The implications of the findings will be discussed.

Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation

Rape as a perversion of gender: Psychiatric constructions of sexual violence

Dr Jemma Tosh, University of Chester, UK

Psychiatry pathologizes sexual violence through a variety of diagnostic concepts, such as ‘sexual sadism disorder’ (APA, 2013). While the 2010 DSM-5 proposals for ‘paraphilic coercive disorder’ reinvigorated debates regarding the profession’s medicalization of rape (Tosh, 2011), psychiatry has a much longer history in its framing of sexual violence as symptomatic of mental ‘illness’. However, not all forms of rape fall under this psychiatric category. Using discourse analysis (Parker, 2003; Burman, 2010), this paper will examine the discursive boundaries between, what is framed as, ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’ rape by analysing a wide range of archival psychiatric material. It is suggested that the psychiatric focus on ‘paraphilic’ rape arises from the paradox this poses in relation to gender nonconformity, which thereby relies upon and further maintains the pathologization of femininity (Tosh, 2014).

Thursday Parallel Session 4 Workshop

Using Imaginative Variation as a Technique to Understand the Lived Experience of Gender & Sexuality

Dr Emma Turley, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

This workshop will focus on the ways that creative methods can be used to go beyond the familiar discourses people express about gender and sexuality. Often when discussing these topics, research participants, therapy clients and academics have difficulty describing their lived experiences around gender and sexuality without relying on accessible, common scripts and grappling with the lexicon available to them. How can we get beyond these stories to really understand and engage with lived experiences of gender and sexuality?

Producing written descriptions of a ‘good’ and ‘bad’ version of an event can generate phenomenological detail about feelings, thoughts, emotions, and sensations related to the experience, for example comparing a fulfilling and unfulfilling sexual experience. Using an adaptation of the phenomenological analytical technique of imaginative variation enables the interrogation of the written descriptions in order to tease out these nuanced experiential details. The written descriptions allow people to respond differently, and these insights are often not present when accessed via interviews alone. This workshop will provide an opportunity to try out this method and consider its usefulness for research, therapy and teaching. There will be space for reflection on the
methodological principles, its application in terms of gender and sexuality and its limitations.

And everything in my body just feels so, so magnified...Like nothing I've ever felt before': Understanding consensual BDSM as a method of embodied exploration

Dr Emma Turley, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

This paper aims to illustrate how the consensual sexual practice of BDSM (bondage, discipline, dominance & submission, and sadism & masochism) can be interpreted as a method of embodied exploration. It will detail the various ways that engaging in BDSM, either as the dominant or submissive partner, is able to enhance feelings of corporeality and explore bodily relationships with the world and with other people. By its nature, BDSM places the body into central focus, and this work will elucidate the ways that this can be conceptualised as ‘embodied exploration’.

Taken from a project examining the erotic experience of BDSM, this research adopted a Merleau-Pontyan existential phenomenological approach. Merleau-Ponty argued that the body is not simply another object in the world, but that people are inextricably linked to the world through their bodies, as body-subjects. Eleven participants were recruited for the study, and variation in assumed sexual role, gender, sexual orientation and age was deliberately sought for the sample.

Template analysis, a method of hierarchically organising & structuring thematic findings, was used to analyse the interview data of the research participants; the salient themes relating to BDSM as embodied exploration are discussed in this paper with particular reference to unfamiliar physical and emotional sensations, imposed corporeal limitations and an experienced sense of embodied liberation.

Embodiment and shame consciousness

Alexander Vasilovsky, Ryerson University, Canada

In her seminal essay on queer performativity, Sedgwick (1993) claimed that shame works to establish queer identity: its machinations uniquely and disproportionally affect lesbians and gay men “and must be intrinsic to the idea of counternormative desire” (Warner, 2005, p. 289-290). This paper draws on a series of individual, semi-structured interviews, which concerned queer male embodiment and were transcribed and analyzed via Foucauldian discourse analysis (Vasilovsky, 2014; Vasilovsky & Gurevich, submitted), in order to explicate the identificatory and corporeal effects of being hailed through the illocutionary performative “Shame on you.”

The materiality of the participants’ bodies mattered not as templates for homosexuality, but as citations of fluid, historically contingent configurations of cultural practices deemed gay and/or queer. Although highly variable and certainly not dichotomous, across all interviews, the course of identity consolidation through body-reflexive practices was presented as rooted in either surmounting or engaging and assuming shame.

According to the “shame/masculine compensation” interpretive repertoire, shame consciousness spurs a symbolic quest to purge oneself of the markers of gayness/queerness/effeminacy while aligning male homosexuality with hegemonic masculinity, under the guise of neoliberal “authenticity.” Conversely, “embodied queer resistances” deliberately “take up” what the hetero- and homonormative majority considers shameful so as to keep gay shame alive, as an “affective economy” (Ahmed, 2004), cohering “collectivities of the shamed” (Crimp, 2005, p. 71). Attuned to the body’s communicative and symbolic propensities, they mobilize agonistic reverse-discourses that embolden marginalized positionalities and bodies, producing creative new ways of being and queer forms of difference.

Laugh it up or Laugh it off; The Use of Humour within the Fire Service as a Way of Constructing, Managing and Coping with Emotionality

Lauren Ward, Northampton University, UK

Historically, much research has focused on the use of humour, especially following traumatic events. Within organisational research, emotions are positioned as either instrumental to doing the job, or damaging to task effectiveness; either way this involves some sort of performance. Thus, individuals with emotionally challenging job roles must find ways to manage difficult or traumatic events, whilst still being deemed ‘professional’. Much research positions humour as a discursive
tool enabling individuals to talk about feeling. Some researchers argued joking is a way of expressing these damaging or ‘toxic’ emotions, in a culturally masculine way. The current research using interviews with fifteen fire fighters, explored how fire fighters manage emotionality within their job roles. One clear theme that emerged was the use of humour as a strategy to construct, make sense of, and manage emotionally stressful events. This research therefore expanded further on the previous work, exploring how humour enabled them to make sense of emotionality.

Thursday Parallel Session 2 Presentation

‘Girly girls’, ‘posh girls’ and ‘right bad tomboys’: Negotiating constructions of classed femininities through talk around food, eating and body management practices

Dr Maxine Woolhouse, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

Within mainstream psychological research around eating and body management practices, gender is commonly regarded in binary ways and social class (if considered at all) is regarded as identifiable through objective indicators such as occupation and income. In contrast, feminist and critical scholarship in this domain recognises these practices as culturally constituted through classed and gendered discourses whereby gender is viewed through a lens of multiplicity and social class as both social construction and simultaneously structured through unequal access to material resources and political power. Drawing on these latter understandings, this paper reports on data from interviews conducted with young women around the themes of eating and body management practices. Conducting feminist-informed poststructuralist discourse analysis drew attention to the ways in which participants attempted to make sense of eating and body management practices through drawing on classed and gendered discourse. The findings are discussed in the context of neo-liberalism, post-feminism and the age of the ‘classless society’.

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