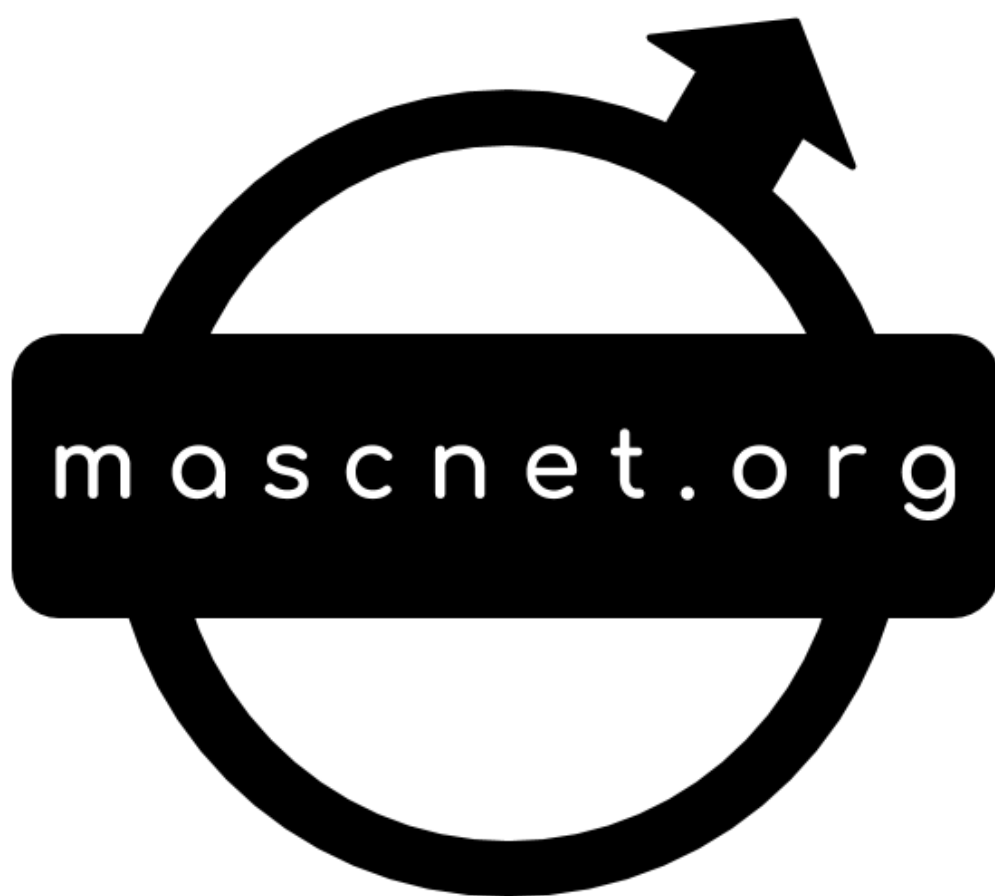


**Masculinity, Sex and Popular Culture  
Research Network**



**Masculinity in Times of Change  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021  
Online Symposium**

Welcome to the third of our Network symposium events in collaboration with Men in Movement V: Masculinities and Feasible Futures an international conference taking place in Barcelona 29th September to 1st October 2021. [https://meninmovement.wordpress.com/mim\\_5/](https://meninmovement.wordpress.com/mim_5/)

We are living through a period of profound change and the title of our third symposium event seems more timely than we could have imagined.

The covid pandemic and the global political and social response to it, the aftermath of the election in the US, the UK leaving the EU, the climate crisis, the Black Lives Matter and #metoo movements, the growth of online extremism, so-called 'cancel culture' all constitute the turbulent contexts in which ideas around gender, sexuality and identity collide with the dynamics of economics, politics and ideology.

What sense can we make of masculinity in these contexts? This three-day online event tries to answer some of these questions.

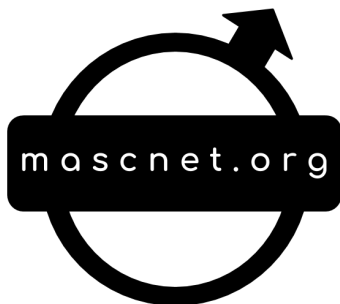
## **Mascnet Artist Commissions**

For the duration of our Network programme we have worked with curator Trevor Pitt to commission artists to make work responding to the themes of our events. Photographer Ming de Nasty made a series of portraits that can be found at <https://www.tagmasc.co.uk/> and performance artist Sophie-Yukiko devised "Hungry" a piece that was staged at Schwules Museum, Berlin in January 2020.

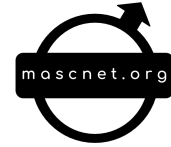
For our online symposium, Emily Warner will be artist in residence and will make a piece responding to the symposium events. You can find out about Emily here: <https://emily-warner.com/>.

If you would like to know more about our events and join the Network visit <http://mascnet.org>.

John Mercer, Clarissa Smith and the network steering group:  
Begonya Enguix, Jamie Hakim, João Florêncio, Mark McGlashan, Peter Rehberg, Florian Vörös, Jose Arroyo (associate steering group member)



**Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council**



# Symposium Schedule

## Day 1: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September

### Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 14:00 BST, GMT+1

Welcome and Introductions: John Mercer, Clarissa Smith and Begonya Enguix

Opening Address: Jonathan Allan (Brandon) *Stuck on a feeling: Affect and the study of masculinity*

### Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 16:00 BST, GMT+1

#### Panel 1: Extremist and Alt-right masculinities

Chair: Mark McGlashan (Birmingham City University)

Elizabeth Short (Independent) *Choking Babalon: Intersections of toxic male esoteric practice, the alt-right and the false flag of Apocalyptic Witchcraft*

Alexandre Pichel-Vázquez, (Catalunya) Marta Cabezas (Autónoma de Madrid) *Radicalizing right-wing masculinities: Censorship, dilemmas and contradictions about gender-violence in right-wing men*

Jason Luger (Northumbria) Dawn Woolley (Leeds) *Gym bodies, militaritized branding and fascistic creeps*

### Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 18:00 BST, GMT+1

#### Panel 2: Medicine Man: Media Assemblages of Medicalized Masculinity

Chair: Karen Hvidtfeldt (Southern Denmark)

Karen Hvidtfeldt (Southern Denmark) & Michael Nebeling (Copenhagen): *Medicine Man: Media assemblages of medicalized masculinity*

Camilla Bruun Eriksen (Southern Denmark) *Men in/and crisis: The cultural narrative of men's midlife crises*

Mie Birk Jensen & Karen Hvidtfeldt (Southern Denmark) *From medicine to metaphor: Viagra trajectories in Danish media (1998-2018)*

Signe Rom Rasmussen (Southern Denmark) *'If you operate on me! I don't need anesthesia 🤪' Or, what can the (male) surgeon body do in networked micro cultures of cosmetic health?*

Kristian Møller (Southern Denmark) and Alexandra Aldridge (Royal Holloway) *(De)centering cocks: Queer and gay male politics of desire in digital sex parties*

## Day 2: Tuesday 21st September

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 14:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Panel 3: Masculinity in Covid Times**

Chair: Jamie Hakim (Kings College, London)

Marcos Bote (Murcia) Agustina Varela-Manograsso (Castilla La Mancha) *Re-spatialization of life and research. Analysing masculinity and old age in Spain during the Pandemic Crisis*

Duru Basak Ugurlu (Hacettepe) *The fall of the houses of male solidarity: Transition of spatial experiences of men under pandemic-hit restrictions*

Frank G. Karioris (Pittsburgh) *Finding Joy & Elegy: Poetry from Pandemic*

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 16:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Panel 4: Diverse Objects, Diverse Methods**

Chair: João Florêncio (Exeter)

Spyros Boviatsis (Independent) *Lost in time: When queer boys (un)become men*

Hongwei Bao (Nottingham) *Performing transnational Chinese female masculinity: Whiskey Chow's performance art*

Matthew G. Nielson (Michigan) *Reactions to the authenticity of ethnically and sexually diverse men*

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 18:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Panel 5: Digital Masculinities**

Chair: Jose Arroyo (Warwick)

Jaime Garcia Iglesias (Edinburgh) Neta Yodovich (Haifa) *Cannibal daddy: How did Twitter users negotiate masculinity, kink and abuse in the wake of Armie Hammer's leaked DMs?*

Marco Scarcelli (Padova) Cirrus Rinaldi (Palermo) *Rearticulating the idea of manosphere. Whatsapp groups as digital idioculture.*

Broderick Chow (Central) Eero Laine (Buffalo) *British lads hit each other with chair: Viewership, speculation and male affection*

## Day 3: Wednesday 22nd September

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 12:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Panel 6: Representations of Masculinity**

Chair: Clarissa Smith (Northumbria)

Liza Tsaliki (Athens) *“Regency masculinity in 21<sup>st</sup> century Shondaland: male erotic desire and racial tropes in Bridgerton”*

Dr. Gilad Padva (Tel Aviv) *Screening monstrous masculinities*

Wangtaolue Guo and Jennifer Quist (Alberta) *A dildonic assemblage: The paradox of masculinity, desire, and queerness on Chinese reality television’s Yundongba shaonian*

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 14:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Artist Talk**

**Richard Sawdon Smith (Norwich University of the Arts)** *Masc for mask:*

*Reflections of a Daddy on surviving a pandemic*

In conversation with Joao Florencio and Peter Rehberg

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 16:00 BST, GMT+1**

**Panel 7: Style and New Masculinities**

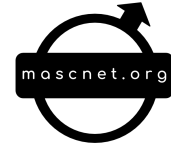
Chair: John Mercer (Birmingham City University)

Judith Beyer (Wellington) *Gucci’s New Man: A close reading of gender-fluid masculinities in Alessandro Michele’s fashion design*

Carolin Becke (Sheffield) *Masculinities & dress: an analysis of men’s kimono at the coming-of-age day*

Gallais Catherine (Hull) *‘New masculinities’: Fatherhood and caring practices in New York City.*

Greg Wolfman (Independent) *Hollow femininities: The emerging faces of neoliberal masculinities*



# Abstracts

## Opening Address

### **Jonathan Allan (Brandon) *Stuck on a feeling: Affect and the study of masculinity***

What if masculinity is not so much a thing or a practice as it is a feeling? In this paper, I bring together affect theory and the critical study of men and masculinities. More particularly, I outline a growing frustration with the seemingly endless taxonomies of masculinities. Masculinities are now toxic, hybrid, inclusive, hegemonic, traditional, normative, orthodox, gay, healthy, heterosexual, queer, female, and on and on and on. While each of these tell us about a way of doing masculinity or being masculine, they may not tell us what precisely masculinity is or is not (though they are better at saying what it isn't). What each of these types have in common, of course, is their belief in masculinity. So I return to masculinity and set out to ask if it is a feeling. What would it mean for the study of masculinities if we turned our attention to the presocial world of affect?

## Panel 1: Extremist and Alt-right Masculinities

### **Elizabeth Short (Independent) *Choking Babalon: Intersections of toxic male esoteric practice, the alt-right and the false flag of Apocalyptic Witchcraft***

This paper is an ethnographic case study centred around discourses within the curatorial and public sphere of 21st Century esoteric practice, and their intersections with fascist and libertarian politic that came to prominence in new forms in the 2010s. The discourse aims to illuminate the comparative and inter-relational values of the USA located strands of the alt-right and other fascist radicals and the contemporary occult movement of Apocalyptic Witchcraft (Grey, 2013). The presentation will give a brief overview of the history of Anglophonic occult and esoteric practice in the 20th and 21st Century; citing the English occultist Aleister Crowley as an individual that intrinsically linked Imperialist rhetoric and white supremacy with acquired and appropriated praxis of spiritual significance. This syncretisation that Crowley undertook is viewed as being a precursor to the meme magic deployed and cited by the alt-right. The linguistics of analysis within the context of discussing the alt-right will also be deployed to analyse the book *Apocalyptic Witchcraft* by Peter Grey. The central discourse of this paper is against the spirit of this manifesto; with the argument of ecocidal rhetoric held within the polemic masks a libertarian strain of accelerationism that welcomes rather than eschews the next potential mass extinction. *Dark Star Rising: Magick and Power in the Age of Trump* by Lachman (2018) will be used as a primary text to site this inter-related fusion of spiritual practice and politic. This discussion builds upon this work and inverts the polarity of of the election; with central research concerns dealing with the emergence of fascist thought in magical circles being seen as holding what Cixous and Kuhn describe as 'Masculine Incorporation' (1981: 52) whilst attempting to present itself as a process of divine feminism.

**Alexandre Pichel-Vázquez, (Oberta de Catalunya) Marta Cabezas (Autónoma de Madrid) *Radicalizing right-wing masculinities: Censorship, dilemmas and contradictions about gender-violence in right-wing men***

Since 2019, Spain has been experiencing the growth of the far-right (VOX) in public institutions. VOX has taken a tough anti-gender stance, targeting gender-violence policy while displaying a model of militarized masculinity. VOX has not electorally surpassed the conservative Popular Party (PP), but its presence has changed the whole right-wing spectrum. Hence, we propose to understand gender as central to VOX ideological struggles as well as one of the vectors of radicalization of right-wing men. How does gender work in the ideological identification/differentiation process of (far)-right-wing men?

The objective of this paper is to analyze how VOX discourses about gender-violence resonate with right-wing men and how the legitimization of these discourses radicalizes them. To approach this process, we configured a discussion group with seven right-wing men (VOX or PP voters).

Three topics were discussed: feminism, gender-violence legislation, and sexual violence. Focusing on their contradictions and dilemmas, we observed how different dynamics of discourse legitimization and systems of moral values appeared. When discussing feminism, participants began by being careful about what to say, but they rapidly renegotiated the censor limits to establish an antifeminist stance. This was reinforced during the legislation topic by silencing the moderate opposition through frontal confrontation. Lastly, when discussing sexual violence, conservative agents disputed the negotiated censor limits to corner antifeminist and macho arguments.

The results show the contradictions and dilemmas of right-wing men when discussing gender. In the group became apparent that gender produced tensions in their positions: On the one hand, gender creates a cleavage between the conservatives and the radical-right. On the other, the ensemble of the discussion moved away from supporting gender-violence policy. Ultimately this shows that gender is not secondary to the Spanish far-right, and neither for the conservatives because what is at stake is their processes of identification and differentiation.

**Jason Luger (Northumbria) Dawn Woolley (Leeds) *Gym bodies, militaritized branding and fascist creeps***

This paper explores the rapid acceleration and viral dissemination of masculine fitness culture. We historically situate the current digitally-networked and gym-built male body, from the advent of physical cultures in the era of The Great Exhibition, to the rapid mainstreaming and growth resulting from the 2008-2009 financial crisis and introduction of social media, to the current triple crisis of Covid 19, right-wing authoritarianism and identity politics (Hakim, 2020; Chow, 2021). We argue that fitness supplements with militaristic, nationalist and violent rhetoric and imagery in their branding and marketing – Merica Labz (US), Grenade (UK) and Chemical Warfare (UK) – suggest that gym-built bodies are signs of a rebellious masculinity. In performing offline and online fitness and bodybuilding culture during Covid 19 lockdowns, deviancy is expressed through societal norms of what are deemed essential, versus non-essential hobbies (Chow, 2021). Secondly, these bodily performers and digital representations, along with the brandscapes that target this lifestyle, allow for a deviant space of masculinity, juxtaposed against the mainstreaming of feminist, queer and non-white identities, perspectives, and perceived power geometries: in other words, a safe space to perform White masculinity (Cornwall et al., 2011; Olou, 2020). Thirdly, we present this space, as a deviant space of class hybridity and fluidity, where the notion or trope of the working-class, industrial militaristic male body is mimetically adopted by users through the

mainstreaming of fitness branding and offline/online gym and body culture (Cornwall et al., 2011; Chow, 2021). Substantively, we suggest that periodic crises in neoliberal society, including the Covid 19 pandemic, and the banality of fitness praxis are helping to catalyse an authoritarian, extremist masculinity.

## **Panel 2: Medicine Man: Media Assemblages of Medicalized Masculinity**

### **Camilla Bruun Eriksen (Southern Denmark) *Men in/and crisis: The cultural narrative of men's midlife crises***

Focusing on the cultural narratives surrounding *men's midlife crises*, this paper will explore the more subtle forms that medicalization takes by broadening and re-orientating the concept of successful ageing away from strictly political, medical or/and sociological discussions of health and ageing and towards cultural representations of masculinity, optimization and the handling of a personal crisis.

### **Mie Birk Jensen & Karen Hvidtfeldt (Southern Denmark) *From medicine to metaphor: Viagra trajectories in Danish media (1998-2018)***

In this paper, we explore how Viagra has circulated in Danish news media over time: Moving from a sensational new pharmaceutical to a metaphorical concept, it functions as a negotiation of the cultural meanings attached to men, objects, and other phenomena. Through this, we emphasize how the impact of Viagra has far exceeded its official remit as a cure for erectile dysfunction, as its circulation in media foregrounds potency as a marker of both masculine failures and successes.

### **Signe Rom Rasmussen (Southern Denmark) *'If you operate on me! I don't need anesthesia 🤔' Or, what can the (male) surgeon body do in networked micro cultures of cosmetic health?***

This paper examines how gendered positionalities are (re)negotiated as cosmetic surgery increasingly becomes an Instagram phenomenon. It pays particular attention to how the self-branding practices and emotional labor of male cosmetic surgeons assemble their masculinity on the platform.

### **Kristian Møller (Southern Denmark) and Alexandra Aldridge (Royal Holloway) *(De)centering cocks: Queer and gay male politics of desire in digital sex parties***

Based on ethnographies in digital sex scenes, this paper considers their sexual scripts and ethics. By comparing scenes led by women and gender diverse people, with those of gay cis men, the paper reveals differences in digital infrastructuring, organisational labour, and audiencing dynamics. Based on readings of different strands in queer sexual theory, we discuss how theories of masculinity operates in and organises the scenes differently.



## **Panel 3: Masculinity in Covid Times**

### **Marcos Bote (Murcia) Agustina Varela-Manograsso (Castilla La Mancha) *Re-spatialization of life and research. Analysing masculinity and old age in Spain during the Pandemic Crisis***

Since SARS-CoV-2 virus spread in early 2020, governments around the world have been forced to declare a state of alarm and the lockdown of practically the entire world's population. This "great lockdown" not only has caused an economic and social crisis, but also has re-signified spaces of life and socialization, permeated by gender difference.

If, as Doreen Massey says, "geography matters to the construction of gender and the fact of geographical variation in gender relations is a significant element in the production and reproduction of both imaginative geographies and uneven development" (Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*. 1994: 2), the experience of confinement and its consequences forces us to rethink the public and private spheres (our cities and homes), as well as the physical and symbolic "borders" that separate them. And they do not affect men and women in the same way, nor do they affect young and old people.

Throughout the last year, it has been studied how the pandemic crisis has exacerbated gender inequality, how it is harming women the most, as evidenced by the greater exposure of women to the virus for performing the most precarious jobs or for being forced to balance work outside the home or teleworking with domestic and care tasks. Also, it has been studied how this health crisis has particularly affected the elderly and made their social discrimination visible. However, not many studies have focused on how the pandemic affect particularly older men. We are interested in analyzing how the transformation of (social) spaces in Spain has affected on men over 65 and their (self-) conception of old age and masculinity, which can transform their way of perceiving and inhabiting gendered spaces. And this study is not immune to the consequences of the pandemic situation. The Covid-19 pandemic has imposed restrictions which has also affected academic and research activities, jeopardizing the implementation of field work in many research projects. When working with aging population, the fear and doubts of participants make it difficult to recruit and bring together people to interview and this also makes it necessary to transform the space of research. This paper aims to show how researchers cope with these limitations and manage to conduct interviews with heterosexual and homosexual older men from different social backgrounds to study their discourses on masculinity and aging, by taking into account how the re-spatialization of participants' lives and of the research transforms both: thinking of masculinity and aging, as well as the process and results of our investigation.

### **Duru Basak Ugurlu (Hacettepe) *The fall of the houses of male solidarity: Transition of spatial experiences of men under pandemic-hit restrictions***

Having been deeply rooted in social and cultural life for centuries though losing its significance nowadays -mostly due to the threat of pandemic- Traditional Turkish Coffeehouses have always been regarded as one of the notable masculine socialization hubs and crucial sites for reproducing masculinities. Invaded by male social actors, these coffeehouses do not only embody considerable nexus among masculinities through providing men-only spatial experiences such as spending "idle" times with gambling or other table games "only allowed to" the male-customers, engaging in "mannish" dialogues ranging from political agenda of the day to personal matters and turning these coffeehouses into male panopticon eyes surveilling the mobility of other subjectivities. But also, more importantly, they are seen as "male

houses”, sacred meeting points for those who seize a chance to retreat from the constraints of daily life, mainly located in the heart of or isolated outskirts of the City. On the one hand, our sense of place and belonging has been subverted dramatically due to the prolonged curfews and partially normalization processes. On the other hand, how we are going to engage in public places still seems ambiguous. Therefore, one cannot help but ask how the agency of masculinities in public spheres has been influenced by the pandemic phenomenon. In this regard, the primary goal of this research is to examine; how regulars of the coffeehouses have dealt with isolation and solitariness away from male solidarity after being confined to private spheres and socially excluded from their peers for a long time. Based on a standpoint theory and focusing on men’s emotions, this study will be conducted through in-depth interviews and using the Ankara, Turkey case.

### **Frank G. Karioris (Pittsburgh) *Finding Joy & Elegy: Poetry from Pandemic***

In amidst the despair, desperation, death, and economic deprivation of the pandemic, poetry – and creative outlets more broadly – have arisen to assist us in both making sense of the world at large, as well as addressing our own struggles during & from these challenges. This essay seeks to put these works into conversation as part of a process - along with quarantine - of seeding, an opportunity to grow new roots & networks.

Drawing from a field of established literary journals and ones established during & explicitly to address the pandemic, the essay aims to begin a process of distilling the ways that even amongst fear and loss we must (and will) find ways to find joy. This requires us to seek out new forms of elegy that elaborate and understand the importance of relations & joys between peoples, and the new relational possibilities that our life holds for us as we move towards a post-pandemic world.

Building on a piece forthcoming in *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association* and a previous presentation on virality, masculinity, and poetry, this presentation will expand the analysis of the poetic forms developed over/during/through the pandemic in looking at the ways that masculinities must – and can – work towards vulnerability, community, and elegiac joy.

## **Panel 4: Diverse Objects, Diverse Methods**

### **Spyros Boviatsis (Independent) *Lost in time: When queer boys (un)become men***

Children carry one of the heaviest burdens: the hope for the future. Through them, parents attempt to achieve immortality and the continuation of (their) world. In contrast to the symbolic treatment of children, in a heteronormative context, homosexuals are associated with mortality, shame and the end of humankind. Thus, when the “innocent” kid identities meet the “stigmatized” homosexual ones, the public sentiment is characterized by bewilderment. But what happens when the “kid” is a “homosexual”? What kind of subjectivity is produced and how family and school affect this production? How can a young boy be both an “innocent”, “asexual” and “heteroromantic” kid and a perverted “faggot”? Through the life narrations of 8 queer Greek men (18-24 years old) we will examine the aforementioned questions and we will see the methods families use to manage the homosexual identities of their children, the role of homosociality in school, the mechanisms proto-gay kids may use to protect themselves and explore their queer identities, and the result of the intersection of two (perceived) polar opposite identities.

**Hongwei Bao (Nottingham) *Performing transnational Chinese female masculinity: Whiskey Chow's performance art***

Female masculinity is often associated with the butch lesbian practice in queer culture and the drag king or female-to-male transgender practice in trans culture. In China, it has a distinct genealogy: from the female-to-male crossdressing performers on classical theatre stage, to the androgynous and heroic 'iron girl' stereotype under state feminism, to the T role in the contemporary *lala*/lesbian communities. This paper examines the representation of female masculinity in the performance art of Whiskey Chow (<https://www.whiskeychow.com/>). Born in China, Chow came to UK to study performance in 2015 and graduated from the Royal College of Art in London in 2017. Since then, Chow has launched her career as a performance artist in Britain. Through a series of live performances, including *Masculinism, Whiskey the Conqueror* (2017), *M.A.C.H.O* (2019), *The Moon is Warmer than the Sun* (2019), Chow interrogates the notion of masculinity, questioning its assumed connection with the male body through a hybrid mode of Chinese and Western, queer, trans and feminist embodiments. In these performances, Chow re-enacts both a trans identity in the Western context and a queer tomboy/androgyny imaginary in Chinese context. Moreover, by drawing on cultural tropes such as the *laosheng* (old male) role in classical Chinese opera, Chow re-enacts a female masculinity not necessarily anchored in the Western trans history and China's socialist history, but in the long history of traditional Chinese culture which is often imagined as queer-and-trans-unfriendly. Drawing on Susan Stryker's notion of 'transing' which brings together both transnationalism and transgender, this paper explores a hybrid form of masculinity performance that is transnational in nature without losing its cultural specificity. Resisting the current trend of separating queer movement, trans movement, and feminism, as well as the essentialist notions of national and cultural identity, Chow's performance art brings them into critical dialogues with each other. This paper argues that, through performance art, Chow performs a transnational Chinese female masculinity.

**Matthew G. Nielson (Michigan) *Reactions to the authenticity of ethnically and sexually diverse men***

Authenticity is related to psychological wellbeing and other positive outcomes such as work performance (meta-analysis: Sutton, 2020). However, the research on authenticity derives from majorly White samples and there are calls for intersectional work that analyzes the experiences of ethnically or sexually diverse people because they experience pressures that differ from White (Molinsky, 2016; Zhang & Noels, 2013) or heterosexual people (Austin, 2016; Riggle et al., 2014). We analyze whether the authenticity of men who identify as ethnic-racial minorities, sexual minorities, and double-minorities (both ethnic-racial and sexual minority) is met with more or less acceptance than that experienced by straight, White men. We analyzed interviews from 31 young adult men from a large US Southwest city ( $M_{age}=23$  years-old;  $SD_{age}=4.20$ ;  $Range_{age}=18-35$ ; White  $n=23$ , Latinx  $n=5$ , and Asian  $n=3$ ; heterosexual  $n=21$ , gay  $n=6$ , bisexual  $n=3$ , pansexual  $n=1$ ; double-minorities  $n=3$ ). Our data challenges past perceptions that minority men experience more constraints in their authentic presentation than straight, White men in two ways: 1) straight, white men also experienced constraints, and 2) minority men experienced authenticity and acceptance from others in ways that nuance what we know about the cultural reception of diverse performances of masculinity.

## Panel 5: Digital Masculinities

### **Jaime Garcia Iglesias (Edinburgh) Neta Yodovich (Haifa) *Cannibal daddy: How did Twitter users negotiate masculinity, kink and abuse in the wake of Armie Hammer's leaked DMs?***

In January 2021, alleged messages by actor Armie Hammer—famed for his performance in the 2017 homoerotic hit movie *Call Me by Your Name*—were leaked online. In these, Hammer describes himself as “100% cannibal” and shares his enjoyment of sexualized violence. The leak generated fiery social media discussions about masculinity, sexuality, kink and abuse. While some saw the criticism of Hammer’s sexual practices as a form of ‘kink shaming’ others saw Hammer as a powerful man, dangerously preying on younger women. At the same time, there were those who sought to make light of the situation by sharing humorous memes about the issue.

Rather than scrutinising the content of Hammer’s alleged messages, this paper explores how sexuality and masculinity are constructed online. More specifically, we ask: how did Twitter users negotiate gender dynamics and masculinity when delineating the boundary between kink and abuse? How was Hammer’s performance in the homoerotic *Call me by Your Name* mobilized in this discussion? And, what role did humor play in these discourses? We remain attentive to the unique characteristics, affordances and limitations, of Twitter and their influence in conversations in line with Paasonen (2018), Gerrard (2018) and Race (2015). We use data scraping to identify the most relevant conversations on Twitter and thematic analysis to explore the negotiations and meanings mobilized in these. This paper provides a snapshot of how masculinity, kink and abuse were negotiated in the wake of homoerotic performances. We argue that discussions were ambivalent between Hammer’s actual messages and the homoerotic character he portrayed in 2017, generating complex narratives about the role of women in his apparent sexuality. Similarly, humorous memes were most frequently used to navigate Hammer’s history and defuse the perceived harm of his practices.

### **Marco Scarcelli (Padova) Cirus Rinaldi (Palermo) *Rearticulating the idea of manosphere. Whatsapp groups as digital idioculture.***

This paper rearticulates the definition of the manosphere by considering everyday male digital media practices as part of a series of peripheral manospheres, connected, often without a clear reference, with the more articulated galaxy that makes up what we now call the manosphere (Ging 2019).

The work focuses on homosocial practices between adolescents (Flood 2008) and how they perform and create masculinity (Mac an Ghail 1994; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2002) inside private WhatsApp groups composed of (heterosexual) guys.

The article is based on the analysis of 36 in-depth interviews with young people aged 15 to 19 who live in different Italian regions. Through the analysis of boys’ narratives, it is possible to explore spaces that are usually difficult to observe—private WhatsApp groups—to bring out the practices of masculinity that intertwine male homosocial relationships with the characteristics and affordances of digital media (Renold et al. 2017; Ringrose & Harvey 2015).

The analysis reveals how the definitions and maintenance of the group, the use of humour, and (what we define) the digital girl-watching maintain and reproduce specific forms of masculinity creating an idioculture (Fine 1987) that we can define digital idioculture, a space that boys retain safe and useful to perform what they

consider a pure masculinity, showing (heterosexual) desire (Adler & Adler 1998; Pascoe 2007; Skelton 2001) and considering women merely as desire object. Despite frequently in the literature scholars speak about hybrid (Bridges & Pascoe 2014; Demetriou 2001) or inclusive (Anderson 2009) masculinities, in the groups that we studied we can easily find a hegemonic and toxic idea of masculinity (Gought, Milnes & Turner-Moore 2019; Toker & Govender, 2017) that deal, frequently unconsciously, with the manosphere sharing with that the same matrix of hate and violence but with different frames that makes more difficult for young men to recognize the toxicity of specific discourses.

### **Broderick Chow (Central) Eero Laine (Buffalo) *British lads hit each other with chair: Viewership, Speculation and Male Affection***

This paper builds on the speculative fan practices of shipping and slash fiction wherein two characters or the performers who play them are rewritten into love stories or sexual fantasies. Fabulation as an artistic strategy indexes the blurry lines of intimacy between fighting and loving in homosocial performances, opening new political and aesthetic relations in otherwise circumscribed social acts. Here we begin from the theoretical implications of re-imagining relations between both characters and performers and the work of spectators in re-interpreting performance documentation. Such rewritten pasts and futures are often developed through close examinations of performances--a shared look, a statement, a touch (or even a punch) signifies much more beyond the moment of performance through the replayability of documentation. We advance this work through a close analysis of a 2015 viral video of [British lads hitting each other with chairs](#) and its consequent reception. The video's troubled boundaries of violence and affection (the lads kiss before one smashes a chair over the other's back) prompted speculation over alternative forms of masculinity it might index or hold open, even as it seemingly adheres to characteristics of traditional or hegemonic masculinity. Such questions are explored by artist and game developer Robert W. Yang's *Hard Lads*, which explores queer love as a "force that honors masculine vulnerability" (Yang 2020). Yang's digital artwork engages fabulation as part of what Eve Sedgwick might call a reparative project; using interactive aesthetics to work through the love for the original video/performance. Thus, we ask how speculative readings of documented homosocial performances can develop strategies that hold open the space of non-confirmation. In doing so, we interrogate the fascination with acts and gestures of affection, tenderness, and love between men, and the concomitant framing or addition of violence as an element in these performances.

## **Panel 6: Representations of Masculinity**

### **Liza Tsaliki (Athens) "Regency masculinity in 21<sup>st</sup> century Shondaland: male erotic desire and racial tropes in *Bridgerton*"**

As Black Lives Matter rise to become a global phenomenon and movement for Black liberation, Netflix's release of the first Shonda Rimes deal on the platform at Christmas 2020, has been met with a mixture of derision with critical acclaim. For some, *Bridgerton* makes us 'reconsider what a costume drama can be' (Lanre Bakare, *The Guardian*, 6.1.2021), either through its equal-opportunities state of undress, the orchestral reimagining of the likes of Ariana Grande, Taylor Swift and Billie Eilish, or its colour-blind/colour conscious casting (*The Guardian* 26.1.2021). It seems, however, that not everybody is convinced by *Bridgerton's* apparent commitment to on-screen racial diversity and find it 'two-dimensional when it comes

to race - more concerned with visibility than reality' (Hannah J Davies, The Guardian, 6.1.2021).

In this paper I am interested in unpacking the representation of masculinity – Black, as well as White – in the first series of *Bridgerton*, as depicted by Rége-Jean Page's dashing 'rake', Simon Bassett, and Jonathan Bailey's Viscount Bridgerton. With an impressive amount of bottom (Viscount Bridgerton's) in its first three minutes, the series has been discussed extensively for the way it has managed to balance on-screen sex scenes equally between male and female characters. Yet, despite the various states of undress we get to see *Bridgerton's* male leads – something that actually upsets the generic conventions of romance/costume drama – there is a lot to be said about the kind of manliness the series preserves for its Black and its White characters. Whether through instances of courting, through family dynamics, or through assumed sexual experience (aka 'rakedom'), '[...] *Bridgerton* fits into a long Hollywood studio tradition ... where films on Black history [...] are funded only when they make white people COMFORTABLE [...]; stories in which whites and Blacks live together in racial harmony: studios love that sh\*t! Hence: the integrated costume drama [...]' (Goldstein Sepinwall, 9.1.2021). As a result, the (Black) Duke is constructed as a very different man from the (White) Viscount - with distinct racial undertones. Here, I intend to offer a critical textual analysis of *Bridgerton* (Series 1), also premised upon the media publicity that engulfed it.

#### **Dr. Gilad Padva (Tel Aviv) Screening monstrous masculinities**

William Friedkin's controversial American horror film *Cruising* (USA 1980) centers on an undercover straight policeman in New York who tries to track down a serial killer in gay leather bars. The young officer, Steve Burns (Al Pacino) goes undercover and tries to attract the murderer. He pretends to be Tom Ford, a gay resident in the Greenwich Village. He begins to integrate in New York's leather bars whereas the murderer continues to pick up his victims in cruising areas of Central Park and the West Village sex clubs. Steve oscillates between his gay masquerade and his private straight life. He frequently visits gay clubs in which he witnesses numerous men engaging together in oral and anal intercourse and brutal sadomasochistic sex acts. The uncovered policeman often admits that his gay masquerade affects him, though, and whenever he needs to revalidate his straightness, he passionately makes love to his devoted girlfriend. Conspicuously, gayness is connoted in this film with ruthless hyper-masculinities, fetishized machismo, perverted brutality, monstrous sadism, grotesque masochism and uninhibited phallic instincts. The deployment of such signifiers of masculinity produces an intricate and intriguingly contradicted "drag macho" who is theatrically demonized and demonically theatricalized. In retrospect, this cinematic *cabinet of curiosities* displays sadomasochistic interrelations between *disguise* and *disgust* in order to fascinate its straight viewers. This screen of monstrous masculinist transformations oscillates between disguise and disgust and it horrifically blurs the boundaries between them, in its presentation of the detective's monstrous performances. The performative masculinities (both gay sadomasochistic masculinities and the New York policemen's homophobic straight masculinities) in *Cruising* perilously demonstrate the intricate interrelations between *carnival* and *cannibal* (Baudrillard, 2011), particularly in regard to penetrative and permeable male bodies, while spectacularly exploring the tragedy of heterosexuality (Ward, 2020) and reconsidering anal anxieties embodied by men's masquerades *and* authenticities.

**Wangtaolue Guo and Jennifer Quist (Alberta) A dildonic assemblage: The paradox of masculinity, desire, and queerness on Chinese reality television's *Yundongba shaonian***

In the summer of 2020, Hunan TV launched a sports/game show called *Yundongba shaonian* [*Game on, Bro*] (运动吧少年). Its promos and posters, featuring athletic jocks and highlighting their chiseled torsos, blatantly promoted the show to the emerging tastes of a spornosexual trend in contemporary China (Cen 2019). Many state-owned media outlets have praised the show for its exciting challenges, reconfiguration of rugged masculinity, and positive energy (Wu 2020). Viewing *Yundongba shaonian* only as a sports-based game show capitalizing on an emerging spornosexual trend while privileging a particular fit, athletic, Euro-American standard of male beauty, however, is both superficial and problematic.

In this paper, we carry out textual and paratextual analyses of *Yundongba shaonian*, with emphasis on the representations and performatives of masculinity, desire, and queerness on the show. Recognizing the complexity of such an unstable triad, we draw inspiration from Paul B. Preciado (2018), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987, 1994), and coin the portmanteau term “*dildonic assemblage*” to theorize a sexual politics encompassing various arrangements of desire, gender, and visibility, a sexual politics in “fabrication” (Preciado 2018, 3) and “postsocialist metamorphosis” (Bao 2020, 5). The show is scrutinized not only as a semiotic discourse created by producers and contestants but also as a rhizomatic fannish event. We argue that *Yundongba shaonian* functions as an ambitious double-ended dildo. It aims to elicit a multiplicity of pleasures—male, female, genderqueer; sensual and sexual—through cultural elements rooted in an anti-queer regime but which ironically penetrate ultrafit “powdered” masculinity to ultimately subvert and complicate discourses that would suppress them.

## **Artist Talk**

**Richard Sawdon Smith (Norwich University of the Arts) Masc for Mask: Reflections of a Daddy on surviving a pandemic**

As I approach my sixth decade, I'm reflecting on my past queer lives and the unknown of the future. Diagnosed HIV+ in 1994 before effective treatment was available, but starting medication in 2005 I have been undetectable ever since. With a normal life expectancy that I thought I might never have, my photographic work plays with this sense of - what now, what next? The work is ever evolving and mutating, so continuing to photograph during the Covid-19 pandemic the prominence of viral contagion again resurfaces but a different spectre. Both haunted by previous lives lived and lives lost, and now witnessing a new language of superheroes not afforded us in the past. The celebration of being double vaccinated against Covid-19, the implication of being 'fit' and 'clean' yet still no vaccination for HIV. Proposing a fluidity and queer temporality to roles played and masculinities exhibited, from the awaked submissive 18yr twink to the mature 58yr body fantasied as dominant Daddy. Dipping into the dressing up box, using those different personas one has performed or been categorised as, to create new and potential different roles, having fun with online profiles. All the time playing with issues of aging, masculinity, gender, identity, sexuality, subjectivity, and everything in between.

## **Panel 7: Style and New Masculinities**

### **Judith Beyer (Wellington) Gucci's New Man: A close reading of gender-fluid masculinities in Alessandro Michele's fashion design**

With his appointment as creative director at Gucci in 2015, Alessandro Michele broke with the brand's look of sleek sophistication and introduced an eccentric, maximalist and ultimately queer approach to fashion. His designs caused a furore in the fashion industry and ushered in a new era of gender fluidity. However, the changing role of gender and more specifically masculinity, in this context remains underexplored academically. Consequently, the paper aims to investigate the evolution and different visions of gender and masculinity in Michele's design. From the red chiffon 'pussy' blouse, sheer lace tops and floral suits to the uncanny 'Cyborg' collection, Alessandro Michele's Gucci represents a reckoning with gender, exposing the slippages, ambiguities and fluid signs of masculinity. Through a comparative analysis of Gucci's fashion collections of the last six years, I believe this paper can shine a light on the way masculinity is constituted and renegotiated in contemporary culture. Fashion then is understood as more than a mirror of culture but a phenomenon that reflects, absorbs and visualises broader social and cultural shifts. This paper also aims to highlight the relevance of fashion in constituting and tackling issues of masculinity in contemporary times of change.

### **Carolyn Becke (Sheffield) Masculinities & dress: an analysis of men's kimono at the coming-of-age day**

This paper aims to contribute to the debate on masculinities in times of change by exploring the role of dress in relation to negotiations of gender expectations and norms in Japan. I will focus on the coming-of-age day (*seijin-no-hi*), a national holiday celebrated annually on the second Monday of January, which marks the transition from childhood into adulthood within the context of Japanese society. To honour the age of majority, young adults are encouraged to attend coming-of-age ceremonies (*seijin-shiki*) which are organised and conducted by local municipalities throughout the country. Dress plays an important role in the event; while clothing in general assists the maintenance of normative gender discourses, it equally provides individuals with the opportunity to negotiate, and even challenge, these ideals. This is especially accurate when it comes to dress for the coming-of-age day. Young men can choose between two main clothing categories; they can either wear a suit, or, alternatively, choose to dress in kimono. As a form of standardised ceremonial wear, suits have for a long time been considered as the standard choice for young men. This is mainly due to the garments' symbolic nature of representing corporate workplace values, such as hard work, self-discipline, aspiration and ambition, principles which are encapsulated in the idealized, post-war figure of the *salaryman*. Influenced by a variety of different factors, Japanese society is slowly changing however. This is reflected in the dress choices of young men who are increasingly opting to wear kimono to the celebration. This paper will investigate different kimono styles worn at the celebration, analyse their origin and appeal for young men, and illustrate the ways in which these modes of dress provide young men with alternative gender discourses to the one surrounding the Japanese *salaryman*.

### **Gallais Catherine (Hull) 'New masculinities': Fatherhood and caring practices in New York City.**

This paper draws on my doctoral research on primary caregiving fathers in the United States. Grounded in 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork in NYC in 2016,



this study looks at fatherhood and masculinities from an intersectional perspective, allowing for an examination of the complexity and diversity of what it means to be a primary caregiving father. My findings show that the ways in which the men make sense of and experience their fatherhood are mediated not only by gender, but also by age, class, race, etc.

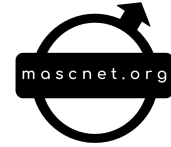
There has been an increase of fathers in the U.S. who are the primary carers of their children, either by choice or because of personal circumstances. A rising number of men for instance became stay-at-home fathers because they lost their jobs after the 2008 recession, an event that affected men's employment more than women's. Despite this, fathers continue to be seen as the second parent, the 'helper' (Doucet, 2009), the 'part-time' parent or the assistant. Drawing on anthropological research, this paper presents rich findings and in-depth analysis of this rising phenomenon, looking at a diverse group of 15 fathers through an intersectional lens, who have chosen, or not, to become primary caregivers.

In a context where hegemonic masculinity is associated with competency, autonomy and control (Seidler, 1989), where fathers have had historically more power to choose their participation in care, and where men are not prepared by society to take care of a child full-time, how are men's masculinities affected when they become primary caregivers? This paper challenges what the literature has written on both the 'new man' (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner, 1994) and on marginalized men or "regressive masculinities" (Bridges and Pascoe, 2005). It introduces two categories, the 'Experts' and the 'Apprentices', where the men draw on different discourses of masculinity to make sense of their capacities as caregivers.

### **Greg Wolfman (Independent) Hollow femininities: The emerging faces of neoliberal masculinities**

Authors from a range of perspectives have argued that the neoliberal subject is coded feminine. While Rosalind Gill has argued that the "ideal disciplinary subject" of neoliberalism is feminine, Jamie Hakim has argued that neoliberalism contains a "feminising axiomatic". There is certainly a range of aspects across the literature on neoliberalism and men that hint at a feminised subject: a reversal of the male gaze, ongoing debates around the feminisation of labour, and, within the workplace, men's adaptation to aesthetic and emotional labours, and the increasing importance of interpersonal relationships. Yet, while the advent of neoliberalism has coincided with a growing presence of women in the public sphere, neoliberal capitalism continues to be dominated by men at most levels. The wider question of this paper is therefore: how have masculinities responded to neoliberalism's feminised subjectivity? I will argue that neoliberal masculinities can be characterised as hybrid masculinities that adopt "hollow femininities", defined as a series of feminine modalities that undermine femininities through a process of commodification that conflates femininity with otherness.

Drawing on interview data with men aged 18-30 in the UK, I will demonstrate how three of these modalities hybridise masculinities. First, I will explore how men attempt to absorb and perform otherness, partly through an aesthetic rejection of masculinity. Second, I will show how participants feminised certain forms of bodily discipline, mostly as a response to a shift in the labour of the subject. And, third, I will explore the contradictory ways in which men rejected binary gender in an effort to distance themselves from masculinities. Each of these draws on feminine modalities as a resource to adapt to changing circumstances, and in doing so, commodify and hollow out femininity.



# Biographies

**Jonathan A. Allan** is Canada Research Chair in Men and Masculinities and Professor at Brandon University. He teaches in the Gender and Women's Studies Program and the Department of English, Drama, and Creative Writing. He is the author of *Reading from Behind: A Cultural Analysis of the Anus, Men, Masculinities, and Popular Romance* and the forthcoming, *Men, Masculinities, and Infertilities* (in John Mercer and Clarissa Smith's Series), and another forthcoming book called, *Uncut: A Cultural Analysis of the Foreskin*. His future work includes a book project called *Snip Snap: A Cultural Analysis of Vasectomy*.

**Duru Basak Ugurlu** holds an English Language and Literature bachelor of arts degree from Hacettepe University. Currently, she is pursuing a Cultural Studies and Media master degree at the same university. Besides, she is writing her thesis about masculinities and how they engage in particular socialization places in the case of Turkey through using the material-discursive and life narrative approach. Her main areas of interest include but not limited to: Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities, Gender and Place Relation, Ethnographic Methods, Sociology of Everyday Life and Emotions.

**Carolyn Becke** is a Sasakawa-funded doctoral researcher at the School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield. Her research is situated at the intersection of Dress and Visual Culture Studies, Japanese Studies, Media Studies, Sociology, and Anthropology. Her PhD thesis analyses kimono culture within contemporary Japanese Society, focusing on dress worn to the coming-of-age celebration to discuss how normative gender ideals are negotiated by individuals and subcultures. Carolyn's wider research interests include the creative industries and popular culture in Japan and East Asia, practice as research and digital humanities.

**Judith Beyer** is a Doctoral Researcher in Fashion and Gender Studies at the College of Creative Arts, Massey University. Her research focuses on the intersection of fashion and culture, and the concept of gender fluidity in contemporary fashion design. Previously she completed her master's degree at the Center for Fashion Studies at Stockholm University. Beyer has participated in international conferences and has worked as a teaching assistant and lecturer for CoCA, Massey University.

**Mie Birk Jensen** is a postdoc at the Department for the Study of Culture, University of Southern Denmark. She received her PhD in Social Science in 2019 from Aarhus University. In her thesis, she examined young adults' experiences with sexual practices when under the influence of alcohol. Her research interests revolve around gender, sexuality and sexual practices, particularly in relation to the consumption of intoxicants and medicine.

**Marcos Bote:** PhD in Sociology by University of Murcia. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology at Universidad de Murcia. His research interest are aging studies, sexuality and social determinants of health. He has been awarded with post-doctoral fellowships at the University of Surrey (Marie Curie-UK),

Portland State University (CajaMadrid, USA) and UCLA (Mec-Fulbright, USA). His papers have been published in international journals such as *Social Science and Medicine*, *PlosOne* and *Sociological Research Online*.

**Spyros Boviatsis** is a social scientist whose areas of interest include gender & sexuality, childhood, education, and refugees. He holds a BA in *Political Science and Public Administration* and a MA in *Education and Human Rights*. He currently works in three European programs, two regarding LGBTQI+ rights and one regarding refugees support. He lives in Piraeus, Greece.

**Camilla Bruun Eriksen** is an assistant professor in the Department for the Study of Culture at the University of Southern Denmark. Using critical disability theory, feminist theory, and affect theory she explores intersections of body norms and politics, health, gender, and sexuality

**Marta Cabezas** is a postdoctoral Marie Curie researcher at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, with a Degree in Law, a PhD in Social Anthropology, and a Specialization in Gender Studies. She is currently researching on gender and far right politics. She is author of the article “Reconquering Spain: Gender and the rise of the nationalist far right” and co-editor of the book “The patriarchal backlash in Europe and the Americas: Neoliberal Authoritarianism and New Right”.

**Broderick Chow** is Reader and Deputy Dean (Interim) at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. **Eero Laine** is the Director of Graduate Studies and assistant professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. Broderick and Eero have co-authored and co-edited several articles and books, including the forthcoming *Sports Plays* and are currently writing *Bros: Obvious Masculinity and Homosocial Performance*.

**Catherine Gallais** is a social anthropologist who specialises in fatherhood and masculinities. She recently finished her thesis at Hull University (November 2019), which focused on full-time fathers in the United States. Her next piece entitled “‘I have a hard time not worrying about my son’: An intersectional analysis of men’s narratives on the meaning and the practice of full-time fatherhood in the United States’ will be published in the upcoming edited collection *Men and their Welfare* with Routledge in 2023. Her interests are centred on issues of social justice, intersectionality, race and racism, childcare and embodiment, always in relation to fathers and men and masculinities.

**Jaime García-Iglesias** holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Manchester and is Mildred Baxter Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Edinburgh, where he explores the relationship between sexual fantasies, internet, and health. He has published extensively on the interface of desire and HIV prevention, with an emphasis on how people negotiate sexuality in their everyday through the internet.

**Dr Hongwei Bao** is an Associate Professor in Media Studies at the University of Nottingham, UK, where he also directs the Centre for Contemporary East Asian Cultural Studies. He holds a PhD in Gender and Cultural Studies from the University of Sydney, Australia. His research primarily focuses on queer cultures in contemporary China, including queer media, film, art and performance. He is the author of *Queer Comrades: Gay Identity and Tongzhi Activism in Postsocialist China* (NIAS Press, 2018), *Queer China: Lesbian and Gay Literature and Visual Culture under Postsocialism* (Routledge, 2020) and *Queer Media in China* (Routledge, 2021).

**Karen Hvidtfeldt** is a professor at the Department for the Study of Culture at the University of Southern Denmark. She works with cultural understandings of health and illness, reproduction, gender and age as embodied, social, and affective aspects of audio-visual, digital and social media as well as in literature, television, and film.

**Frank G. Karioris, PhD** is Visiting Lecturer of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Their work addressing issues of education, sexualities, sociality, and masculinities has been published in journals internationally, including *The Journal of Gender Studies*; *Gender, Place, & Culture*; and *IDS Bulletin*. Their monograph *An Education in Sexuality & Sociality: Heteronormativity on Campus* was released in January 2019 from Lexington Books. Beyond their individual work, they are Co-Editor, with Dr Jonathan A. Allan and Dr Chris Haywood, of the peer-reviewed journal *the Journal of Bodies, Sexualities, and Masculinities* (published by Berghahn).

**Jason Luger** is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Northumbria University. His research focuses on the social and political productions of networked urban space, and the linkages between online and offline identity formation and spatial practices, with an emphasis on the far-right and authoritarianism, masculinities, and the changing cultural dynamics between cities and their hinterlands. His doctoral work (2016) explored grassroots activism and public space in authoritarian contexts. Recent publications include a special issue in *Territory, Politics, Governance* on 'Planetary Illiberal Geographies' in 2020, and a forthcoming special issue (with Loretta Lees) in *Urban Geography* on urban public space.

**Kristian Møller** is a postdoctoral researcher with the Digital Design Department at the IT University of Copenhagen. He researches how LGBTQ sexuality is platformed, and has published on dating/hook-up apps, domestication, recreational drug use, and digital ethics and ethnography.

**Michael Nebeling Petersen**, Associate Professor at the Center for Gender, Sexuality and Difference at The Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics at The University of Copenhagen. His research centres gender, race, nation and sexuality, in particular homosexual culture and citizenship, new technologies of reproduction, and kinship as well as digital media and mediated cultures of intimacy.

**Matthew Nielson** is a postdoctoral research fellow funded by the NICHD T32 post-doctoral research fellowship in Developmental Science at the University of Michigan. His research focuses on gender identity development using a bioecological framework. During his masters and PhD program he focused on the socialization of pressure to conform to gender norms, the outcome of acquiescing to or rebelling against this pressure, and how these processes might change over time. In his current work, he is adding to those research aims by including a biological focus (e.g., what role do hormones play in developing gender identity) as well as an intraindividual focus using Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) methods. When not working on school things he is generally cooking, running, or reading novels (always happy for good book recommendations)!

**Dr. Gilad Padva** is a scholar and lecturer in film studies, men's studies and queer theory. He is the author of *Straight Skin, Gay Masks and Pretending to Be Gay on Screen* (Routledge, 2020) and *Queer Nostalgia in Cinema and Pop Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). He is the co-editor of *Leisure and Cultural Change in Israeli Society* (Routledge, 2020), *Intimate Relationships in Cinema, Literature and*

*Visual Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), and *Sensational Pleasures in Cinema, Literature and Visual Culture: The Phallic Eye* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Dr. Padva publishes extensively in peer-reviewed journals, edited volumes, and international encyclopedias. Dr. Padva currently works for the Graduate Program in Women's and Gender Studies with NCJW at Tel Aviv University where he teaches Men's Studies and popular culture.

**Alexandre Pichel-Vázquez** is a predoctoral researcher at Universitat Oberta de Catalunya and a member of the research group MEDUSA. He holds a BA in Political Science and two MAs in Communication and in Gender Studies. His work focuses on how the different interactions between gender, body, and affects are held in the Spanish extreme-right and the Catalan secessionist left.

**Cirus Rinaldi** is a senior lecturer in sociology of law, deviance, and social change in the Department of Cultures and Societies at the University of Palermo, Italy. His main research areas cover theories of deviance and crime, masculinity and violence, LGBT studies, and ethnography of deviance. Among his latest publications are *Diventare normali: Teorie analisi e applicazioni interazioniste della devianza e del crimine* [Becoming normal: Interactionist theories and analysis on deviance and crime] (McGraw-Hill, 2016) and *Maschilità, devianze, crimine* [Masculinities, deviance, crime] (Meltemi, 2018). He coordinates the activities of the Interdisciplinary Lab for the Research on Bodies, Rights and Conflicts, University of Palermo.

**Signe Rom Rasmussen** is a PhD student at the Department for the Study of Culture, University of Southern Denmark. Her research centers men's increasing use of medical cosmetic technologies, how the cosmetically enhanced male body emerges through processes of mediatisation in contemporary culture, the self-branding of cosmetic surgeons on social media platforms, as well as the narrative accounts of men who frequently have cosmetic treatments.

**Richard Sawdon-Smith** is Professor of Photography and Dean of Arts & Media at Norwich University of the Arts, UK. On the Editorial Advisory Panel of *Journal of Photography & Culture*, Patron of Norwich Film Festival, and Trustee of the Council for Higher Education in Art & Design. Previously a Board Member of bookRoom Press and Editorial Advisory Panel of Mustard TV, Norwich. He is a winner of the National Portrait Gallery Photographic Portrait Award; Co-editor of *Langford's Basic Photography* and *The Book is Alive!* His work is published and exhibited internationally.

**Cosimo Marco Scarcelli** is a tenure track Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Education and Applied Psychology at the University of Padua where he teaches Sociology of Digital Media and Digital Culture and Society. His research interests deal with digital media with a focus on identities, young people, intimacy, gender, sexuality, digital literacy and media education. Since 2018 he has chaired the Gender, Sexuality and Communication section of ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association).

**Elizabeth Short** is an artist and writer based in the North of England. She has performed in a variety of contexts and collaborations under several names, including NPA, The New Aktionists and Nick Kilby, both nationally and internationally for over a decade. She graduated in 2009 from Leeds Metropolitan College with a first class BA (hons) in Contemporary Performance Practice. Elizabeth undertook and completed an MRes at Leicestershire De Montfort University 2015, researching modern forms of spiritual practice and the transpersonal witness. Short has previously worked as a producer and curator, including the State of Magick/ The Magickal State in 2014, a

two day conference and symposium that studied the intersections of spiritual praxis and art.

**Liza Tsaliki** is Professor in 'Information Society, Politics and Popular Culture' at the Department of Communication and Media Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She has conducted research and written about political engagement; activism; celebrity culture; gender and technology; the cultures of pornography; children/youth and the sexualization debate; children/youth and media; popular culture; post feminism, body aesthetics and motherhood; celebrity motherhood; fitness culture. She currently sits at the editorial board of Information, Communication and Society, and Convergence, and is one of the commentaries editors for the Journal of Media and Cultural Politics. For more detail about her publications, please visit <https://tsalikiliza.wordpress.com/>

**Agustina Varela-Manograsso** is a post-doctoral researcher at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (MASCAGE Project. Gendering Age: Representations of Masculinities and Ageing in Contemporary European Literatures and Cinemas). She holds a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Murcia and she has been a predoctoral researcher in a gender European project (MISEAL project) at de University of Hull (UK). During her undergraduate and postgraduate studies, she has been awarded with fellowships to study at the University of Salamanca (Spain), the National University of Córdoba (Argentina); the University of Hull (UK); the Free University of Berlin (Germany) and Bard College (New York, The United States).

**Greg Wolfman** recently completed his PhD at the University of Huddersfield exploring how the expected capabilities of neoliberal subjectivity come into tension with the masculine subject, producing a series of contradictory subject positions and contributing to the proliferation of men's lifestyles now on offer. His research is interested generally in placing men and masculinities in a neoliberal context, and the changes and adaptations men have been forced to confront as a result, empirically as well as in cultural representations.

**Dawn Woolley** is an artist and research fellow at Leeds Arts University. She completed an MA in Photography (2008) and PhD in Fine Art (2017) at the Royal College of Art. Her research examines contemporary consumerism and the commodified construction of gendered bodies. Recent exhibitions include; "Consumed: Stilled Lives" Perth Centre for Photography, Australia, (2021), "Dance for Good & Exercise Your Rights" Public Space One gallery, Iowa City, (Hard Stop 2020), and "Consumed: Stilled Lives" Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds (2019). Her book *Consuming the Body: Capitalism, Social Media and Commodification* is due to be published in 2021 by I B Tauris.

**Dr Neta Yodovich** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Haifa, studying cultural policy in a research project funded by Horizon 2020. She completed her PhD in Sociology from the University of Manchester in 2020 after studying women's reconciliation of science fiction fandom and feminism. Her previous papers about female fans and representations of singlehood in popular culture are published in Sociology, Women's Studies in Communication and European Journal of Women's Studies. Her academic interests include fan studies, identity, feminism, and popular culture.