

**Call for Papers: Cultural Representations of Masculinities: Models and Counter-Models
in the English-Speaking World**

**Appel à communications : JE Représentations culturelles des masculinités : modèles et
contre-modèles dans le monde anglophone**

12 May 2023, University of Strasbourg

In the words of Judith Butler, gender is “instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*” (140, author’s emphasis). In her foundational work *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Butler focuses mostly on gender performance and femininity, though the concept is applied to both sides of the socially constructed binary. Anticipating Butler’s theorization of the importance of performance within the social existence of gender, literary critic Nancy Armstrong emphasizes the link between cultural representations of gender in literary texts. For Armstrong, fiction functions “both as the document and as the agency of cultural history” (23). Following this assessment, this conference proposes to analyze cultural representations of masculinities, working under the assumption that cultural artifacts, including but not limited to fiction, are “a matter of *meaning*: not meanings as free-floating ideas or as ideals embodied in texts but as part of lived experience, shaping social practice,” in a cultural studies approach (Hall 40).

Such studies on the constructed nature and varying definitions of different ideals of femininity alongside transgressions of these models through cultural objects have been increasingly common since the advent of feminist criticism in the 1970s, and we are looking to shift the focus to cultural representations of masculinities. Such a focus was marginally undertaken in the same time period, underlining the relational nature of the concepts of masculinity and femininity (Connell 28, 43). However, although hegemonic masculinity plays a central role in setting up an oppositional binary with the subordinately-constructed concept of femininity (the perpetual ‘other?’) - thus enforcing patriarchal power relations - it also defines itself against a range of subordinate or non-hegemonic masculinities, which often intersect with other considerations/categories/identities such as race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation. (Val de Almeida, 2000). The dynamics between hegemonic models of masculinity, counter-models of masculinity and models of femininity vary according to the historical period and cultural context, and warrant further study. Masculinities studies is a growing field of inquiry, to which this study day aims to contribute. Papers from all geographical areas within the English-speaking world are welcome, across all time periods. Given that conceptions of masculinity are “inherently historical,” prone to change according to the shifts in the “conditions for the defence of patriarchy,” we are particularly interested in tracing a wide range of masculinities, and their relation to their hegemonic manifestation within their specific contexts (Connell 43, 77).

We invite papers especially on, but not limited to, the following topics:

- . Representations of masculinity/ies in literature, the media and creative industries (music, cinema, tv series, visual arts, performance arts...)
- . History/ies and geography/ies of masculinity/ies
- . Masculinity/ies in sports, education, ...
- . Performing masculinity/ies, gender bending, queer masculinities
- . Hegemonic and non-hegemonic / 'subordinate' masculinities
- . Ecomasculinities, Postcolonial masculinities, ...
- . Masculinity/ies and the body

Paper proposals (300 words, in English or in French), along with a short biography, should be sent to chloe.bour-lang4@etu.unistra.fr, t.heron@unistra.fr, and jmisset@unistra.fr by 6 January 2023.

Bibliography

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Landreau, John and Nelson Rodriguez. *Queer Masculinities: A Critical Reader in Education*. Springer Science and Business, 2011.

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