

► **Women and the Challenge of Power. Gender, Environment, and Power in *Borgen* and *Occupied***

Damien Tissot

Environmental issues are now a key social and political concern in Europe. Yet are environmental activists the new heroes and heroines of the 21st century? To answer this question, this article examines two TV series, *Borgen* and *Occupied*, and in particular the careers of their main characters, Birgitta Nyborg and Anita Rygh. Although they are not ecofeminist activists, an ecofeminist critical framework does bring to light the structure and contradictions of the discourses in which these two women are caught. The article examines how the characters embrace and negotiate power in patriarchal institutions, how they ethically organize private and public spheres, and how they redefine the gendered rationales of territorial and national identity. The characters do not embody a model or ethic, but they do have an ethical dimension, insofar as they reveal to the viewer the concurrent, opposed or conflicting moral imperatives they have to compose with in leading their lives.

GENDER – ECOFEMINISM – CARE ETHICS – FILM

► **Reimagining Womanhood: Analyzing Female Representation in Contemporary Russian Series**

Tatsiana Zhurauliova and Anastasia Krutikova

Since the early 2000s, there has been a growing number of Russian TV series that prominently feature complex female characters, offering a distinct vision of womanhood and femininity that is specific to the post-Soviet society. Taking as a point of departure three recent series—*Two Hills* (*Dva holma*), *An Ordinary Woman* (*Obyčnaja žensina*), and *Sleepers* (*Spjašie*)—this paper explores how female representation in contemporary Russian television serves not just as a mirror reflecting societal attitudes, but also as a battleground for larger ideological struggles in a nation under authoritarian rule. By discussing the evolving televisual landscape in the broader sociopolitical context of post-2012 Russia, the analysis sheds light on the intricate intersections of gender politics within the current Russian political and media context.

TELEVISION SERIES – MEDIA – GENDER POLITICS – RUSSIA – POPULISM

► **Being Female, Black and Queer: Colorblind Casting and Intersectional Feminism in *How to Get away with Murder***

Franziska Humphreys

In the series *How to Get Away with Murder* (2014-2020), the story of Annalise Keating, a brilliant and unscrupulous lawyer, dramatizes the complex connections between issues of gender, race, and transgenerational trauma. Drawing on three iconic scenes evoking black womanhood through hair care, this article examines the ways in which the series contributes to establishing permanent shifts in the aesthetics and production conditions of American television toward an intersectional feminist approach. In this context, the article analyzes the strategy of colorblind casting as an element of a post-racial ideology or an innovative approach to identification and visibility through the overrepresentation of racialized minorities.

BLACK FEMININITY – RACE – QUEERNESS – UNITED STATES – INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

## ► **Autistic Femininity in TV Series. The Figure of the Genius, Ableist Romances and the Absent Mother**

**Adrien Primerano**

*Astrid et Raphaëlle* and *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* are two series featuring autistic female characters. From an intersectional perspective, this article aims to show the ambivalence of these representations, which derive from the use of a female version of the techno-autistic male figure, as well as from a representation of romantic relationships based on the male figure of the prince charming and the enforcement of ableist norms in couples. Finally, the absence of mothers refers to an antifeminist discourse of maternal guilt.

AUTISM – TV SERIES – VALIDISM

## ► **The paradoxical empowerment of the female loser in comedy series *Fleabag* and *Chewing Gum***

**Elena Defay-Thibaud**

The loser figure has been a fixture in comedies for over thirty years now, for example the clumsy and luckless Pierre Richard in *La Chèvre* (English title *Knock on Wood*), or Jeff Bridges playing a slacker in *The Big Lebowski*. Yet there is no denying that this figure is unequally represented in fiction: what can be said about the presence of the female loser on screen? Using narratological tools, this article examines the mediological and feminist implications of the female loser by looking at the *Fleabag* and *Chewing-Gum* TV series, which feature their own paradigm of empowerment at the heart of their narratives.

FEMINISM – NARRATOLOGY – POP CULTURE – TV SERIES – ENGLISH SERIES

## ► **Teenage femininities in crisis - Trajectories and social experiments of the main characters in *Euphoria***

**Tatiana Daligault**

Female characters in the teen drama series *Euphoria* grow and evolve over the course of narrative arcs, taking on scripted acts as stages on the journey to adulthood. The series looks at the multiplicity of femininities and their relationships, using the associated crises they provoke for the characters as a cross-cutting theme. Using a sociological approach, the article objectifies the social groups to which the six main characters belong, tracing their trajectories, ordeals and social experiences based on a study of the series' two seasons to date. This approach allows to question current constructions of teenage femininities.

SOCIOLOGY – TEEN DRAMA – EUPHORIA – ADOLESCENCE – CRISES – FEMININITY – HEROINES

## ► **Out of the Kryptonite Closet: The Rise of *SuperCorp* through Prosumer Power**

**Christina Dokou**

Though otherwise mediocre, the CW Network television series *Supergirl* (2015-2021), chronicling the adventures of Superman's cousin, gained prominence for powerfully challenging the comic-universe canon of the titular heroine's sexuality, albeit unintentionally. When, during Season 2, the show cast Katie McGrath as Lena Luthor (the good sister of Superman's

arch-nemesis, Lex Luthor), they did not expect that the Irish actress's strong lesbian appeal would transform the friendship scripted between her and Kara Danvers/Supergirl into something immediately perceived by fans and viewers—even non-LGBTIQ+ ones—as a deeply romantic relationship. Encouraged by the strong queer following of the show, who boosted ratings spectacularly, Supergirl writers began cultivating this alternative subtextual scenario, upgrading Kara and Lena's original short encounter into the main plot axis of the entire show. While, however, fans (rightly) clamored, seeing the two women's interactions, that "there is no heterosexual explanation for this" and demanded that their romance—and Supergirl's bisexuality—be acknowledged as canon in both the CW and the DC universes, the writers and producers of the show insisted at constantly gaslighting such expectations by either pairing Lena or Kara with male suitors or reiterating, to the point of absurdity, their status as "friends," thus eliciting accusations of shameless queerbaiting. The article chronicles the development of "SuperCorp" (the joint moniker of Lena and Kara's relationship) as a dominant plotline even beyond the show through the "prosumptive" (to use Alvin Toffler's term) influence of queer fandom; it further hails "SuperCorp" as a sign of current cultural inclusiveness for queer/minority characters, but also of social media culture granting a creative voice to fans that in the past were merely passive viewers.

SUPergirl – SUPercorp – PROsumption – QUEER SHAME – FANDOM

### ► **Angela McRobbie. Thinking gender and feminism in the age of neoliberalism**

**Delphine Chedaleux**

This article reviews the work of Angela McRobbie, a British sociologist and leading figure in feminist cultural studies. Since the 1970s, she has been analyzing neoliberal capitalism, the material and ideological production of femininity and its subjective dimensions. This article focuses on the most empirical part of her work, concentrating on three objects she holds dear: cultures of femininity among working-class teenage girls, post-feminism, and fashion.

FEMINIST CULTURAL STUDIES – FEMININITIES – POST-FEMINISM – FASHION – NEOLIBERALISM

### ► **Sex workers in Lomé facing Covid-19. Multiple vulnerabilities and strategies**

**Ayité Mawussi, Florence Tagodoe and Koffi Kpotchou**

The Covid-19 pandemic and curfew measures have significantly affected sex workers in Lomé. This article examines the effects of the health crisis on their activity. It shows that the curfew has worsened their work and increased their economic vulnerability. Within this context, most sex workers, even if they know the consequences, continue to engage in risky behavior, while others deny the existence of the disease. Some have migrated their sex work to online social media, while others have started a process of professional reconversion or continue to see only their regular clients. These strategies depend on the resources of each individual.

### ► **Gender and race in hospitality practices: when white women host black men**

**Evangéline Masson-Diez, Oriane Sebillotte and Marjorie**

**Gerbier-Aublanc**

Since 2015, individual and collective initiatives have been developing to address the emergency or lack of institutional responses to the situation of exiles. They take the form of food distributions, provision of administrative and legal support, and more recently, hosting exiles in one's own home. Our socio-ethnographic fieldwork shows that the hosted exiles are mainly men from sub-Saharan Africa, while white women are over-represented among the hosts. In light of this situation, this article examines how gender, race and age shape the everyday experience of hospitality. The protagonists involved in hosting, in their interactions, aim to normalize and make hospitality possible, by negotiating, on the one hand, their relations with otherness, and, on the other hand, the seductive relationships that often emerge out of sharing a home and intimacy.

PRIVATE HOSPITALITY - EXILES - SEXUALIZATION - RACE - GENDER