



METROPOLITAN MASCULINITIES

PROGRAMME

20.00 Thursday, 28 Nov.: Conference warming at [Goldkante](https://goldkante.org/)
Alte Hattinger Straße 22, 44789 Bochum (<https://goldkante.org/>)
(drinks only)

FRIDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2019

09.30-10.00 Registration, coffee/tea

10.00-10.30 WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Burkhard Niederhoff (Dean of the Faculty of Philology)
Heike Steinhoff and Cornelia Wächter (convenors)
(Cinema)

10.30-11.30 KEYNOTE: JACK HALBERSTAM

Unbuilding Gender: Trans/Masculinity and the Work of Gordon
Matta-Clark
Chair: Heike Steinhoff
(Cinema)

11.30-12.00 Coffee/tea

12.00-13.30 QUEER SPACES AND PRACTICES

Chair: Anette Pankratz
(Cinema)

"We're all just bodies in space": Skateboarding as a Queer
Practice

Konstantin Butz

Gay Hunting Grounds: Virtual Spaces and Reductive Identities of
Homosexual Men in Metropolitan Areas

Christian Lenz

Gay by Design: Memorials, History, and Identity

Wayde Brown

13.30-14.30 Lunch (Humanitäre Solidarität Middle East e.V.)



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14.30-16.00

QUEER MASCULINITIES

Chair: Simon Dickel
(Upstairs)

Substance Misuse and
Struggles with Sexual Desire
and Identity

Elisabeth Punzi

Traffic Signals and
Transgenders: Contesting
Traditional Masculinities

Neha Tyagi

Male Bodies Dancing on
Counter Tops: Secrets on
Display

Carsten Junker

ART, MUSIC AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Chair: Maximiliane Brand
(Cinema)

A City at Work: Blue-Collar
Masculinity in Clyde Hare's
Pittsburgh Photography

Susann Köhler

Framing the Ends: Estate
Spaces and the Male Black
Body in Audiovisual Grime

Culture

Julian Wacker

16.00-16.30

Coffee/tea

16.30-17.30

URBAN FOOD CULTURES

Chair: Dietmar Meinel
(Upstairs)

Barista, barista, (anti-)capitalista?: White Masculinity, Coffee
Connoisseurship, and the Urban Café

Maria Sulimma

Narrating Culinary Masculinities: The New Chef, Neoliberalism
and the City

Christoph Singer

19.30

CONFERENCE DINNER

at **Rotunde**

Konrad-Adenauer-Platz 3, 44787 Bochum (www.rotunde-bochum.de)



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SATURDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2019

10:00-12:00

SOCIAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVES ON MASCULINITY

Chair: Cornelia Wächter
(Upstairs)

It's a Man's World: Narratives
on the Absence of Working
Women in the Construction
Sector

Abdallah Zouhairi

Latino Boys, Masculinity, and
Neighborhood Violence

Richard Mora

Performing Masculinity in Fela
Kuti's Afrika Shrine-Lagos and
Selected Urban Spaces in
Ibadan

Harriet Omoweh

LITERATURE AND MASCULINITY

Chair: Chris Katzenberg
(Cinema)

The Metropolis in Eugenic

New Women Narratives

Fatima Borrmann

The Brothel in the
Contemporary

Moroccan Novel: Fragmented

Urban Masculinities and
Scattered Hegemonies

Younes Yassni

"Slow as molasses": Old Age
as the Last Frontier in Colum
McCann's *Thirteen Ways of
Looking*

Stela Dujakovic

Raging Machines in the Big
Apple: Hipsters, Yuppies,
Psychopaths

Marcel Hartwig

12.00-13.00

Lunch (Humanitäre Solidarität Middle East e.V.)



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13.00-14.00

LITERATURE, RACE AND ETHNICITY

Chair: Elena Furlanetto
(Cinema)

Black and the City: Black Masculinities between (Non-) Movement, Incarceration, and Vulnerability

Alexandra Hartmann

Refugees and the City: The Construction of Masculinities in Viet Thanh Nguyen's "The Other Man"

Iris-Aya Laemmerhirt

14.00-14.30

Coffee/tea

14.30-16.00

CINEMATIC AND TELEVISUAL MASCULINITIES

Chair: Sebastian Berg
(Cinema)

"Within Cells Interlinked": Metropolitan Cyborg Masculinities in *Blade Runner* and *Blade Runner 2049*

Jan D. Kucharzewski

Tearing Down Metropolis: The Male Superhero and the Fragile City in Film

Maria Verena Peters

Cold Intimacy: Ex-Urban Masculinity

Karin Hoepker

16.00

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Heike Steinhoff and Cornelia Wächter

18:30

Post-conference dinner at **Café Tucholsky**

Viktoriastraße 73, 44787 Bochum (www.cafe-tucholsky.de)



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FATIMA BORRMANN | KU LEUVEN

The Metropolis in Eugenic New Women Narratives

In eugenic thinking around the turn of the twentieth-century, the question of nature versus nurture was far from settled. Although thinkers and writers emphasized the importance of hereditary traits, they also argued that these traits could be influenced, positively and negatively, through setting and social context. Urban spaces were often presented as the main sites of the 'degeneration' of the race. Cities and in particular the 'slums' functioned as the stage for drunkenness, filth, poverty and disease. Women writers in both Germany and Britain blamed these social ills, and the urban environment in which they were set, for corrupting the sexuality and health of men and, hence, endangering the future of the race. In Helen Böhlau's "Muttersehnsucht" (1904) and in Sarah Grand's "Eugenia" (1894), both strongly pronatalist narratives, a degenerated, sterile urban masculinity is contrasted with a healthy, fertile and evolved rural one. The degeneration of urban masculinity results in these novels from a proximity to the lower classes as well as to the realm of culture and art. Depictions of male interactions with prostitutes serve to expose the double moral standard but also the direct physical threat of venereal diseases. The cultivated, highbrow and male artistic sphere is also shown to be barren in its individualism. Rural masculinity is shielded from these urban male indulgences and can thus remain healthy, keeping the promise of regeneration and racial improvement. However, New Women writers not only represent the city as a space of degeneration for men, but also as a site of emancipation for women where they are empowered without being contaminated. Whether fleeing a tyrant husband, starting a new profession or enjoying the freedom of anonymity, these female protagonists experience the city as a site of female empowerment. In my paper, I will read the stories' imagination of the city as a highly paradoxical, gendered space within the larger context of the eugenic theories which these authors also present in their work.

WAYDE BROWN | UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Gay by Design: Memorials, History, and Identity

In 1969, the 'Stonewall Riots' signaled both the emergence of a gay rights movement, and an evolving sense of collective identity for gay men. This identity was primarily presented as an urban experience, and closely related to specific urban spaces, and their use by gay men. Initially, this mostly reflected venues for social and sexual



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interaction: bars, bathhouses, and cruising areas (legendary examples in New York City include the Mineshaft, the Continental Baths, and the piers on the Hudson River). Eventually, the gay presence within major urban areas was represented by 'neighborhoods' – a second wave of urban appropriation (for example, the Castro in San Francisco, and Boystown, in Chicago). In 2016, Christopher Park, the small urban greenspace that witnessed the Stonewall Riots, was designated a national monument, demonstrating a new claim on urban space by gay men, to memorialize events within gay history.

This paper examines designed memorials that use urban space to both engage a gay male audience with a specific historical narrative, AND to challenge the larger community, often in a very physical, experiential way. Most of the urban memorials included in my research 'remember' gay men who died during the AIDS epidemic or gay men sent to concentration camps as part of the Holocaust. While memorials to both stories can be found in many cities worldwide, this paper primarily considers AIDS memorials in New York City, San Francisco, and Vancouver, and Holocaust memorials in Berlin, Amsterdam, and San Francisco. These memorials are not presented as detailed case studies per se, but rather are analyzed within a framework of three criteria. First, the degree to which the memorial forces people to physically engage – in New York and Amsterdam, people must walk through memorials, in Berlin and San Francisco, they must be sought out. Second, the siting of the memorial within the city – in New York, the AIDS memorial is located adjacent to a (former) hospital closely associated with that event, and in Vancouver, near a gay cruise area. Third, the design vocabulary employed, from insistent use of the pink triangle reference, in New York and Amsterdam, to a pointed rebuttal, as in Berlin. The synthesis of this research addresses two questions: how do these memorials use urban space to (re)define a gay collective identity in the twenty-first century, and how do they respond to the larger urban community.

KONSTANTIN BUTZ | UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE

"We're all just bodies in space": Skateboarding as a Queer Practice

The urban culture of skateboarding, at least in its media representations, is still dominated by male (often white, often middle-class) participants. Magazines and videos mainly depict young men who exercise risky maneuvers and perform versions of heroic heteronormative masculinities. The media image of skateboarding remains



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restrictive by neglecting the participation of non-male skateboarders and thus undermining the potential the practice generates for a really free and liberating approach to urban space(s).

Challenging the medial image of skateboarding as a predominantly male sport, in my paper I set out to argue that the activity of skateboarding can and, for that matter, *should* be approached as a decidedly queer practice not only questioning the site-specific settings of urban and suburban topologies but also offering its participants a variety of opportunities to escape normative notions of identity, particularly those relying on gender and age. Drawing on a queer reading of empty swimming pools that J. Jack Halberstam developed in *The Queer Art of Failure* (2011), I will point out to what extent skateboarding, from its first emergence as a (sub-)urban phenomenon of bodily movement, incorporates moments of queer disruption. Combining analyses of concrete skateboard maneuvers with a reading of Tara Jepsen's novel *Like a Dog* (2017) – the story of queer skateboarder Paloma roaming across California in search of skate spots – my paper seeks to highlight the emancipatory potential skateboarding holds for everyone who is interested in alternative ways of moving and living in the city.

Particularly in view of the debut of skateboarding as an official discipline in the 2020 Summer Olympics and the inevitable evaluations and regulations that will follow (a clear separation into national teams of either male or female athletes only being the most obvious), my paper highlights the disruptive and critical potential that characterizes the practice of skateboarding outside such discourses of official sports and competition. It focuses on what I would like to emphasize as the queer roots of skateboarding.

STELA DUJAKOVIC | PADERBORN UNIVERSITY

"Slow as molasses": Old Age as the Last Frontier in Colum McCann's Thirteen Ways of Looking

American culture provides a large amount of strictly formulated scripts for males to define their masculinities in constructed space. And urban centers are one of the settings where hegemonic powers are played out and demonstrated in the ideal masculine body. Exploring narratives of old age, however, exposes how difficult it becomes for aging male characters to conform to hegemonic plots with advancing age. My paper thus argues that contemporary fictional accounts contribute immensely



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to making visible the harsh negotiations of old age and masculinities in the American city and ultimately confront “younger” men with the bio-medical reductions of old age which may encourage them to rethink their understanding of masculinity.

By exploring Colum McCann’s recent literary example, *Thirteen Ways of Looking* (2015), I aim to demonstrate, in line with masculinity studies observations, that while the perception of space alters with advancing age and the need to reconfigure private and public surroundings, aging masculinities experience difficulties in adjusting. This inability to adapt to bio-medical bodily changes, among others, due to the lack of scripts to construct meaningful aging identities, manifests then as a last frontier in American cultural representations of male aging. Part of a male-dominated genre that laments the losses of hegemonic masculine powers and, one could argue, a counterexample to Jonathan Franzen’s falling suburban patriarch in *The Corrections* (2001), McCann’s fictional story offers insight into an affluent Fifth Avenue apartment, where the hegemon in decline becomes increasingly aware of old-age limitations through the manifold perils that New York City holds for the aged. This urban space is thus represented as a giant machinery that appears indomitable and therefore contributes – on an individual level – to the rapid downfall of hegemonic masculinities, which subsequently cannot be upheld and maintained in old age.

JACK HALBERSTAM | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Unbuilding Gender: Trans/Masculinity and the Work of Gordon Matta-Clark

Today, I want to think with you about a new politics of gender and rethink masculinity along the way. If we resituate the gendered body in relation to the emergence of a trans* politics of gender instability, then the older categories of masculinity and femininity must also be rethought. The category of trans* takes the prefix for transitivity and couples it with the asterisk that indicates a wildcard in internet searches; it is a diacritical mark that poses a question to its prefix and stands in for what exceeds the politics of naming. So, to investigate trans* representation, as I will be doing here, is also to propose that something within trans* representations exceeds our current ways of framing gender variance. In keeping with older work of mine from *The Queer Art of Failure*, I will be arguing for the unmaking of the world and in relation to new work on wildness, I will explore anarchic modes of breaking down the structures that currently confine us. The talk will proceed by way of a theory of transgender



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embodiment, a survey of anarchitectural theories and practices from the 1970's and queer anarchitectural concepts of the new masculinities.

ALEXANDRA HARTMANN | PADERBORN UNIVERSITY

Black and the City: Black Masculinities between (Non-)Movement, Incarceration, and Vulnerability

Most American urban landscapes privilege white male bodily movement while restricting, surveilling, and troubling alternative existences in said spaces. This holds particularly true for black men in inner-city neighborhoods who are more likely than any other group in the United States to be detained, incarcerated, or killed. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's phenomenology of being stopped, I read Barry Jenkins' NYC-based film *If Beale Street Could Talk* and Patrisse Khan-Cullors' LA-centered Black Lives Matter memoir *When They Call You a Terrorist* (both 2018) side by side to show how the policing of black men – both literal policing by law enforcement and its cultural equivalents – takes its toll on the individuals and the black community at large, leading to repeated and unjust incarceration as well as distorted and non-normative body schemata. While *Beale Street* deals with a protagonist wrongfully accused of rape, *Terrorist* ponders the psychological harm of police abuse as witnessed in the mental illness of the author's brother.

I argue that both texts serve as counter-narratives / counter-cinema (Jared Sexton) to black masculinity stereotypically conceived by painting the tragic elements that the disruption of black male bodily movement entails and triggers. It is through integrating black feminist thought in their criticism of the intersections of masculinity, race, and space that Jenkins and Khan-Cullors call for a loving and righteous hypervigilance to the plight of black men (and consequently also women) in order to counter the negligent and disregarding hyper-surveillance these people are continuously subjected to. Both promote community activism and organizing as an indispensable element of resistance in the restructuring of the urban landscape so that it might harbor black masculinities in a less fatal and more humane manner. Different as they may be, in *Beale Street* and *Terrorist*, black men are tender, vulnerable, and caring in an urban setting which does not cease to remind them that they do not belong, and instead continuously violates their personal space and rights. Such representations of vulnerability challenge and complicate images of hypermasculinity and criminality so often associated with black masculinity.



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MARCEL HARTWIG | UNIVERSITY OF SIEGEN

Raging Machines in the Big Apple: Hipsters, Yuppies, Psychopaths

Norman Mailer observes in "The White Negro" (1957) "a new breed of adventurers, urban adventurers who drifted out at night looking for action with a black man's code to fit their facts" (n.p.): the urban hipster. As this adventurer constantly codifies "at least for himself, the suppositions on which his inner universe is constructed", Mailer sees in the hipster a "philosophical psychopath" (n.p.). Mailer here marks the psychotic nature of the hipster according to which (s)he negates the conformist social body and replaces it with an artificial desiring machine that (s)he aims at embodying against the communal and equalizing practice of American mainstream culture. When we talk about hipsters today we refer to tastemakers and conspicuous consumers, the darling of the informal economy, a member of what Robert Florida calls "the creative class", the hipster that has become the *altbro*, or today's *Yuccie*. Most generally put, we speak of those who exist right at the intersection of a Venn diagram that separates hipness from consumerism, or in turn material goods that mark hipness from those that mark the mainstream, or black culture's hipsters from white culture's Yuppies. Hipsters, as I will argue in this paper, are a logical outcome of Yuppie culture. Both groups share a common birthplace: New York City.

In order to understand the psychogeography of New York City as a particular male space, both demographics will be looked at as regarding popular culture's representations of their social codes. American culture's darling yuppie, *American Psycho's* (1991) Patrick Bateman, allows a good understanding of the tastes and the aesthetic practice that render the dangers in the demographic of yuppies and their offspring, the hipsters. In 2019, to understand the dynamics of an identity group such as the contemporary hipster seems to be more important than ever. With a former yuppie in the White House and a famous MAGA-hat-sporting pop-culture icon turned hipster as his public sidekick, the various literary traits of Bret Easton Ellis' 'Patrick Bateman' have been manifested in the flesh. In his essay collection *White* (2019), Ellis even thinks about what his Bateman would do today: He would not only vote for the sitting president, he would also use the hipster platform *Instagram* and sport one of Kanye West's Yeezy hoodies (224). This paper will thus take a closer look at *American Psycho* to better understand the social and moral codings of metropolitan hipsters, as exemplified by contemporary ads, Vice magazine, and Kanye West.



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KATRIN HOEPKER | UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA / FAU ERLANGEN-
NUERNBERG

Cold Intimacy: Ex-Urban Masculinity

In US-American cultural productions, TV-series have become one of the major sites of contestation in negotiating gender relations as social practices. Transgressive series like Jil Soloway's *Transparent* (2014-) and *I Love Dick* (2016-17) for Amazon as well as more conventionally framed but women-centered formats like *Big Little Lies* (HBO, 2017-, dir. By Andrea Arnold for season 2), explore the conditions of shifting gender relations. In turn, other shows revert to established genre conventions to form a line of defense (if not of backlash) of traditional masculinity reacting to a much-cited sense of middle-class precariousness, for which crime series and police procedurals such as *Ray Donovan* (Showtime, 2013-) or *Bosch* (Prime Video, 2014-) markedly reference urban sites and noir traditions.

Within the spectrum of recent shows that reflect an intersectional engagement with issues of class and gender, I focus on the emergence of serial narratives and their use of nonurban social landscapes to stage alternate models of performative and complex masculinity. Settings beyond the former "crabgrass frontier" of medial production (bundled around New York City, Chicago, Miami, and especially LA) come to the fore with *Breaking Bad's* shift to New Mexico (AMC, 2008-13), *Sneaky Pete's* (Amazon, 2015-) Connecticut, or the *Ozarks* (Netflix, 2017-) and work with microcosms that diverge from established locales of viewer familiarity. Far from idealizing an idyllic rurality, their "peripheral" scenarios and social economies that starkly contrast the metropolis enable a creative decentering of the heroic male protagonist. I propose specifically a closer reading of *Ozark's* narrative of ex-urban displacement and exposure to discuss hybrid adaptations of masculinity and conflicted viewer identifications; for the show, I argue, is above all marked by forms of "cold intimacy" (Illouz) and an emotional economy of dissociation which is communicated through use of setting and visual aesthetics.

CARSTEN JUNKER | TU DRESDEN

Male Bodies Dancing on Counter Tops: Secrets on Display

Male bodies dancing on counter tops, bodies flaunting what they got. Secrets exposed, secrets on display. Naked bodies not quite, but bodies in sturdy shoes, bodies wearing socks, socks holding dollar bills. Mind you, some dancers are actually



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bespectacled so they can revert the hungry gazes of those who are having a good time on their night out. At the gay strip club: who is watching whom? What transactions are under way where money rules? This is also a narrative of displacement: the night club moved to this place ten years ago, making room at the former location for a baseball stadium, where families with children now go to see games. A new soccer stadium followed, opening next door only last year, with realtors and city officials gearing up to turn this area “into an upscale retail, residential and entertainment district” (Chibbaro Jr.). Other kinds of masculinities on display in the neighborhood now, other kinds of money paid and money made – but that’s a different narrative, or is it?

Taking the conceptual framework of the conference on metropolitan masculinities as my cue, I would like to share field notes I recently started to make and plan to continue to make while back in Washington, DC, during the summer and fall. The city is home to one of the few clubs in the United States that feature “fully nude” dancers who cater to a mostly gay (queer?) cis male crowd. These notes will yield reflections on the embodiment of metropolitan masculinities, those of the dancers and the visitors of the club alike. My field notes will interrogate the nexus between metropolitan masculinities, desire, consumption, intimacy, gay place-making and gay community-building in light of the strictures of capitalist transactions of exchange. The paper also presents an opportunity for me as a literary and cultural studies scholar to methodologically explore the practice of “field noting” as both method and text.

SUSANN KÖHLER | UNIVERSITY OF GÖTTINGEN

A City at Work: Blue-Collar Masculinity in Clyde Hare’s Pittsburgh Photography

Up until the mid-twentieth century, Pittsburgh was a city in US-America’s industrial belt, where the production of steel dominated the local economy and urban development. Blast furnaces and railway lines were located next to multi-ethnic neighborhoods and blue-collar communities. Pittsburgh therefore earned the nickname of a tough and vigorous “steel city.” Its national reputation as an industrial metropolis was deliberately propagated by city boosters, business managers, and local politicians who sponsored advertising campaigns for Pittsburgh’s urban-industrial profile and blue-collar culture. These campaigns were often based on idealized notions of masculine strength, skill, productivity and power. One of the most vivid portrayals was created by local journalist and photographer Clyde Hare who



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documented working environments, as well as construction and steel workers in a stylized iconography of muscle and expertise. Captivated by the process of steel production, Hare stated that “against the massiveness of the mills, the men seem tiny ... and yet you always know that these are big, tough guys in complete control of enormous forces” (54). While his work created a powerful vision of blue-collar labor, it can also be understood as a critical commentary on the looming threat of economic decline and social insecurity that was beginning in the early sixties. In my paper, I will argue that Clyde Hare developed an image of masculine blue-collar vigor and vulnerability in order to uncover the social effects and human cost of deindustrialization in the steel valleys of Pennsylvania and subvert the official city discourse of economic strength and power. I will analyze photographs taken from the late 1950s through the 1970s and situate Hare’s urban documentary photography in a context of the city’s manufacturing history, which includes hard and dangerous working conditions, racial hiring policies, ethnic tensions, and the exploitation of laborers in the mills.

JAN D. KUCHARZEWSKI | UNIVERSITY OF HAMBURG

*‘Within Cells Interlinked’: Metropolitan Cyborg Masculinities in *Blade Runner* and *Blade Runner 2049**

This paper will compare and contrast the gendered constructions of urban spaces in the movie *Blade Runner* (dir. Ridley Scott, 1982) and its sequel *Blade Runner 2049* (dir. Denis Villeneuve, 2017). Since both films explore the nexus of urbanity, masculinity, and hegemony, a comparative analysis will examine if the more than three decades separating the texts are also reflected in their respective cinematic configurations of metropolitan masculinities.

Scott’s *Blade Runner* is set in a dystopian Los Angeles anno 2019 and revolves around the cop Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), who is tasked to terminate escaped cyborgs while having to confront the possibility that he himself might be a so-called “replicant.” Because the plot utilizes a cyborg trope à la Donna Haraway to problematize essentialist notions of personhood, *Blade Runner* is commonly regarded as a ‘postmodern’ text. Yet, this antifoundationalist conceptualization of ‘what it means to be human’ rarely seems to inform the movie’s fairly reactionary identity politics. Scott’s neo-noir vision of L.A. frequently relies on xenophobic and misogynist stereotyping and visually constructs the demographic diversity of the megalopolis in



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terms of exoticist entropy. By focusing on the male flaneur Deckard, *Blade Runner* ultimately reinforces hegemonic hermeneutics of the city-as-text. And even though Deckard is eventually revealed to be a replicant, his actions nevertheless authenticate an ideal of autonomous masculinity reminiscent of the 'regeneration through violence' ideology famously identified in Richard Slotkin's eponymous discussion of American manhood. At the end of *Blade Runner*, Deckard might be a 'fake' human, but he is still a 'real' man.

Villeneuve's sequel positions itself as a meta-commentary on the original, deliberately inverting central motifs and structures of its predecessor: The twist of *Blade Runner* (the protagonist might be a cyborg), is the premise of *Blade Runner 2049* (its protagonist is identified as a cyborg within the first minutes of the film). The movie therefore offers an opportunity for reexamining futuristic discourses of metropolitan masculinities in contemporary American cinema. Concordantly, this paper will discuss the construction of urban masculinity in *Blade Runner 2049* both as a critique and a reiteration of Scott's original. It will be argued that although *Blade Runner 2049* activates post-ironic and postpostmodern theorizations of hegemony and urbanity, the film nevertheless generates a paradoxical narrative of men and the city.

IRIS-AYA LAEMMERHIRT | TU DORTMUND

Refugees and the City: The Construction of Masculinities in Viet Thanh Nguyen's "The Other Man"

Western literature has a long tradition that renders the city as a place that is both promising as well as destructive. Especially since the Industrial Revolution and the urbanization that went along with it, modern literature mainly depicted urban spaces as alluring, yet dangerous and corrupting, ultimately destroying those who seek a better life there. Accordingly, the metropolis in the United States has been dominantly constructed as a masculine space while the narratives revolve around white heterosexual protagonists who either succeed or fail. Yet, in coming out as well as refugee narratives, the city is often imagined as a liberating space that allows those who do not fit the heteronormative framework to develop their identity.

This paper will focus on Viet Thanh Nguyen's short story "The Other Man" and argue that the city of San Francisco allows Liem, a young Vietnamese refugee, to completely reinvent himself. Having escaped from communist post-war Vietnam, he



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moves in with a homosexual couple who act as his local sponsors. In the course of the story, it becomes clear that the young Vietnamese refugee does not only have to face issues of displacement and dislocation but he further starts to come to terms with his male identity when he no longer suppresses his own homosexuality. Focusing on the constructions of different masculinities, which are frequently marginalized in American literature, this paper argues that the short story connects a coming out story with a refugee narrative, while at the same time mirroring and reenacting Western colonial history with the character constellation in the story. Within this context the urban space of San Francisco serves as a new frontier for Liem as he diverges from Asian normative ideas of masculinity. At first sight, it seems that the American city in this short story allows for more complex social relationships and is rendered an inclusive space, where everyone can fulfill his or her American Dream. Yet, at closer scrutiny, it turns out that the city is perceived differently by the different characters and plays an active role in the construction and reproduction of masculine identities. "The Other Man" clearly shows the power of spaces and mindsets connected to them and how they can be both liberating as well as destructive in 21st century America.

CHRISTIAN LENZ | TU DORTMUND

Gay Hunting Grounds: Virtual Spaces and Reductive Identities of Homosexual Men in Metropolitan Areas

Not long ago, many western metropolises had what Ghaziani calls 'Gayborhoods'. Here, non-heterosexual people had the chance to live 'amongst themselves' and find support as well as offers tailored specifically to them. Recently, however, these spaces have lost their importance in the queer community. The main reason can be traced back to the advent of location-based dating apps such as Grindr.

In my talk I want to address the issue of these dating apps and how they have not only created virtual gay spaces but also a shift in the spatial identity formation of gay men. Apps such as Grindr, PlanetRomeo or Scruff have established a heterotopic environment that operates on a virtual level. Whilst being out in the open, gay men do no longer need to draw attention to their homosexuality by wearing an earring in their right lobe. They simply log on to their preferred app, which caters their sexual tastes, and thus they can find like-minded people wherever they are. This results in gay spaces that subvert heterosexual and heteronormative environments due to their simultaneously shared spatiality. Whereas in the last century, gay men had to construct



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their own communities in metropolises, they now do so online. This means that the metropolis which used to be a space of escape for many homosexual men seems to lose its importance. However, gay dating apps can only work in metropolitan areas for they can only function with a large enough pool of users that needs constant replenishment: gay dating apps may not need the metropolis as a place, but they need it as a space.

I aim to show that gay men have created a different closet that has become both more subversive and more reductive at the same time. Dating apps used by gay men in metropolitan areas have created a new form of self-awareness of one's own identity but also of the identity of the spaces surrounding them.

RICHARD MORA | OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE, L.A.

Latino Boys, Masculinity, and Neighborhood Violence

Employing social constructivist theories of gender and sociology of violence literature, this paper examines how and why a group of low-income, USA-born Dominican and Puerto Rican middle-school (grades 6–8, ages 11–14) boys constructed masculine identities. Ethnographic data from a 2.5-year study indicate that the boys utilized their bodies, cultural referents, and bilingualism to delineate masculinity, reiterate dominance, and enact a hypermasculine, heteronormative variant of their ethno-racial identities at school and on the streets of their urban neighborhoods (in the greater metropolitan area of a Northeastern city). The dominant gender practices present in the boys' neighborhoods, and in segments of the broader US, Dominican, and Puerto Rican cultures informed how the boys did masculinity. In the boys' neighborhoods, fights among youth were a regular occurrence, in part because of the local expectation that boys use violence to resolve interpersonal disputes. The boys viewed fighting as both characteristic of localized, urban masculinity and a strategic approach by which to respond to neighborhood violence that was more severe than the violence involved during the physical altercations that occurred at school.

During the sixth grade year, the boys engaged each other in ritualized mock tussles and play fights. Throughout the latter half of the seventh grade year and all of the eighth grade year, the boys engaged in fewer play fights and instead enacted tough personas, invading each other's personal space in an imposing manner – standing stoically with a few inches of another boy and staring intently at him. By the end of their time at middle school, most boys were capable of successfully doing the



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necessary 'emotion work' to mask their fears behind a threatening stoicism that on the streets was part of an 'urban look' – baggy clothes, doo-rags, baseball caps, fashionable sneakers, and hooded sweatshirts. These tough personas, which the boys proactively worked on, met local gendered expectations. The findings contribute to our understanding of how second-generation boys residing in low-income, working-class neighborhoods construct masculinities.

HARRIET OMOWEH | THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

Performing Masculinity in Fela Kuti's Afrikan Shrine: Lagos and Selected Urban Spaces in Ibadan

Scholars of masculinity have long come to the consensus that there are variations to being masculine and have emphasized the need to apprehend and comprehend these various 'masculinities'. However, in line with keeping up with the SDG on gender Equity, scholarship tends to focus more on femininities and its contending issues across different time and spaces. Public Spaces such as Fella Shrine particularly receive special attention as they are often constructed and perceived to be cultural spaces re-enforcing the stereotype of patriarchal masculinity where women are insubordinates, are absent, are performing before a predominantly male audience, etc. (Ayobade 2017, Baba Lola 2018).

Public spaces in general have received less attention with regards to the presence, absence and performance of masculinities within them. What is more, as Felix Engelhardt (2009) rightly observes, "the academic knowledge on masculinities is to a great extent concentrated on masculinities in Western countries". Men in other societies (Muslim, African, Indian) have not been studied sufficiently. Consequently, this study explores the performance of masculinity in selected spaces in Nigeria that have a reputation for being patriarchal in their reproduction of masculinities in order to identify the variant presence across different temporalities, from a diachronic/synchronic dimension, within an Afrocentric context.

Using participant observation and in-depth interviews, the study is conducted at day and night time in four selected spaces, including the popular Fella Kuti's African Shrine, The University of Ibadan Staff Club, the students' cafeteria, and a pub located outside of the University of Ibadan with 30 participants chosen from each space.

The study so far reveals that how masculinity is performed in these spaces has been different across time and remains different across these four spaces. Thus what



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is done to be perceived as manly not only differs within one broad African/Nigerian cultural context but also within the Yoruba ethnic group as a subculture and even at that, temporal disparities are observed at night and day respectively. Age, educational level, media exposure and exposure to other races were identified as strong variables influencing these performances, with the latter being particular observable at Fella Kuti's Afrikan shrine. Performance of masculinity by "other" genders was also largely witnessed in two of these spaces when juxtaposed with the other two.

MARIA VERENA PETERS | UNIVERSITY OF WUPPERTAL

Tearing Down Metropolis: The Male Superhero and the Fragile City in Film

Recent superhero blockbusters such as *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), *Superman Returns* (2006), *Avengers* (2012) and *Age of Ultron* (2016) rely on a creation of spectacle through turning the metropolis into rubble. These orgies of urban destruction have been read as filmic reactions to 9/11 (e.g., Gilmore, Rendell). In this paper, however, I will argue that the trope of the male hero who sacrifices the city to save it (Gilmore) is not specific to post 9/11 film, but predates it (for instance, at the example of *Ghostbusters II* (1989)). Rooting back to the western genre, the male hero already in pre-9/11 films constantly struggles to negotiate his role of caretaker of the feminized city on the one hand (Dittmer) with his hypermasculine force on the other, a conflict linked to the idea of the frontier as the cradle of American masculinity.

While the final conflict between hero and villain can be resolved when the hero's journey comes full circle, the underlying conflict between the hero and the city remains unresolvable in such narratives of urban wreckage – the male hero is, in the end, haunted by questions of responsibility, accountability and financial compensation by city authorities and the community. The hero is exposed as the greatest villain in relation to the urban space, and his entrance is answered by an intensification of measures of control, supervision and regulation. Thus, he is not a nomadic loner by choice who can peacefully ride into an idyllic sunset as the American monomyth suggests, but he turns out to be a virtual outcast of the space he claims to protect.



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ELISABETH PUNZI | UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Substance Misuse and Struggles with Sexual Desire and Identity

This presentation concerns the life story of a man who for many years struggled with substance misuse as well as with his perception of masculinity and sexual orientation. This man, whom I have given the assumed name Albert, participated in a study concerning substance misuse and sexuality that I performed some years ago. I interviewed Albert four times. For Albert, it was important to tell his story so that researchers and practitioners in treatment facilities could understand and acknowledge that substance misuse might be a way to handle, express, and simultaneously shield from unaccepted sexual orientation and questions of masculinity. I will present the urban landscape and spaces that were salient in Albert's struggle to accept himself, his sexual orientation and his attempts to handle questions of masculinity, namely his childhood home and neighbourhood in a socially marginalized area, the streets of Gothenburg, and the spaces of the LGBTQ community in Gothenburg. His struggle will be understood from the perspective of relational psychoanalysis, a contemporary psychoanalytic theory in which questions of gender and recognition are central. From this perspective, sexual orientation is understood as a process that involves experiences of relationships as well as recognition and misrecognition from others. An understanding of oneself, including oneself as a gendered person with a sexual orientation, evolves over time and the individual's self-perception becomes a collage of multiple parts. Difficulties might however evolve if one or several parts, for some reason, cannot be accepted. For Albert, it had been difficult to accept his own perceptions of masculinity and it had also been difficult to accept male intimacy.

When the interview took place, Albert was in his late thirties. He described that both his parents had misused substances and told me that his father had been violent and unreliable. Albert had understood masculinity as either violent and unreliable, or as protective and with full responsibility for family members. The latter was what Albert had strived for in order not to be like his father. It had been difficult for Albert to have intimate relationships with women since he, with his own words, "became overprotective". Simultaneously, it had been difficult to have intimate relationships with men. He expressed that "Where I come from, gay, is the worst thing a person could be". Accordingly, he had strived to deny his sexual orientation, to the extent that



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he for some years was part of an extreme right-wing movement, connected to soccer hooliganism. Alcohol and drugs were central to their violent activities. One of these activities was to assault and beat up gay men in the city of Gothenburg, for example outside gay clubs.

When Albert was in his thirties he did not want to hide himself anymore. He came to self-identify as gay, and presented himself in this way. This process did however not come easily; substances became too important, just as they had been when Albert was part of the right-wing movement. By the time of the interview, Albert had not used substances for some years. In this presentation, I reflect on how Albert and I, during the interview process, understood his binary perception of masculinity, the position of substances in his life, and how the LGBTQ community, after some initial difficulties, became a safe urban space for Albert.

CHRISTOPH SINGER | PADERBORN UNIVERSITY

Narrating Culinary Masculinities: The New Chef, Neoliberalism and the City

Celebrity chefs like the late Antony Bourdain, David Cheng, Action Bronson (New York), Gordon Ramsay (London), Nancy Silverton (Los Angeles), Ivan Orkin (Tokyo) or Matty Matheson (Toronto) not only managed to build and expand their culinary enterprises. More importantly, they created global media empires. Ironically, few of Gordon Ramsay's 5.7 million *Instagram*-followers are likely to ever dine at London's restaurant *Aubergine*, neither will the fans of Rene Redzepi experience the chef's food at Copenhagen's *Noma*. Where, then, lies the appeal of these celebrity chefs?

In this paper I will argue that their celebrity-status is the result of the narratives they are selling rather than their food, narratives which are largely based on affirmations or renegotiations of metropolitan and neo-liberal masculinities. Brita Harmelin, e.g., argues that "the micro-spaces of gourmet restaurants' kitchens and dining rooms can be understood as nurseries for 'nostalgic and conservative masculinities'." (2015) These micro-spaces come with specific rules, expectations and norms that in turn influence trends influencing their metropolitan surroundings. This paper will discuss these narratives as found in a variety of web-series such as "Munchies", "Hot Ones", "The Pizza Show", "Binging with Babish" or Netflix's "Chef Table" as well as the related social-media representations.



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MARIA SULIMMA | UNIVERSITY OF DUISBURG-ESSEN

Barista, barista, (anti-)capitalista?: White Masculinity, Coffee Connoisseurship, and the Urban Café

From TV shows such as *Girls* or *Portlandia*, movies like *Coffee and Cigarettes* (2003), *Café* (2011), or the documentary *Barista* (2015), to Lego's character Larry, the barista, popular culture pays particular attention to who serves us our caffeinated beverages in metropolitan areas. Further, increasingly conversations center around how "the coffee shop is the tip of the iceberg" (Peter Moskowitz, *How to Kill a City*, 2017) of gentrification-like processes of urban transformation. Turning to cultural urban studies such as by Sharon Zukin or Andreas Reckwitz, as well as critical masculinity studies, the proposed paper interrogates how the relatively recent cultural figure of the barista has been positioned as an embodiment of socio-economic neoliberalism, capitalist privatization, and globalization of urban spaces. The specialty coffee industry here invests the profession of the coffee server with a distinctly urban cultural capital clearly distinguished from, for example, the diner waitress offering endless coffee refills. Despite his recentness, the barista, however, seeks to mobilize a nostalgic reference to a 19th century ideal of craftsmanship. Aside from the aforementioned cultural artifacts, the paper particularly interrogates the phenomenon of World Coffee Championships as an idealized expression of the particularly gendered (cis-male), racialized (white), and normatively beautiful and stylish identity of the barista.

NEHA TYAGI | UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

Traffic Signals and Transgenders: Contesting Traditional Masculinities

The underrepresentation and marginalization of the transgender community in India can be seen in the form of spatial restrictions they confront which limits their access to metropolitan spaces and not only confines their rights and freedom but also their possibilities of livelihood. Nonetheless, transgender people are a regular sight at traffic signals across major cities in India and in South Asia, where their begging and demanding money from the passing commuters has become a way of life and subsistence. This very phenomenon, though highlighting the problems of the discrimination and lack of integration which the community face in these societies, at the same time makes the traffic signal a site of transition and of constant flux into what urban theorist Edward Soja calls a 'Third space', a site of social interaction where transgender beggars interact with passing commuters, other sellers on the traffic



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signals and even the traffic officers and convert these sites into spaces that foster relations and interactions among the varied sections of society, which might not interact with one another in a different urban space.

Focusing on these exchanges between transgender people and traditional masculine identities and taking into account the personal narratives of trans people within Indian queer literature, the paper intends to study how these intersections and engagements challenge and contest traditional hegemonic masculinities and how the transgressive queer spatial practices create a plurality of identities and social spaces.

JULIAN WACKER | UNIVERSITY OF MÜNSTER

Framing the Ends: Estate Spaces and the Male Black Body in Audiovisual Grime Culture

Since the early 2000s, grime – a black British musical genre that fuses rap techniques with self-made and fast-paced electronic beats – has arguably evolved from an East London working-class subculture to the protest sound of a generation across the United Kingdom. While the heavy music industry and media coverage do not want to miss out on the popularity of grime icons like Stormzy or Skepta and thus increasingly embrace the genre, its relationship with the British public is contested: From its start, critics have placed grime, and its largely male artistic collective, in a broader narrative that racializes inner-city working-class communities ('feral youth') and the council housing spaces they live in. As such, grime (and more recently one of its generic relatives, UK drill) have and continue to be read as actively perpetuating turf wars, so-called 'black-on-black crime,' and are constructed as artistic proof of an inherent precondition of black men to violence. Today, both estate spaces and the male black body are thus entrapped in a firmly rooted crisis of representation.

Although Jeffrey Boakye rightly asserts that grime provides "[a]nother context for hypermasculinity to assert itself and another trap for males to step blindly into," many grime music videos tackle the stigmatization of black boys and men in Britain. In paying close attention to the specificities of the medium music video, I argue that audiovisual grime culture often self-consciously responds to these discourses and, quite literally, re-frames the juxtaposition of estate spaces and the male black body. In my paper, I will explore how several music videos (including Dizzee Rascal's "Sirens" (2004), Jorja Smith's "Blue Lights" (2018), and Skepta's "Shutdown" (2016)) employ the distinct interplay of sound and image to not only lay bare and criticize these racializing



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discourses that script the male black body as violent Other but to frame empowering counter-narratives. In borrowing the term ‘ends’ that is widely used among London’s estate communities and in grime tracks, my paper proposes to read grime culture as contributing to a distinctly British variant of what Chris Richardson and Hans Arthur Skott-Myhre (*Habitus of the Hood*, 2012) have described as ‘the hood,’ an affirmative conceptualization of marginalized social housing spaces.

YOUNES YASSNI | MOHAMED V UNIVERSITY, RABAT

The Brothel in the Contemporary Moroccan Novel: Fragmented Urban Masculinities and Scattered Hegemonies

Our paper is informed by an attempt to (un)map the uncharted territory of the brothel as a site of fragmented urban masculinities. As the locus of the expression of “deviant” male masexculinities, the brothel constructs and deconstructs hegemonic forms of masculinity traditionally informed by a patriarchal worldview and rooted in various acculturation processes that concur to construct an ideal masculinity. The urban/metropolitan brothel does, however, unsettle these gendered social structures whereby the strictly demarcated lines between public/private, male/female, dominant/subversive are blurred. Interestingly, the very gendered/sexualized performance upon which males construct their identities as virile and potent also lays bare the blindspots of a scattered patriarchal, phallocentric hegemony. Indeed, when performed within the confines of the brothel, sexuality turns into a practice that dilutes male authority and, far from being a site of female submission and male domination, the brothel empowers the articulation of a plethora of herstories as a counter-narrative to male-oriented histories. In this context, through the deployment of the brothel category, we intend to unravel the complex web of empowerment and disempowerment dynamics that cut across urban masculinity in Morocco. We will closely look into the contemporary Moroccan novel to discuss the centrality of the brothel in ushering marginal forms of masculinity that run counter to the visible/dominant representation of male roles in the metropolitan space. Far from being a site of unbridled male sexuality, the brothel unravels the limits of an emasculated masculinity accentuated by the weight of an all-encompassing Islamic tradition that places great emphasis on sexual abstinence and a metropolitan urban existence rigged by alienating socioeconomic forces. Likewise, this urban masculinity crisis is even accentuated by the predominance of notions of *rojoula*, masculinity in Moroccan colloquial Arabic,



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which are partly, if not totally, lodged in a religious discourse that portrays males as bearers of power and authority.

ABDALLAH ZOUHAIRI | UNIVERSITY HASSAN II CASABLANCA

It's a Man's World: Narratives on the Absence of Working Women in the Construction Sector

In this paper, we present narratives about the concept of masculinity in relation to the absence of women in the urban construction and building sites. These narratives are taken from qualitative data of a fieldwork among the construction workers in the city of Casablanca (Morocco). All the interviewed workers were male and all the workers in the observed building sites were also males. As reported by the international literature, the absence of women in the construction sector is confirmed in the case of the construction sector in Morocco. Male workers are explaining the absence of working women in this sector by the physical constraints, the adverse working conditions as painfulness and the bad living conditions in the construction sites. For the workingmen in this sector, a woman can't handle the work and the living conditions in the working sites. Male workers are emphasising that only a "man" can have the capacity to deal and endeavour the dangerous working conditions, to support pain and to deal with other male workers' problems and conflicts in everyday life. The physical force and the endurance of a man are said to be very important for construction work. However, by perpetuating this image of masculinity as the physical capacity to deal with bad and risky working conditions, these workers are also maintaining a stereotype of the good working man who needs to handle heavyweight materials and objects and who do not complain whatever can be the nature of the tasks assigned in the building sites. Such stereotypes are then in favour of a status quo of adverse working conditions in the building sites as such conditions are interiorised as a social norm and as challenging the masculinity as an image and as an identity of any male worker.