

## Call for Abstracts for Issue 9 (Summer 2020)

### Love Politics, Practices, Perspectives

The ninth issue of *On\_Culture* focuses on the concept of love, seeking to address its role in political struggles, cultural theories, and artistic expression. As a concept simultaneously central and marginalized within the humanities and the arts, love has been theorized in various and often contradictory ways. It has been seen as both oppressive and liberational; on the one hand, serving political and economic agendas and, on the other hand, as itself conducive to solidarity within political action. It is the goal of this issue of *On\_Culture* to open-up the complexity presented by “love” and its relevance to cultural discourses within academic debates, the political present and its horizons.

While commonly understood as a personal sentiment, love has long been used as a political tool and analyzed as such within cultural theories. It has been utilized within national communities in order to make people willingly risk their lives for the ‘love of the nation,’ a sentiment similarly present in official political discourses as well as those of nationalist and other hate groups, reframing themselves as acting out of love (Ahmed, 2014). Within feminist theory, the focus on love has been mostly responsive to male dominated research in scientific and philosophical fields which have historically worked to associate women with emotion and sexuality as a way of justifying their oppression (e.g. de Beauvoir, 1949, Firestone, 1970). In a similar vein, love was used in art and theatre since the Renaissance to compromise the narratives of heroic women, who were represented instead as sexual temptresses (Garrard, 1989). These same capacities, simply described as the institutional domination of white, heterosexual men, have also worked to persecute and pathologize those whose private sentiments were seen as a threat to social and religious institutions (Foucault, 1976).

Love has also been largely related to capitalism and modernity, most notably by sociologist Eva Illouz, for whom love is a commodity circulating in a marketplace of consumers with unequal access to its terms and definitions (2012). Political philosophy, by contrast, has theorized love as a subversive rather than oppressive force, conducive to more communal social structures. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt focus on a discussion of universal poverty in order to emphasize love as embedded in forms of solidarity fundamental to political action (2009). Similarly, for Badiou, love can be seen to overcome neoliberal modes of self-interest and individualism in favor of union between people, whether privately or communally (2012).

This issue’s concept of love calls for the analysis of cultural histories and theories, economic relations, institutions and their modes of regulating private spheres. In line with feminist thought, this issue’s theme asks for a politicization of what are considered private practices and their interrelation with broader cultural frameworks. This could take the form of examining the role of love in present debates about abortion and reproductive rights, sexual harassment and the legal system, migration policies and the institution of the family, or within neofascist and other heteronormative actions and discourses. This could also entail a theoretical probing of love and its current uses and representations in literature and the arts.

Further possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Political institutionalizations of love across social contexts and time periods
- Theoretical and historical critiques and surveys of concepts of love (e.g. as presented in feminist, queer, de-colonial theories and political philosophy)
- Love and nationalism (construction of national groups, identities, and actions)
- Love and political action past and present (e.g. forms of solidarity and community)
- Queer interpretations, practices, and perspectives on love
- Economies and the commodification of love in popular culture/mass-media (e.g. admiration of idols/self-objectification and digital platforms/dating apps)
- Absent, obsessive, or abusive love
- Non-human forms of love, towards or between objects, animals, plants, digital entities

If you are interested in having a peer reviewed academic article featured in the next issue, please submit an abstract of 300 words with the article title and a short biographical note to [content@on-culture.org](mailto:content@on-culture.org) (subject line “**Abstract Submission Issue 9**”) **no later than 15 September, 2019**. You will be notified by September 30, 2019 whether your paper proposal has been accepted. The final date for full paper submissions is January 15, 2020.

Please note: *On\_Culture* also features a section devoted to shorter, creative pieces pertaining to each issue topic. These can be interviews, essays, opinion pieces, reviews of exhibitions, analyses of cultural artifacts and events, photo galleries, videos, works of art... and more! These contributions are uploaded on a rolling basis. Interested in contributing? Send your ideas to the Editorial Team at any time: [content@on-culture.org](mailto:content@on-culture.org)

### **About *On\_Culture*: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture**

*On\_Culture: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture* (ISSN: 2366-4142) is a biannual, peer-reviewed academic eJournal created and edited by doctoral researchers, postdocs and professors working at the GCSC. It provides a platform and forum for pursuing and reflecting on the study of culture. It investigates, problematizes and develops key concepts and methods in the field. More often than not, developing such new approaches and emerging topics is a collaborative and collective process. *On\_Culture* is dedicated to fostering such collective processes and the cultural dynamics at work in thinking about and reflecting on culture.

The journal consists of three sections: peer-reviewed academic *\_Articles*, *\_Essays* and *\_Perspectives* such as video clips, interviews and visual statements, which can be submitted on a rolling basis. *On\_Culture* is the result of collaborative processes and emergent structures in the field of e-publishing. *On\_Culture* puts new approaches and emerging topics in the (trans)national study of culture ‘on the line’ and, in so doing, fills the gap\_\_\_\_\_ between ‘on’ and ‘culture.’ There are numerous ways of filling the gap, and the plurality of approaches is something for which we strive with each new issue.

Contributions to the *\_Perspectives* Section are possible at any time, also to previous issues. So if you’re interested into contributing also to one of the previous issues, get in touch with our Editorial Team at [content@on-culture.org](mailto:content@on-culture.org). Please find our Call for Abstracts Archive here: <https://www.on-culture.org/submission/call-for-abstracts-archive/>

Please note: As a commitment to the open access to scholarship, On\_Culture does not charge any Article Processing Charges (APCs) for the publication of your contribution!

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