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# GENDER FORUM

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## Special Issue: Early Career Researchers IV

Edited by  
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## Editorial Deadlines

Spring Issue:

abstracts (October 1),

completed papers (January 1)

Summer Issue:

abstracts (January 1),

completed papers (April 1)

Fall Issue:

abstracts (April 1),

completed papers (July 1)

Early Career Researchers Special Issue:

abstracts (May 1),

completed papers (August 1)

Winter Issue:

abstracts (July 1),

completed papers (October 1)

## About

*Gender forum* is an online, peer reviewed academic journal dedicated to the discussion of gender issues. As an electronic journal, *gender forum* offers a free-of-charge platform for the discussion of gender-related topics in the fields of literary and cultural production, media and the arts as well as politics, the natural sciences, medicine, the law, religion and philosophy. Inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Beate Neumeier in 2002, the quarterly issues of the journal have focused on a multitude of questions from different theoretical perspectives of feminist criticism, queer theory, and masculinity studies. *gender forum* also includes reviews and occasionally interviews, fictional pieces and poetry with a gender studies angle.

Opinions expressed in articles published in *gender forum* are those of individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the editors of *gender forum*.

## Submissions

Target articles should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition) and should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length. Please make sure to number your paragraphs and include a bio-blurb and an abstract of roughly 300 words. Files should be sent as email attachments in Word format. Please send your manuscripts to [gender-forum@uni-koeln.de](mailto:gender-forum@uni-koeln.de).

We always welcome reviews on recent releases in Gender Studies! Submitted reviews should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition), have numbered paragraphs, and should be between 750 and 1,000 words in length. Please note that the reviewed releases ought to be no older than 24 months. In most cases, we are able to secure a review copy for contributors.

## Article Publishing

The journal aims to provide rapid publication of research through a continuous publication model. All submissions are subject to peer review. Articles should not be under review by any other journal when submitted to *Gender forum*.

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There are no submission or page charges, and no colour charges.

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## Editorial

By Laura-Marie von Czarnowsky, University of Cologne

1 While the three previous issues of the Early Career Researchers series of *gender forum* featured a topically diverse collection of essays, the submissions for this year's issue spoke to two particular fields of interest that are currently engaging young academics. One centres on problematic and subversive representations of gender in current and cult TV shows, and the other on the rise of feminist material in science fiction. One half of this issue thus speaks to a recent trend that is continuously gaining ground in scholarly analysis, while the other expands on a well-documented area of research that has its origin in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

2 In "Renegotiating White Male Hegemony in Contemporary Period Fiction: An Analysis of the Television Serials *Copper* and *Hell on Wheels*", Sebastian Probst analyses notions of masculinity in current variations of the Western genre. While both shows were marketed as counter-hegemonic approaches to the dramatization of the American Civil War, both series feature white male protagonists who are portrayed as patriarchal protectors. Probst critically interrogates how the two shows complement their white male main character with a Black male side-kick. While these relationships allow to be read as critical explorations of the subject of racism at the surface level, a more thorough inquiry into their structures and dynamics indicates that they primarily cater to the emotional needs of a white male audience, up to the point of offering a redemption of sorts from the historical guilt of slavery.

3 Angelica de Vido's "‘I Want to be a Macho Man’: Examining Rape Culture, Adolescent Female Sexuality, and the Destabilisation of Gender Binaries in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*" considers in how far the oppressive, essentialist models of gender identity evident in (for instance) *Hell on Wheels* routinely dominate the action and horror genres of screen media. De Vido investigates how the first two seasons of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) destabilise this repressive polarisation through its courageous, commanding female protagonist, who subverts genre norms by adopting the – traditionally male – role of Vampire Slayer. Pointing out how Buffy's relationship with Angel further destabilises traditional heterosexual power relations, De Vido's essay also examines the centrality of rape culture in *Buffy* and its powerful and subversive rewriting of Sharon Marcus' theory of the 'rape script'.

4 The third contribution to this issue's focus on television comes from Dennis Schäfer, whose "Nosferatu Revisited: Monstrous Female Agency in *Penny Dreadful*" offers a subversive reading of female characters in the horror genre. He argues that F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922) constitutes an important filmic intertext that

facilitates a fruitful understanding of the series *Penny Dreadful*'s first episode and its main character Vanessa Ives. Even though almost a hundred years separate one of the prime examples of German expressionist film from this contemporary TV series, the monstrous female agency of Vanessa Ives can be conceptualized and problematized by several narrative and visual congruencies with *Nosferatu*. Analysing the show's female acts of transgression, the essay assesses the critical nature of masculinised female monstrosity on the serial screen and the fruitful possibilities that agency and serialisation might offer.

5 Jonas Neldner maintains the issue's focus on feminist analysis in his essay "'I should have let her die': a Posthuman Future between (Re)-Embodiment and Cyborgian Concepts" when he argues that the depiction of gender roles functions as an important theme in science fiction literature, as it allows for a critical evaluation of stereotypes and underlying disparities. Drawing on C. L. Moore's "No Woman Born" (1944), James Tiptree, Jr.'s "The Girl Who Was Plugged In" (1973) and Shariann Lewitt's "A Real Girl" (1998), Neldner discusses a posthuman state and its effect on traditional gender roles. The futuristic worlds the stories are set in serve to explore science fiction's potentially feminist stance, and offer room for an investigation of the thought-provoking cyborg figure.

6 Christian David Zeitz offers this issue's final contribution. In "Dreaming of Electric Femmes Fatales: Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner: Final Cut* (2007) and Images of Women in Film Noir", he takes up *Blade Runner* as a classic neo-noir, a science fiction film which applies 1940s films noirs' visual style in order to create a dark and dystopian vision of humanity's future. However, this borrowing from film noir is not only limited to visual style, but also applies to *Blade Runner*'s representation of women. Zeitz examines how two female archetypal film noir roles, namely the roles of the *femme fatale* and the *redeemer*, are transposed to science fiction and how they are placed outside of what Lacan calls the Symbolic Order.

7 This fourth issue of gender forum's Early Career Researchers series speaks to young researchers' ability to make significant contributions not only to new fields, but also to established ones, and to offer new ways of engaging with gender representations in literature, film, and television.