1. Violence, intimacy and the black body in Zanele Muholi’s Only Half the Picture (2006)

*Andy Carolin, UNISA, South Africa*

carolas@unisa.ac.za

The paper examines the interdependent significations of sex, race and identity in South Africa in which ‘corrective’ rape and the black, lesbian, working class experience have become mutually defining. The seemingly ubiquitous representations of homophobic violence against the black female body are revealed in the paper through a critical analysis of mainstream media reports. It is within this dominant narrative that I locate Zanele Muholi’s collection of photographs entitled *Only Half the Picture* (2006). Described in *The New York Times* as “the foremost chronicler of black lesbians and transgender people in South Africa”, Muholi is increasingly receiving critical acclaim for her award-winning photography. What distinguishes Muholi’s work from the prevailing representational frame of victimhood is the complex rendering of the body, juxtaposing desire with abjection – simultaneously a site of intimacy and violence. The celebratory eroticism that characterises the collection demands a radical reevaluation of the significance of sex and desire in shaping gendered subjectivities, eschewing the desexualising tendencies of official discourses. I focus on the images in this particular series to show how Muholi disrupts dominant ways of ‘being’ and ‘seeing’ black lesbian women. Foregrounding the materiality of the body, these provocative photographs demand an intersectional reading of contemporary race, gender and class politics in the making of the sexual other.

2. Stuck between home and elsewhere: migration and the construction of “gay” identity in contemporary North African novels

*Gibson Ncube, Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

cnubegibson@yahoo.fr

Migration plays a central role in the construction of “gay” identity in the works of contemporary North African writers such as Rachid O. and Abdellah Taïa (Morocco) as well as Eyet-Chékib Djaziri (Franco-Tunisian). These writers’ novels reflect a fascinating trans-Mediterranean construction of “gay” identity. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the “becoming body”, this paper situates the migrated “gay” body in tandem with embodiment as a continuous process of becoming. This process of becoming is articulated through the manner in which the body frames itself vis-à-vis spatial settings. The novels of O., Taïa and Djaziri present bodies that are perpetually torn between a cherished but homophobic Maghreb and a more liberal yet inauspicious France. In a way, this perpetual movement between the privileged yet “unhomely” North and the homely but restrictive South leads to the emergence of innovative responses to divergently constructed and configured gender and sexual identities. Furthermore, the trans-Mediterranean fluctuation is important in subverting and destabilising essentialising and normalising discourses of ethnicity, sexual and gender identity. This fluctuation will allow for an examination of the manner in which bodies are spatially sexed and gendered on both sides of the Mediterranean. These novels demonstrate how the “gay” Arab-Muslim body has the potential of surpassing the limits of discernible and fixed bodily/identity categories. In this manner, they occupy an interstitial space, or “third space” as proposed by Homi Bhabha. The interstitial space also offers a reimagining and shaping of a broad-spectrum of aesthetic, rhetorical and narrative structures in the novels to be considered.

3. Dialectic of the Text-Context Contest: The Patriarchal Imagination in Nollywood Films

*James Tar Tsaaior, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria*

jtsaaior@smc.edu.ng

As a filmic tradition, Nollywood, the Nigerian video film film culture means many things to many people. To some, it is a veritable site for artistic and cultural production in Nigeria and Africa. To others, Nollywood is a textual event for the communication of cultural nationalism against Euro-American imperialism. In
In this regard, therefore, Nollywood purveys a counter-discursive project against Empire and the dominant regimes of the Western order of knowledge and its epistemic violence against others. This makes Nollywood a nationalist revisionist project against the rhythms of misrepresentations perpetrated by Hollywood and a hostile/violent Western media on Africa and its image. It is also imagined by many as an elemental engagement with the postcolonial political establishment in Nigeria and Africa. To many others also, Nollywood represents a dialogic encounter with history as a memory archive and so functions as a sieve for the negotiation of social hierarchies and formations which underwrite modernity within Nigeria’s postcolonial existence. In other words, this film tradition constitutes a powerful site for the performance of African modernity in an increasingly globalised world order. While this complex of issues validly constitute the furrow which Nollywood elects to plough, it is also important to engage the Nigerian video film tradition as an engendered space where gender and sexual politics is enacted. In specific terms, the paper negotiates the materiality of a gendered modernity in Nollywood films against the backdrop of the ruling ideology present in the patriarchal imagination. Having emerged from a dominantly phallic culture, Nollywood privileges patriarchal ideology and its political assumptions in the name of preserving the cultural sanctity and sovereignty of Africa. This patriarchal hegemony institutes gendered hierarchies and tyrannises other modes of sexualities particularly those that are matriarchal and have a minority provenance and orientation. Using selected Nollywood films as analytic paradigms, the paper will interrogate this patriarchal lineament and argue for a democratic spatiality so that other repressed and silenced sexualities can occupy a space where they can enact their energies.

4. The death of a revolutionary – The gendered modernities of Nelson Mandela and Winnie Mandela

Karin van Marle, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Several authors have reflected on Nelson Mandela in light of modernity. Jonathan Hyslop (2008:112) situates the development of the political thought of Mandela (and Ghandi) within the context of Johannesburg as instantiation as a form of modernity. He contends that both Ghandi and Mandela, although they started out from narrow nationalism famously managed to transcend this to approaches that were inclusive, that embraced humanistic values and that had international relevance. (2008:123) His argument is that their approaches of inclusive nationalism founded on universalist values can be traced to their experience with the metropolitanism and cosmopolitanism of Johannesburg. Rita Barnard (2014:5) describes Mandela as ‘a man of the twentieth century, viewed in its global complexity as an era of a radically incomplete and uneven modernity.’ Daniel Roux (2014:205) in similar vein interprets Mandela within the realm of modernity. Mogobe More in his reflection on Mandela laments the descriptions of Mandela as pacifist and peace-maker and is interested in unearthing Mandela’s radical politics and support of violence. He argues that we should distinguish between a pre-Robben island and a post-Robben island Mandela. How does his take relate to those that praise the modern Mandela – the universalist, the humanist, the cosmopolitan. But even further how could we conceive of Winnie Mandela in light of modernity? Could the same claims be made about her? I will draw amongst others on Njabulo Ndebele’s The cry of Winnie Mandela and Lewis Nkosi’s Mandela’s ego in order to explore these questions.

5. Negotiating modernity through sexual entanglements of the urban, the rural and the international:

Phaswane Mpe’s Welcome to Our Hillbrow

Sanja Nivesjö, Stockholm University, Sweden
sanja.nivesjo@english.su.se

There is a preoccupation with gendered urban geographies as sites where modernity is negotiated. The metropolis is seen as the catalyst and incubator of change and progression against the village as a site of tradition. In this paper I will complicate this image by introducing migration as a construct which challenges the gendered dichotomy between city and village in contemporary African fiction. Looking at
Phaswane Mpe’s novel *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2001), I will explore how migration can showcase the complex entanglements of modernity expressed through sexuality ascribed to the city and the village. Sexuality is the site where conflicting notions of modernity come together and challenge each other in Mpe’s novel. Migration is the force that allows this to happen. The village of Tiragalong defines itself against the urban neighborhood of Hillbrow as a space of tradition and purity where the migrants and sexual deviant practices ascribed to Hillbrow do not exist. Conversely, Hillbrowans see the village as a site of backwards and outmoded customs. Migratory practices bring these spaces and their assigned sexual configurations in contact with each other and with other international locations to complicate senses of belonging and narratives of modernity.

In the end, *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* argues for the impossibility of assigning different notions of progression to different spaces and sexual practices: “You have come to understand that you too are a Hillbrowan. An Alexandrian. A Johannesburger. An Oxfordian. A *Lekwerekwere*, just like those you once held in such contempt. The semen and blood of *Makwerekwere* flows in your Tiragalong and Hillbrow veins” (122–3). Mpe’s novel helps us contemplate the entanglements of how conflicting notions of modernity emerge in different spaces where sexuality becomes the battleground for conceptions of personhood and community.


*Senayon Olaoluwa, University of Ibadan, Nigeria*
samsenayon@gmail.com

Siding with the conceptual assumption that in sexuality discourse, there can be no exclusive affirmation of divisive categories of male and female, this paper contributes to the now burning debate by centralizing cultural, linguistic and spiritual symbolisms which articulate everyday staging of “transgressions” and reinforce the limits of human assumptions of absolute dichotomization in African sexuality discourse. Against this backdrop, the paper privileges everyday and periodic rites of passage among the Ogu-speaking people of South-western Nigeria. It contends that the rites are mediated by human communicative interactions that blur, and in some cases, reverse sexual roles while sometimes investing humanity with neutrality and hermaphroditic orientations, regardless of more popular affirmations to the contrary on the African continent. Relying on an experience of embodied ethnography, I argue that communicative interactions among the Ogu reference the realms of both the spiritual and the secular. Attention is additionally given to interactive and discursive processes that reinforce the necessary interaction of the human and the inanimate, ranging from the environment to the imaginations of divinity both in theistic and pantheistic categorizations. I further argue that the imaginations interface and articulate with parallel symbolisms of transgression in Christian redemptive affirmations. Therefore, while close-reading the textual data that reference the blurring of gender lines in Ogu ontological dynamics, the discussion reinforces how the parallels in Christian spirituality fuse with the indigenous assumptions of sexuality to contest the rigidity of exclusive dichotomization in African and global sexuality discourses.


*William J Spurlin, Brunel University London, United Kingdom*
william.spurlin@brunel.ac.uk

While transnational processes, globalisation, and migratory movement continue to produce multiple forms of biopolitical domination within and across geopolitical borders, the concomitant deconstruction and delocalisation of borders is similarly producing radical transformations of political subjectivity, citizenship, and sovereignty no longer confined to the borders of the nation state. As Ratvica Andrijasevic observes, rather than enclosing geopolitical territories and demarcating a state’s external
edges, borders have become more discontinuous, porous spaces that do not necessarily map onto fixed geographical demarcations.

With this framework in mind, the proposed paper examines how literature and cultural practices in postcolonial francophone North Africa address same-sex desires in a modernising world where long-established traditions pertaining to sexuality and culture are brought into contact with new forms of gender and sexual difference. Specifically, the paper scrutinises representations of same-sex desire and queerness emerging in recent francophone literature from the Maghreb by gay and lesbian authors from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The paper analyses and interrogates issues around linguistic and cultural difference and how these works adopt a translational nature. Authors such as Rachid O., Abdellah Taïa, and Nina Bouraoui foreground translation and narrative reflexivity around incommensurable spaces of queerness in order to index their negotiations of multiple languages, histories, cultures, and audiences. These highly complex textual and political strategies, alongside struggles for sexual subjectivity, respond to the fact that all of the writers considered are now living in diaspora, and that Maghrebian spaces of queerness are now increasingly inflected by globally circulating discourses and embodiments of queerness while simultaneously destabilising cultural norms around gender and sexuality both within North Africa and in the West. The paper will conclude by addressing how migration to the North does not necessarily bring (sexual) liberation, but new forms of (racial) otherness.

8. The multiple and contradictory modernities in *Agaat* by Marlene van Niekerk

*Martina Vitackova, University of Pretoria, South Africa*

m.vitackova@gmail.com

My current research strives to identify a sufficient theoretical tool that would describe women’s writing in post-Apartheid South Africa in its multiplicity and multi-layeredness. Its main object is to demonstrate modernity as simultaneously gendered, localized and subject to time. The key question is how do gender and modernity resonate and take shape in the post-Apartheid women’s writing in South Africa, and can the theories of gender help us understand modernity in these texts and vice versa: can theories of modernity help us understand how gender (i.e. post-Apartheid female subjectivity) is represented in the very same texts.

The question is how literature is contributing to contemporary thinking about modernity, and, in particular, how gender in literature is giving shape to a modernity (or, indeed, modernities) that can no longer be limited to a singular trajectory. We have to be aware of mobility and reflexivity of gender, the intersection of gender and modernity, and importantly: contradictory connections between femininity and modernity. Post-Apartheid time/space of South Africa should be analysed regarding its relation to modernity (striving to and fighting against at the same time), while taking into account that this modernity is essentially gendered. Traditionally, the male-centred theories of modernity have always been the standard, as opposed to the gendered (read: female-centred) margins of modernity. While there definitely is a large scale of representations of “modern femininity” and “female modernities” to map, it is as important to pay attention to women’s critical involvement in the construction of their own modernity, and provide a conceptual vocabulary (Giddens, 1991) for thinking about gendered modernities. An example of this paradoxical clash of modernity with traditions, of (female-centred) gendered modernity can be found in the novel *Agaat* (2004) by Marlene van Niekerk which I will use to illustrate my arguments. The female characters in the novel namely find a way somewhere in-between (Bhabha, 1994), pre-modern, modern and post-modern at the same time.

9. “Poetically Correct?”: Re-thinking Gender and Sexual Identities in Contemporary Malawian Poetry

*Asante Lucy Mtenje, Stellenbosch University, South Africa*
Malawi under Kamuzu Banda was defined as “a contraption of totalitarian power [...] a land of pervasive fear where words were constantly monitored, manipulated, and mutilated,...a state of dull uniformity that criminalized difference, ambiguity, and creativity, an omniscient regime with a divine right to nationalize time and thought, history and the popular will” (Zeleza, 10). Creating a paternal and patronizing relationship between himself and most ordinary people, Banda imposed strict dress and moral codes thus inscribing on Malawian bodies and sexualities new scripts “steeped in the Victorian moralistic, antisexual and body-shame edicts” (Tamale, 16) as well as a complex system of control. The advent of new virtual spaces in the form of social media has gone a long way in rethinking not just the public space but also the construction of gendered and sexed subjectivities. Social media has also ushered in a new regime of visual imagery in which screen culture creates spectacular events just as much as they record them. Under such conditions, state power and its surveillance techniques become more porous and control is more elusive. This paper seeks to examine how the production of poetry from Malawian writing groups in the current democratic dispensation on Facebook and other social media interrogate continuities of imposed gender and sexual identities and how masculinities inflected by various global repertoires are reconstructed through selected poetry.

10. Eat your Cake: Emancipation and Individuality in Storytelling
Chipo Zhou, AFDA (South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance), South Africa
chipomz@gmail.com
In the 20th century, great strides were made to give women a voice, world over, and as in any struggle, there was no shortage of spilt blood. Nevertheless, women’s lives changed radically. Women now have the power to speak for themselves and challenge patriarchal systems, and this has led to postmodern feminist theory evolving to deconstruct gender boundaries. The changing mentalities regarding gender and cultural roles shook the established social dynamics and yet in many places, specifically in Zimbabwe the first battle is far from over.
In this contribution, I explore the position of the Zimbabwean modern woman, who has fallen back to pre-20th century status because, among other reasons, of a general stigma about women propagated by the behaviour of those in the public eye, specifically in the throngs of political power and influence. A situation that has created a woman stifled into silence and submission by physical and emotional prisons, the oppression created by cultural doctrines and the current socio political state of affairs in the country.
This paper seeks to find a solutions within the same patriarchal society that the established system exists, so that women reject the prevailing reality of their conventional religious, traditional and cultural circumstance perpetuated by the doctrinaire politicking using their own stories in screenplays as the raw materials for a radical cultural reconstruction, in effect, giving them a global voice, that they can relate to.

11. Writing the apartheid prison: three memoirs by women political prisoners.
Daniel Roux, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
droux@sun.ac.za
One of the functions of the apartheid prison was to reinscribe notions of separate cultures and discrete races in the face of a mass struggle that attempted to remove these barriers. Thus Fatima Meer, writing about her prison experience, comments:
We were all women, but so classified and separated that we could not be women together: we were divided by the impregnable barriers of law and custom, in addition to race. (209)
The category “woman” seemed to extend the possibility of transcending the prison and the apartheid state’s divisions, and the writers I will discuss in this paper all test the oppositional power of this collective notion. However, the prison also imposed its own notions of a racialised and class-based
femininity, firmly imbricating these notions in the rituals and discipline of the institution. One problem confronted by these prisoners was precisely the problem of extracting the apartheid state’s conception of femininity from an empowering, conscious appropriation of shared womanhood. In this sense, the problems collecting around the use and imposition of the idea of womanhood in the apartheid prison opens up to more general questions concerning the use of a culturally burdened collective concept in the practise of subjectivity and citizenship. On the one hand, “woman” is a contested signifier, a site of struggle. On the other, as I will try to show, it is a sign membership, in Raymond Williams’s sense of the word as “… describing an individual’s positive identification with the society in which he lives.” (2002: 75). Prisoners use the term in positive, strategic (and shifting) terms in order to counter the culture of the prison. The paper attempts to show how the apartheid prison, defined by its curtailment of movement, a place of stasis, can be read as a nexus of interchange where gender is implicated in the production of a particular notion of modernity and global citizenship.

I will discuss three South African prison writers in my conference paper: Caesarina Makhoere, Emma Mashinini and Ruth First.

12. Gender in Media Discourse: A Corpus-Based Analysis of Linguistic Representation of Women in Male-Authored Articles in Nigerian Newspapers

Umar Ahmed, University of Bayreuth, Germany
umar.ahmed@uni-bayreuth.de

Research in African literature and cultural studies has shown that women are often represented less positively. It is also observed that male-writers/authors have the tendency to represent women as weak, subordinate and inferior (see Odejide 1996, Mustapha 2012, etc). While most of these studies provide some insights into the representation of women, the findings are often based on data obtained from sources outside print news media. This article critically examines the many complex and subtle ways in which women are linguistically represented in the Nigerian (English) newspapers. It does so by employing the methods of and insights from Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) and Corpus Linguistics (CL) in analyzing over 200 male-authored newspaper articles on gender and related issues published in five Nigerian national newspapers namely: The Punch, The Guardian, Vanguard, Daily Trust and New Nigerian from 1999 to 2014 (a period that has witnessed an unprecedented surge in the wave of gendered discourses in the Nigerian print news media). Using Lawrence Anthony’s (2014) Antconc version 3.4.3w concordance package, collocation profiles of the two selected key terms; women/woman and men/man are extracted and investigated and results obtained show that women are repeatedly depicted as victims of some cultural and religious practices and their indispensability in the task of nation building highlighted. More importantly, there is a noticeable tendency for male writers/journalists to negatively represent men and overtly condemn their treatment of women, as evidenced by the prevalence of negative discourse patterns surrounding the search term men/man. These research findings contest the predominant argument that male-writers/authors portray men more positively and women less positively.


Victoria J. Collis-Buthelezi, University of Cape Town, South Africa
victoria.collis.buthelezi.uct@gmail.com

On November 30, 1902 Fanny Jackson-Coppin arrived in Cape Town. A renowned teacher in her own right, she came in her capacity as wife to Bishop Reverend Levi J. Coppin of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Nearly a decade later her memoir was published posthumously by husband. So too A. B. Xuma wrote the biography of Charlotte Manye-Maxeke, founder of the ANC Women’s League, and the first black South African woman to attain her PhD. In this paper, using Ula Y. Taylor’s “community feminism”, I explore the ways in which these women were central to an understudied
moment in black thought and political activism, yet made simultaneously visible and peripheral in the archives through their relationships with men as wives, sisters, mothers etc. Part of my larger book project, Empire, Nation, Diaspora: Constituting the Black Archive, I track the gendered logic of the dominant archive of black modernity through a comparative reading of Jackson-Coppin’s memoir and Manye-Maxeke’s biography.

14. Gender and sexuality in a global present: A critical look at ‘queer’ and other perspectives
Taylor Riley, BIGSAS, University of Bayreuth, Germany
taylorriley@live.co.uk

In my paper I propose to examine how different trajectories of sexual and gender deviance or non-conformity are currently situated, looking at contemporary examples from academia, activism, and community in the West, mainly Anglo-America, and also in South Africa. By doing so I would like to entertain the idea of modernity as a problematic ideological frame under the guise of a natural linear process. What do ‘new’ or changing understandings of non-normative expressions of gender and sexuality have to say about the linearity or non-linearity of a vision of modernity that focuses on notions of evolution and progress? What can a look at gender and sexuality teach us about other constructions caught up in a politicized vision of our future? This mainly refers to the way that these ideas and categories have been produced historically through, and as, discourse. I want to propose queer theory as a useful analytical tool for understanding these questions and challenges, while also critically interrogating ‘queer’ as a (Western) morphology and idea. While queer as the new frontier is a very interesting insight into a new history of gender and sexuality, it is an idea that contradicts itself; both malleable and fixed, dynamic and static. This begs the question of how a look at the other side of queer, what I see as the myriad of non-Western modes of this paradoxical identity of non-identity, can tell us about gender, sexuality, modernity, and the assumptions around them that govern social practices and practices of the self.

15. Desires and Gestures: Transcultural novelizations of the “Comfort Woman”
Peggy C. Cho, Kyung Hee University, South Korea
pcho@khu.ac.kr

Since the first public testimonies by the Korean “comfort woman” (enforced military sex slave) in the early 1990s, Korea’s colonial history took on the face of the female personal tragedy. The personal testimonies of these colonial sex slaves garnered considerable attention in South Korea and abroad, producing discourses conducted around the intertwined notions of colonialism, nationalism, human rights, and women’s rights. While fictions on the topic by Korean authors remained largely restricted to the Korean reading audience, novels published in the late 1990s by Korean American writers Nora Okja Keller and Chang Rae Lee (respectively Comfort Woman and A Gesture Life) reached a wider international audience. Though different in their approach and style, their novels mediate the surviving women’s stories as inherited historical and genealogical legacies, bearing witness and vicariously mourning loss of lives and agency. For these and other Korean and Asian American authors invested in the literary representations of the “comfort woman” theme, the transnational and transcultural appropriations of gendered Asian bodies suggest complications and contradictions inherent in creating fictions of real or imaginary homelands. Often, their cultural productions reveal the essentially diasporic condition as ethnic minorities writing for a mainly western audience. This paper examines the writerly choices they make under awareness of a discomfiting relationship the writing subject, object, and material reality especially when the past in those homelands are continuing into the contested present. This study also asks how the fictional and cultural output abroad affects and determines the positioning of the on-going sensitive “comfort woman” issue in South Korea.

Polo Belina Moji, University of Pretoria, South Africa
mojipb@gmail.com

Swiss-Gabonese author Bessora writes an autobiographical account of being an illegal alien in Paris, which is dedicated to Saartjie Baartman (pre 1790 –1815). Emblematic of the grotesque hyper-sexualization, of the African body and its construction as ‘pre’ / ‘less-than’ human, Saartjie Baartman was displayed as ‘the Hottentot Venus’ in London and Paris. Characterized by steatopygia - enlarged buttocks – Baartman’s body was dissected by the anatomist George Cuvier upon her death. 53cm refers to the buttock size of the novel’s heroine, Zara, a ‘gaulologue’- an ethnologist studying the rites and customs of the French Gauls. Zara’s tongue-in-cheek account of being an illegal alien in Paris depicts her quest to obtain the society’s most sacred object – the ‘ca’t de séjou’ (residence permit). I analyze the novel’s depiction of Paris as a modern jungle of ‘citadogènes’ - indigenous city dwellers, whose anatomy and behavior is ironically dissected the narrator. This paper concludes that the novel can be read as a reversal of the colonial gaze or re-membering of Saartjie Baartman’s dismembered body.

17. Shifting perspectives on homosexuality in Afrikaans autobiographical texts: Pieter Cilliers’s Soeker (2011) (will be presented in Afrikaans)

Metha-Miré Viljoen, University of Pretoria, South Africa
methaviljoen@hotmail.com

Modernity is a phenomenon that is often associated with movement in the perceptions around issues of gender and sexuality. This paper deals with the shifts in perceptions on homosexuality in Afrikaans autobiographical texts. Pieter Cilliers's autobiography Soeker (2011) is discussed to get a grip on the shifts in perceptions on homosexuality in the Afrikaans-speaking communities of South Africa from the 1970s to the first decade of the twenty-first century. This paper involves theoretical aspects of Stephen Greenblatt’s New Historicism; gender theory; and the theory on (sexual) autobiography. The individual’s struggle with the social issues of his homosexuality, as well as shifts in perceptions on homosexuality and how it is represented in the family context, the Christian religion and the society are carefully pointed out.

Cilliers found himself in an environment where homosexuality were considered as a taboo, but in a (post)modern world the internet and social media have encouraged an increased awareness of gender and sexuality, it is clear that considerably more literature on homosexuality is appearing. A Marius Crous (2006) state that homosexuality is partially accepted as social reality and he argues that literature is a reflection of imaginative or realistic worlds and thereby strains the reader to participate actively to bring about change. Shifts in the literature is thus noticeable - examples of recent novels in Afrikaans that openly deals with homosexuality are Score me a gwai (2013) by Marlize Hobbs, Vuilspel (2013) by Bettina Wyngaard and Wolf-Wolf (2013) by Eben Venter. Soeker (2011), the concise, updated reprint of ‘n Kas is vir klere is about Cilliers’s life as a "gay, white, Christian Afrikaner" and its shaky path to self-acceptance. His motivation to pen down his life story was the hope that the text in the Afrikaans context may contribute to the ignorance about homosexuality and what it means to be a gay Christian (and minister). In my opinion Soeker encourages the public to remove "the glasses of ignorance" and to look from a new perspective at the matter. Soeker is therefore regarded as a text that bears the marks of his time and this paper comes to the conclusion that there are changes in perceptions on homosexuality in the Afrikaans-speaking community.

18. Modernity and queer precarity: Wolf, wolf by Eben Venter

Andries Visagie, University of Pretoria, South Africa
andries.visagie@up.ac.za
The novels of South African writer Eben Venter explore a variety of issues that beset queer people in relation to modernity as it pertains to Africa, and particularly South Africa. *My Beautiful Death* (2004), published originally in Afrikaans in 1996, was one of the first South African novels to deal with the scourge of AIDS in the queer community. In *Wolf, Wolf* (2013) Venter explores the precarity of queer Afrikaner men in contemporary South Africa. The main character Mattheüs Duiker seems to be dazzled by the prosperity associated with Western modernity and aligns his queer sexuality, and also his business aspirations, with innovation from Europe and the United States. Both his addiction to internet pornography and his naïve belief that his restaurant, inspired by ideas collected during his travels in Europe, will lead to business success expose him to new forms of vulnerability in postapartheid South Africa that is characterised by a number of divergent and often competing trajectories associated with modernity in postcolonial societies. This paper about queer precarity in *Wolf, Wolf* is an attempt to gain greater clarity about Eben Venter’s challenging views about queer men in relation to a greater postcolonial society in motion. Does Venter’s novel remain mired in a view of precarity in later modernity, as a condition that Judith Butler (2015), drawing on the work of Isabell Lorey, describes as defined by the sovereign people and the sovereign subject constantly faced with disease, contagions of sexual panic, criminality and the possibility of a variety of invasions? In *Wolf, Wolf* Venter suggests that the lives of queer people who embrace the most contemporary manifestations of modernity in a postcolonial society are more precarious than the position of communities that align themselves with more established trajectories in modern society that have achieved greater consolidation.

19. At the crack of dawn a whip
*Francois Smith, University of Free State, South Africa*
smithfah@ufs.ac.za
An attempt to come to grips with the unprecedented popularity of the book (and subsequently the film) *Fifty Shades of Grey*. What does the emergence of aberrant sexuality into mainstream popular fiction and film say about gender dynamics in our society? Following firstly Michel Foucault’s and then Gilles Deleuze’s take on the so-called epistemological uncertainty that characterises modernity, as well as their critique of psychoanalysis’s presumed phallocentric discourse -- and reading these two French philosophers critically as well -- it becomes apparent that one would need to negotiate the paradoxical interwovenness of two opposing social forces, namely the questioning as well as the reaffirmation of established gender hierarchies.

20. Lucky Marais: epitome of chameleonic masculinity (will be presented in Afrikaans)
*Stefanus (Stefan) van Zyl, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa*
stefanvanzyl@hotmail.com
This paper focuses on the representation of masculine images in Eben Venter’s novel *Santa Gamka* (2009) and more specific the multifaceted representation of masculinity in the character of Lucky Marais. The workability of the cognitive narratology as literary approach is also tested by identifying cognitive frames and scripts in the novel. Cognitive frames in narratives are those backdrops against which events take place, while the actions executed by the characters are read as cognitive scripts. These scripts create the projected masculine images of the male protagonist Lucky Marais. When reading a novel especially three cognitive processing possibilities are important: firstly to discard existing ideas and perceptions in order to make room for new ideas and perceptions; secondly to modify existing ideas by means of cognitive information processing in the novel; and lastly the total rejection of new ideas. Irrespective of the cognitive processes that occur during the reading process, the representation of masculinity in a novel will probably have an effect on the way in which the reader will experience masculinity in future. Venter demonstrates sensitivity and compassion for all the characters in his novels and the hypothetical expectation is that his representation of masculinity will instil sensitivity and
compassion in readers. This instilment will most probably create a better understanding of masculinity, as well as humanity, within the cognition of the reader. The most important finding is that it is indeed possible to use cognitive narratology as a literary approach to analyse and interpret novels in order to make valid conclusions – in this case with regard to the complex delineation of multifaceted masculine imagoes as represented by the character Lucky Marais within Eben Venter’s novel *Santa Gamka*.

### 21. Law, family and home in gendered peri-urban geographies

*Isolde de Villiers, University of Pretoria, South Africa*

isolde.devilliers@up.ac.za

Zygmunt Bauman, in *Liquid Modernity*, takes up the notion of community and problematizes a communitarian understanding of community always already in terms of the family home because it makes it impossible to trace one’s origin, one’s reason to exist in another place. In search of fluid understandings of belonging, family, community and home and their complex relationships to law, segregation and exclusion, I read Zoë Wicomb’s latest novel *October* and her inter-textual conversation with the novels *Home* by Toni Morrison and *Home* by Marilynne Robinson. *October* is set in peri-urban South Africa and presents a valuable framework for interrogating concepts of family, home, community and belonging and their interaction with the law. I will draw from Doreen Massey’s understanding of belonging as a relational politics of the spatial, Iris Marion-Young’s ideal of community and politics of difference, and view belonging as a culture of place in step with the theory of bell hooks. Soshanguve in the City of Tshwane is the setting for the currently pending Bultfontein case, initiated in December 2014. On the court papers this case concerns an application for the removal of informal settlements from the farm, and it seems on the surface like it is ultimately a party-political battle between the EFF and Afriforum. The stories that will not be told by the papers, nor by the court record, are narratives of family ties between the informal settlers and subsistence farmers on the same farmland and the intersecting and gendered power relations between the white, male farm manager and the black, female subsistence farmers. When one heed these narratives this case extends the production of urban space to peri-urban areas and stresses the inter-dependence and mutual influence of the urban and peri-urban. The case therefore exposes some of the elements raised by the question: to what extent have gendered urban geographies become the sites where modernities evolve?