

PASSIONATE LOVE AND RATIONAL ENGAGEMENT – COGNITION AND VALUATION



SUBMISSION: Please submit abstracts of 200-250 words to Danijela Kambaskovic on Danijela.kambaskovic-schwartz@uwa.edu.au by Monday 1 August 2016

Pedro Perret, *The Spectacles: allegory on Love and Impotence*, 1590-1600. © Trustees of the British Museum.

This is a call for papers for a special stream themed 'Passionate Love and Rational Engagement - Cognition and Valuation', jointly organised by the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100-1800 (CHE) and Victoria University. The stream will take place as a part of the Australasian Universities Languages & Literature Association (AULLA) conference themed 'Love and the Word', hosted by Victoria University, to be held in Melbourne, Australia from 7-9 December 2016. <http://conference2016.aulla.com.au/>

We are especially interested in cognitive and ethical implications of romantic and erotic love (although other kinds of human love, such as *agape* and *philia*, can also inform the discussion).

Plato described love madness, or *mania* - a term still in psychiatric use to denote an unnaturally heightened state of mind marked by periods of great excitement or euphoria, delusions and overactivity - by way of a list of symptoms which recur in numerous proto-medical treatises on love sickness over subsequent centuries. While Plato gives love mania a positive valuation and associates it with a cognitive enhancement, premodern medical treatises on love melancholy, and medieval and early modern religious discourse, continue to rely on Plato's symptoms, but evaluate them negatively, as cognitive impairment.

Some of the reasons for this axiological shift could be found in Aristotle's negative valuation of love madness, biblical and doctrinal writings warning of the dangers of temptation a changing focus

towards rationality and control - not passion - as markers of idealised masculinity, and the derogatory association of women with heightened mental states. The two different ethical valuations continue to underpin modern-day philosophical, neurological and behavioural research in the cognitive and medical impact of human love and desire.

This interdisciplinary stream aims to bring together scholars working in both the humanities and the sciences, whose research addresses the interaction of passionate love, cognition and ethics - an exchange of ideas and views.

Papers are invited to address topics which can include (but are not limited to): human love/ passionate love/ romantic love/ desire, cognition, creativity, ethics, epistemology, durability, social acceptability, social trends, neuroscience, psychology.

Diachronic and synchronic approaches are encouraged.

Fields include (but are not limited to): history of ideas, literature, philosophy, history, theology, Classics, psychology, history of science, psychiatry, neuroscience, experimental psychology.

CONVENORS:

Danijela Kambaskovic, CHE at The University of Western Australia and Kimberley-Joy Knight, CHE at The University of Sydney

PUBLICATION:

Papers not previously published will be considered for publication in a themed journal issue or an edited collection.