ABSTRACTS

Padmore Adusei Amoah, “Perception on Same-Sex Sexuality: A qualitative study of the role of culture and religion in Kumasi, Ghana”

Evolution and perception on sexual minorities are an uneven process across the globe. While some countries have achieved significant progress, others have remained stagnant and even worse, backslid. This paper aimed at finding how people perceived and responded to same-sex sexuality given the cultural and religious milieu of the Kumasi Metropolitan Area in Ghana. A total of 15 people were involved in the study. The popular opinion saw same-sex sexuality as something orchestrated by the ‘devil’ and a ‘taboo’. Majority of participants expressed their unwillingness to befriend or associate with non-heterosexuals even as house neighbours. Legalisation of rights and universal access for sexual minorities was therefore not an option for majority of the participants. Cultural and religious precepts on marriage and sexual relationships strongly accounted for the disdain towards same-sex sexuality. However, higher educational attainment seemed to affect the extent to which cultural and religious values influenced attitude towards same-sex sexuality. Extensive public sensitisation and discussions with especially traditional and religious institutions should therefore precede any policy on same-sex sexuality within contexts with pronounced religious and traditional culture such as urban Ghana.

Key Words/Phrases: Same-sex sexuality, culture, religion, human rights and access, Ghana

Luo Muyuan, “Theorizing the Same-Sex Marriage Debates in Contemporary China: Governmentality, Biopolitics, and Intelligibility”

The history of Chinese marriage suggests a new form a government and a new technique of power, in which a double process of subject-ification, i.e., being-made and self-making, has been presented to discipline the individual as well as the population as a whole in terms of intimate life. Under this circumstance, the heteronormative discourses of love and family harmony has spread to the non-heterosexual community, which has led Chinese homosexuals to fight for the marriage right on one side, and the quality of object of this governmentalized power on the other. However, the de-sexualized way in which Chinese homosexuals try to fight for the marriage right and to integrate their sexuality into their social beings as members of their family, community, and the society, or, the de-sexualized sexual citizenship, emerging in the tongzhi politics in contemporary China, indicates a logic of biopolitics, which focuses on the socioeconomic usefulness of homosexual body
rather than their (non-hetero-)sexuality on the micro level, and the species body and population on the macro level by centering on the issues of birthrate, the homosexuals proportion, the hidden risk of being “polluted” bead by the next generations as well as the future of nation. Furthermore, this biopolitics have kept Chinese homosexuals unintelligible. Intelligibility, as Butler uses it, refers to the production of a normative framework that conditions who can be recognized as a legitimate subject and who would live a live that is impossible, illegible, unreal, and illegitimate. The lack of intelligibility, regarding the same-sex marriage debates in China, means unqualified to become an object of biopower, and the marginality that allows homosexuals to critically link themselves to the heterosexual norms which provides them freedom to organize their intimate relationships and quasi-marriage practices.


Despite women’s continued independence from marital and family responsibilities in Hong Kong, there continues to be a pervasive discourse that specifically targets women who remain unwed. Parts of this discourse challenge the modern romantic love ideal by taking a more pragmatic approach to “settling” for suitable marriage partners, and actively manipulating their presentation of self. Little is known, however, about how women are responding to this “new pragmatism”. Based on seven focus groups, conducted with 40 unmarried women, this paper examines women’s responses to the popular Bride Wannabee Dating (盛女愛作戰) television show in order to learn more about how women negotiate the negative stereotypes about remaining single. We show that many women reject the stereotypes presented of them in the show, but use the show to construct a counter-narrative of mate selection that still relies on traditional romantic ideas about spontaneity, authenticity, and the importance of “natural” dating situations. Using the Bride Wannabe show as focal point for discussing modern romance, we attempt to systematically examine unexplored beliefs about courtship in modern Hong Kong.

Yeung Ka Yi, “Reassessing the effect of stereotypes in advertising on ideal woman image among female university students in Hong Kong”

With the uses of the internet, it has greatly increased the exposure to mass media as well as advertisement. Adolescents or university students who are in young age would be most influenced by mass media. It is due to the fact that they are in the age which having the least socialization from family as well as occupational employment or marriage. Media hence becomes a significant tool in shaping their self-concept and
gender role learning. However, there is always stereotype existed in the media which distorts and limits the possibility of how female could be.

There are mainly three kinds of stereotype portrayed in Hong Kong advertisements. The first type is the ideology of “slim is beauty” imposed by the slimy company commercials. Another type of stereotype is that women are not as intelligent and rational as men do so that they have lower chances of being shaped as professionals or having power and that the image of housewife is commonly seen in Hong Kong advertisement. The third type of stereotype is about the ideal female images or the “perfect woman” as portrayed in commercials in which successful women are those who can handle well in both their business and family life and that they are independent, strong and tough. Yet, these kinds of standards are not imposed on man.

This research aims at investigating the effect of ideal women stereotypes in advertisements towards female university students. The two different ideal women stereotypes adopted in this research are modern businesswomen and traditional housewives that are commonly seen in Hong Kong commercials. The changes in attitude about ideal women after students watched the advertisements were studied. Also, the study examined whether there will be any differences in the influences of two different ideal women image stereotypes.

Keywords: Gender, Stereotypes, Advertisement effect, Ideal woman image