

## ARTICLE ABSTRACTS IN ENGLISH

### **THE MOST VALUABLE ASSET IN THE HUMAN BEING... THAT IS WOMEN**

#### **Traffic in Women: Prostitution and the Economy**

*Anna Betlen*

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This time we are not going to discuss prostitution in terms of ethics, health, social welfare or crime but in terms of its political economy. Although we do not deny the relevance of the other approaches, we sense the debate on prostitution has been caught in a deadlock for decades. Is it voluntary or forced labor; work or slavery; degrading or elevating; to be legalized or forbidden; extremely dangerous, or just as much as any other forms of activity; is it right or not at all...These dilemmas (and many others) are important to address but this time let's move on and say something different. Let's consider the function of unequal gender relations (and their unequal social-geographical distribution) in the transformation of prostitution into a global economy. Let's look into and explore with the help of a particular example the function of prostitution (more exactly, that of the sex industry, comprising prostitution, pornography, and human trafficking) in the production, maintenance and increase of unequal relations between men and women, the rich and the poor, the population of the developed and underdeveloped countries, territories and regions, the majority and minorities, etc. Finally, for a summary, let's ask the question: In addition to the immediate profit and pleasure, whose interest does this human being, that is, the woman in the title, serve?

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### **MENSTRUATING FATHERS AND WOMEN OF COLD WAR: TRANSGRESSIVE MASCULINITIES IN DANILO KIŠ'S WORKS**

*John K. Cox*

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The Serbian-Yugoslav-Jewish writer Danilo Kiš (1935-1989) is famous for his novels and short stories exploring the sufferings of victims of fascism

and communism. Many of his writings are autobiographical and set at least in part in Hungary. His fictional world is polyphonic but employs mostly male protagonists, so there is ample material for the study of masculinity. In some of his works, such as the novella "Jurij Golec" and the poem "The Wedding Guests," he makes use of rather traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Other works, such as the story "The Lute and the Scars," show a mixture of traditional and nontraditional conceptions, while the novel *Hourglass*, Kiš's masterpiece, is the best example of a nontraditional, transgressive portrayal of masculinity. Another bold departure from the traditional masculine domain is found in the last major creative work of Kiš's career, a television documentary from 1989. In *Bare Life*, two Serbian Jewish women, now Israelis, tell their stories as victims, survivors, and accusers of the two infernal systems, Nazism and Communism, that Kiš spent his life equating. Ultimately the transgressive use of gender stereotypes seems to be just one of the many tools that Kiš uses to open the door to the exploration of the lethal otherness that left so many people condemned in the ideological dictatorships of the 20th century.

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## PATERNAL INITIATION INTO THE WRITTEN WORLD, OR GENDER STEREOTYPES IN COMPULSORY READINGS IN THE HUNGARIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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The compulsory literary works in the lower four grades of Hungarian primary education are usually recognized as emotionally moving and morally uplifting. However, their merits are questionable from the perspective of the gender roles they construct as ideals for their young readers, who are so impressionable at this young age. The novels in question – *Kincskezeső Kisködmön* by the Hungarian writer Ferenc Móra, *Bambi* by Felix Salten, and Erich Kästner's *Emil and the Detectives* and *The two Lottis* - are firmly positioned in the patriarchal canon of the early 20th century. The heroes are usually boys, while the girls, if there are any among the characters, prepare to be able to fulfill their future roles of taking care of the (physical or emotional) demands of boys/men. It seems that the only positive position for women is that of the mother who clings to her (boy-)child and sacrifices herself for him while her love often becomes a burden on the growing son

when he strives for his (expected) independence. The girls/women who are interested in non-traditional female roles are presented as unfeminine, unnatural and unworthy of attention. These common themes in these literary works are dangerous as compulsory readings for young readers, who are still too immature to develop a critical stance towards these stereotypical views.

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## **UNIVERSITY GENRE-PAINTINGS (ÉLETKÉPEK) – PETTY HUNGARIAN PATRIARCHY**

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This time I do not wish to ascend to the theoretical heights of phallogocentrism but descend to the actual university campus. I would like to discuss the institutional practices of the Hungarian Academe from the perspective of the female professor. Writing in the guise of a quasi anthropologist I aim to identify the more or less automatic and unintended reproduction of technologies of masculine power in the everyday practices of university life. While I am going to draw on decades of my own lived experience as a philosopher, I will support my personal observations d by statistics, and I trust that many readers will recognize their own experiences, as well. , Although today in Hungary the majority of graduates from universities and colleges are women (53%), the academic hierarchical distinctions between men and women are still maintained. I will look at my own experiences as illustrations of typical acts of cross-sex communication and the corresponding character types as enactments of Bourdieau’s habitus (Bourdieu 2000, 46-47). Ultimately I want to underscore the few existing positive practices, challenging the dominant masculine practice relative to the existing theories that are already translated to Hungarian.

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## **THE FANTASY OF „MANLY” DISABILITY. ATYPICAL EMBODIMENTS OF ALTERNATIVE MASCULINITIES IN CONTEMPORARY POPULAR VISUAL CULTURE**

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This essay explores representations of the disabled male body in today's popular visual media. Its focus is on whether and how the "potently vulnerable" embodiments cherished by normative fan communities' fantasies can personify alternative masculinities that reject hegemonic gender hierarchies. The ultimate concern is to see if they allow for a greater degree of imaginative, erotic agency for female spectators. These masculinities are specific in that they let male viewers intimately relate to a non-domineering, imperfectly re-embodied, demythologized mode of manliness. The complex negotiation of naturalized interconnections of engendered and dis/abled bodily identities along with daring associations of virility with weakness and vulnerability coincides with an attempt to undo oppressive patriarchal power relations. However, the examples – primarily taken from the popular television series *House M.D.*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *Game of Thrones* and the related fan(fictional) reactions to each of these programs – also demonstrate that the deviation from the normative bodily ideal is only possible within the relative frames of the ideological regime of ableism.

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**THE ENCOUNTER OF THE FROCK-COAT AND THE BODICE  
BY THE DRESSING-TABLE, OR THE VISUAL  
CONSTRUCTEDNESS OF MASCULINITY AT THE END OF THE  
19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

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In my article I wish to disclose the toilette-secrets of the nineteenth century Hungarian gentleman. My intention is not to embarrass him, following some voyeuristic instincts, but to be able to observe the making of the man of breeding, literally 'of a decent house'. Beauvoir's famous statement, "One is not born but made to be a woman" can equally be applied to the other gender. Therefore I am exploring the elements of "masculine" appearance, with a particular focus on the relationship between fashion (clothes, make-up) and the masculine body. The data for my analysis includes descriptions of men's clothes, articles and advice columns in contemporary Hungarian men's fashion magazines (*Férfi divatlap*, *Férfi divat*) as well as their literary representations in some Hungarian novels at the time (by Ferenc Herczeg, Gyula Reviczky, Stefánia Wohl).

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## THE MAN AND HVG ('WEEKLY WORLD ECONOMY')

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Today – as a result of feminist research since the 1990s neither femininity, nor masculinity can be interpreted as a monolithic, stable category of identity.– hence, we cannot argue for an obvious causal relationship between manhood, masculinity and patriarchy, but for a flexible and contradictory masculinity at any particular moment and place. My choice of topic was motivated by the recognition that in this uneven space of (male) identity I can choose among various contradictory sites of (self)representation. My article examines the issues of the past two years of the Hungarian periodical, HVG (*Heti Világgazdaság*/‘Weekly World Economy’) and comes to the conclusion that those articles in these issues which deal with.. various aspects of manhood, can be read as an attempt at interpreting “the crisis of masculinity,” mainly attempting to legitimize their claim to the existence of such a crisis by drawing on natural scientific and medical discourses, which seek to stress the “exact nature” of the relevant science. Against this discursive background, I look at the representation of the successful upper middle-class man in the “Portrait” column. The particular media product I have selected – seen as the weekly periodical preferred by the middle class – can justify my claim on a pars pro toto basis that any claim made about men will be considered “serious” (mainly by the majority male readers) if it sounds “exact and scientific”. Therefore the publication of these articles reflects a certain stance, viewpoint of the editorial board that seems to be shared by the targeted readers.

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## OH MY! FOR A GIRL, YOU...? – GENDER CULTURES IN ENGINEERING DEPARTMENTS IN AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM THE PRESPECTIVE OF THE FEMALE STUDENTS

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Given that there is a shortage of engineers and IT professionals in some segments of the Hungarian labor market, it is an important strategic objective to increase the number of secondary school students who opt for technology programs as their first choice when applying for university

programs. One way to achieve this aim is to persuade more young women to apply for programs in these fields, where they are still extremely underrepresented. Our research explores some elements of the gender culture at the faculties of technology of a Hungarian university, drawing on Brigitte Liebig's model. We compared the organizational elements of the gender culture with the situation outside of the organization. The data we analyze was elicited in focus group discussions with female students of the electronic, mechanical engineering, and IT faculties. The results show that the female students in the research have met almost the same doubts concerning their professional ambitions within the organization as outside of it. On the other hand, Many female students also felt that in the organization they had experienced several advantages of being a woman, such as greater attention and greater extent of helpfulness from professors, although in some cases this attention was combined with an attitude from the professors that implied the female students would be less successful in the completion of the required tasks.

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