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“Who, Being Loved, Is Poor?”

Material and Media Dimensions of Weddings

Anna-Katharina Höpflinger / Marie-Therese Mäder (eds.)

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FOCUS OF THE ISSUE

Marriage can be understood as a rite of passage that marks a fundamental transformation in a person's life, legally, politically, and economically, and often in that person's self-conception, as an individual and in terms of his or her place in society. In the contemporary European context in particular, a wedding can take the form simply of the signing of a socio-legal contract. But nevertheless – or perhaps exactly therefore – marriages are often staged ritualistically and linked to religious symbols, worldviews, and norms.

This issue will focus on the question of how different media transmit specific aspects of a wedding, understood as an event between the private and the public, between tradition and innovation, and between collective and individual meaning making processes. This issue shows that weddings are on different levels interrelated to religion; some of these dimensions may be more apparent as others. Media in its visual and material dimensions play an important role in forming and communicating these levels, and thereby shape the spectator's perception of the ritual itself.

The range of research in this issue reaches from the Classical Hollywood Cinema and its specific representations of marriage to the successful American television series *GREY'S ANATOMY* and its tension between the portrayal of traditional heterosexual weddings and its progressive inclusion of a lesbian ceremony. Rather theatrical is the historical wedding practice of the charivari (during the 18th and 19th century) located in the region of Bern, Switzerland. An audio-visual and violent expression against nonconformist marriages according to the collective attitude and local custom. To conclude, the article “Bridal Mysticism, Virtual Marriage and Masculinity in the Moravian Hymnbook *Kleines Brüdergesangbuch*” elaborates marriage as a metaphor for mystical piety in the Moravian Church.

OPEN SECTION

In the open section, Vuk Uskokovic's essay shows how new ways of representation that break with convention work as mind opener. The contribution seeks new ways of thinking by using the example of the films of Nouvelle Vague director Jean-Luc Godard.

Book, music and film reviews as well as two calls for papers for upcoming issues of JRFM complete the volume.

ISSUE EDITORS

Anna-Katharina Höpflinger is a research and teaching assistant at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. After completing her Ph.D in the Study of Religion, she has developed different research projects in the field of media and religion, particularly focusing on the body, clothing, and gender. She is also interested in religions in the ancient world and in European history, in Heavy Metal and religion, and in charnel-chapels.

Marie-Therese Mäder is a scholar in the study of religion with particular interest in the field of media and religion where she has published several articles and books. Her current research focuses on (self-)representation strategies of religious communities in documentary media, supported by the Bayerische Gleichstellungsförderung based at Ludwigs-Maximilians-University in Munich. She teaches at the Universities of Zurich, Chur and Bern (CH). Since 2006 she has been a member of the research group “Media and Religion”. She is a member of the editorial boards of JRFM and of the book series Religion, Film und Medien (Schüren, Marburg) and Media and Religion (Nomos, Baden-Baden).

The issue can be downloaded at <http://www.jrfm.eu> and <http://unipub.uni-graz.at/jrfm/> or can be ordered in print from www.schueren-verlag.de

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