



Love, Gender, Intimacy, Sexuality and Law

written by Allegra
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As one of our aims is to keep a pulse on the (scholarly) feeling of the moment, we wanted to share these recent encounters with highly familiar themes from our varied sources. First, [a thought-provoking article](#) from [The Feminist Wire](#) discussing the romantic notion of love, freedom and equality and how it has been hotly contested by many feminists. These themes find connection in the upcoming, fascinating-sounding seminar at the University of Cambridge titled [‘Probing the Intimate’](#) (13-14 May, 2014) as well as a forthcoming book [Redefining Rape](#) by [Estelle B. Freedman](#) discussing the historical trajectory behind definitions around this profound violation of intimacy.

The consideration of the complex roles of women in the eyes of the law continues in the upcoming seminar [‘The Judge is a Woman’](#) organized at the [Université Libre de Bruxelles](#). The entanglement of law, gender, love and legal regulation of sexuality lends itself also the issue of same-sex marriage explored recently by [Nicola Barker](#) in her book [Not the Marrying Kind](#), winner of the 2013 SLSA-Hart Socio-Legal Book prize. And while on the topic, why not look into the work of [Mariana Valverde](#), the current [‘Membership Spotlight’](#) of the [Law and Society Association](#).

To conclude this free association of thoughts, the issue of women’s visual representations echoes our recent call for more experimental approaches to analyze international collaboration: the photo exhibition and book [She Who Tells a Story](#) introduces the pioneering work of twelve leading women photographers from Iran and the Arab world.

As the Middle East has undergone unparalleled change over the past twenty years, and national and personal identities have been dismantled and rebuilt,



these artists have tackled the very notion of representation with passion and power. Their provocative images, which range in style from photojournalism to staged and manipulated visions, explore themes of gender stereotypes, war and peace, and personal life, all the while confronting nostalgic Western notions about women of the Orient and exploring the complex political and social landscapes of their home regions.

Enhanced with biographical and interpretive essays, and including more than 100 reproductions, this book challenges us to set aside preconceptions about this part of the world and share in the vision of a group of vibrant artists as they claim the right to tell their own stories in images of great sophistication, expressiveness, and beauty.

The included photographers are Jananne Al-Ani, Boushra Almutawakel, Gohar Dashti, Rana El Nemr, Lalla Essaydi, Shadi Ghadirian, Tanya Habjouqa, Rula Halawani, Nermine Hammam, Rania Matar, Shirin Neshat, and Newsha Tavakolian.

