

**Call For Papers:**  
**Bad Romance: The Ethics of Love, Sex, and Desire**  
An interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference at Harvard  
March 29-30

Featuring Keynote Speaker: Nancy Bauer (Tufts)  
Panel Respondents: Moira Weigel, Robert Reid-Pharr, and others (TBD)

The #MeToo movement has raised questions about the ethics of love, sex, and desire. Narrowly, it has raised questions about sexual consent and violation; broadly, it has raised questions about attraction, power, monogamy, adultery, sex work, and more. Thinkers and artists throughout history, from Plato and Sappho to Foucault and Martha Nussbaum, have addressed these topics. But in light of the current crisis in sexual ethics, we propose a conference that re-examines how we should conduct ourselves in romantic and sexual relationships. Issues of erotic ethics not only invite but also demand an interdisciplinary approach. Scholars working in philosophy, history, history of science, literary studies, and art history are all examining different aspects of this topic, such as the moral status of sexual activity, the evolution of erotic norms over time, and the representation of romantic crimes in art and literature. We invite graduate students across the humanities and social sciences to come speak, from their particular disciplinary perspectives, on a range of questions raised by #MeToo, including, but not limited to:

**Consent:** What constitutes consent? Must consent be explicit? In what circumstances is ostensible consent undermined?

**Sexual Rights or Claims:** Is there a right or claim to sex or love? Are sex and love commodities, and if so, should they be distributed like other commodities?

**The Ethics of Desire:** We know it's wrong to act badly, but is it possible to *want* badly? Might we have an obligation to modify racist, sexist, or ableist attractions?

**Erotic Representation:** How should sexual violation be depicted in art, literature, pornography, and sexual culture? What should we do with artworks, both high and low, created by men and women guilty of sexual transgressions?

**Sex and the Law:** How should sexual crimes be adjudicated? Are unofficial tribunals—for instance the tribunal of public opinion—good forums for adjudication?

**Sexual Technologies:** How have medical and technological advances changed sexual norms enabled new erotic and romantic crimes? Can sexual harassment occur in a virtual sphere?

**Global #MeToos:** How have the questions posed above been addressed in diverse national and cultural settings? How do—and should—their answers change in different contexts?

Speakers should send 250-350 word abstracts and CVs to [BadRomanceConference@gmail.com](mailto:BadRomanceConference@gmail.com) by January 15<sup>th</sup>; Applicants will be notified of acceptance or rejection within a week. Travel grants, likely of up to \$200, will be offered to a limited number of applicants.