

**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
**African Studies Association of the UK Biennial Conference 2016**  
**7-9 September 2016, University of Cambridge (UK)**  
<http://www.asauk.net/asauk-biennial-conference-2016/>

**Pleasures: Sex, Orgasm and the Erotic in Africa** (panel #5162)

The portrayal of hypersexualised African bodies has long been a source of oppression and exploitation. More recently, academic research has continued to portray African sexualities as inherently 'dangerous', often focusing on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, overpopulation, female genital mutilation, and other harmful practices. Similarly, the study of health and reproduction has largely avoided a focus on sex itself, and has instead focused on fertility, childbearing, and birth. Although research on non-normative African sexualities, including LGBTQ human rights abuses, has received increased academic attention in recent years, a focus on sex itself remains largely absent.

This panel aims to address this gap by exploring how the notion of sexual pleasure is socially and intimately defined, embodied, reproduced, and at times challenged. We welcome ethnographic and field-based research papers that interrogate ideas and concepts of satisfaction (or the lack thereof), in traditional, contemporary or changing definitions of sexual pleasure(s), as well as those that examine the intersection of affect and sexuality, and critical approaches to gender and sex.

We particularly welcome papers that address (but are not limited to) the following questions:

- What is/are sexual pleasure(s)?
- Whose pleasure and definitions of it prevail, or are deemed acceptable?
- Is the orgasm the only measure of pleasure?
- How is pleasure taught, learned, or transmitted?
- How is sexual education conceived and transmitted?
- How, where, and why are sex and pleasure rendered public or private?
- How are concerns for reproduction and/or sexual health implicated in experiences of pleasure? What is the role of religion in defining and experiencing sexual gratification?
- Who is allowed to look for, demand, give and receive pleasure?
- Can pleasure be harmful, and conversely, can pain be a source of pleasure?
- How is pleasure achieved, and what objects or ways of doing mediate its attainment?
- What impact can sexual pleasure(s) have on a personal, economic, health, political and religious levels?

You can submit your paper no later than the **2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2016** via the online submission system by [clicking here](#); make sure to **select panel #5162**.

Feel free to share this CFP and to contact us at [veronique.gilbert@ed.ac.uk](mailto:veronique.gilbert@ed.ac.uk) if you have any questions.

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