

Love in Our World

27-28 November 2008

An international conference convened by the Research Network on Love
The University of Manchester

Keynote speaker:

Leela Gandhi (University of Chicago)

Call for Papers (and other Contributions)

As a concept, experience, ethic, and subject of study, love remains one of the most elusive phenomena. Despite millennia of study and writing on love, it is difficult – if not impossible – to define what love is, what love does, or what love means. Yet we continue to try to make sense of its place in our lives and in our worlds, and to understand how it shapes us both as individuals and as communities – whether we understand love as an abstract universal ethic, or a contingent, contextual way of being social in the world. Few would deny that love – for better and worse – animates, shapes, and motivates our beliefs, our relationships, and our endeavours. And while it may not be possible to say what love is, we wonder still at how love works – what shapes it might take. It is, perhaps, the question of how we see love working in and on our lives (professional, personal, and political) that provides the conceptual space for us to give shape to a concept that is, essentially, shapeless.

Love in Our World is a multidisciplinary conference through which participants will attempt to trace some of the contours of love in their professional and artistic work, in what might be termed a desire to give expression to our understandings of love and its impact on and meaning for our lives. **Love in Our World** asks participants to share their work on love or, indeed, in love, in order to consider the significance of love and its impact on who we are as academics, performance artists, musicians, painters or photographers, poets, teachers and educators, counsellors, clergy or faith-based professionals, political leaders, students, and activists.

We welcome proposals from all areas of academic study or professional life that speak to the concept of love. Traditional academic paper or panel proposals exploring diverse questions surrounding love are welcome, and we strongly encourage photographers, artists, creative writers, musicians, and other professionals to share their work as it relates to love. Over the course of two days, we envision a truly multi-faceted collection of presentations and exhibitions on how love works to shape who we are and what we do.

Love in Our World is organised by the Research Network on Love at The University of Manchester, an interdisciplinary research group comprised of over 80 scholars and postgraduate students from across the Faculty of Humanities and beyond. The group is currently convened by Maja Zehfuss, Cristina Masters and Véronique Pin-Fat. If you wish to participate in **Love in Our World**, please send us your abstract of about 300 words (or equivalent description of your intended contribution) by **10 April 2008** at researchonlove@manchester.ac.uk. For more information on the group and the conference see our website at <http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/disciplines/politics/research/rnl/>.

We would like to thank the School of Social Sciences and the Centre for International Politics at The University of Manchester for their support of the conference.