

Queer Reading the Heritage

Workshop, lead by Rising Lai

September 3rd, 2022 - Everything New Under The Sun - The Grey Space in The Middle

Hi, I am Rising Lai 🙌

#designer #artist

#taiwan #netherlands

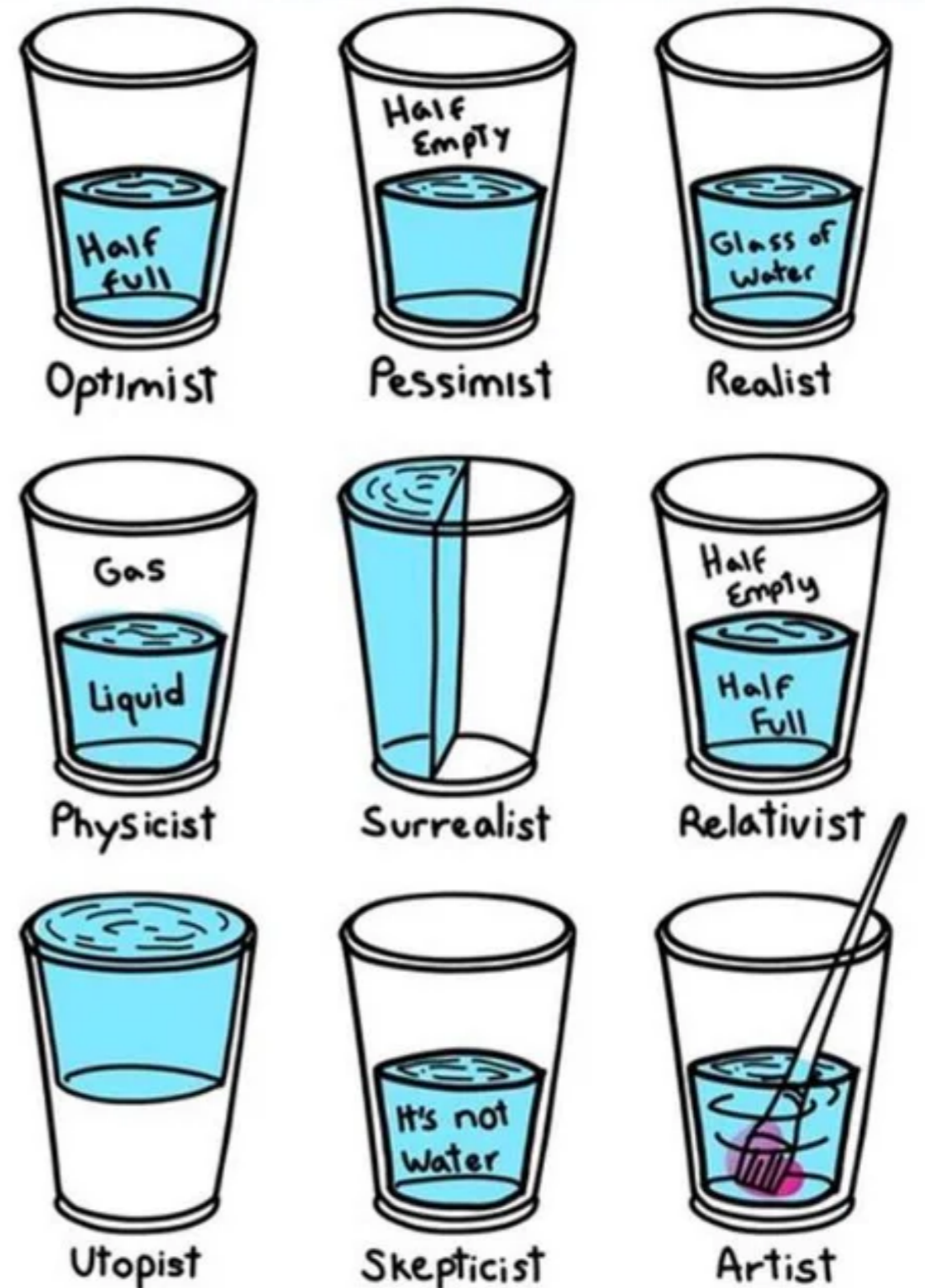
#object #materialculture

pronouns undetermined

because in my native languages we have one pronoun for all lives
so I guess you can call me whoever you want (?)

Why having this workshop?

During my study, I realised that how heritages are described in the institution affects the way we learn about the culture. The narrative is hierarchical, and so does the mind behind it.





Rellen op zijn Rotterdams

Rotterdam kende in de zeventiende eeuw de nodige oproeren, maar die hadden meestal te maken met spanningen op landelijk niveau. Maar in 1690 waren er in de Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden geen binnenlandse onrust. Willem III was net twee jaar koning van Engeland en zwaaide al sinds 1672 als stadhouder de scepter over vijf van de zeven provinciën. Het was pais en vree in de Republiek.

Ondanks die rust kon er klaarblijkelijk in Rotterdam in de laatste maanden van 1690 een situatie ontstaan waarbij de hele stad in oproer was, poorten gesloten werden, bruggen opgehaald, huizen geplunderd en er kanongebulder door de straten klonk. Het oproer lijkt een unieke Rotterdamse aangelegenheid. Rotterdammers die anno 2015 met de tram tussen Noord en Zuid Rotterdam over de Schiedamse dijk langs de Leuvehaven zoeven, reizen wat dat betreft langs het decor van een echte Rotterdamse rel.



Wit bord met in blauw afbeelding Costerman oproer (foto: Museum Rotterdam)

Rotterdam experienced quite a few riots in the seventeenth century, but these mostly had to do with tensions at the national level. But in 1690 there was no internal unrest in the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands. William III had been king of England for just two years and had held sway as stadtholder over five of the seven provinces since 1672. It was peace and quiet in the Republic.

In spite of that peace, apparently in the last months of 1690 a situation could arise in Rotterdam in which the whole city was in revolt, gates were closed, bridges were taken down, houses looted and cannons roared through the streets. The riot seems to be a unique Rotterdam affair. Rotterdammers who, in 2015, whiz by tram between North and South Rotterdam over the Schiedam dike along the Leuvehaven, are traveling past the backdrop of a real Rotterdam riot.



1690年製作的鹿特丹暴動紀念幣

Medal struck to commemorate the Riot of Rotterdam, reproduced in *Histoire métallique des Pays Bas*, by Gerard van Loon, the Hague, 1736.

鹿特丹暴動 Riots of Rotterdam

鹿特丹是荷蘭的一個海港城市，即使身處現今的你我，也不是人人有機會到訪，更何況是十七世紀末的景德鎮陶工們。可是，這件青花瓷盤卻出現一幅為紀念鹿特丹暴動而設計的圖畫。畫面中爬梯上牆的人們，正著手拆毀房子，看似平靜無聲的畫面，其實描繪了一樁發生在1690年的殺人事件。由於紋樣的構圖與佈局和翻印自版畫的紀念幣相似，因而有荷蘭人以紀念幣作為範本將之客製化成瓷器的說法。由此也可知，流通於貿易網絡中的中國瓷器，也成為荷蘭人記錄社會事件的媒材。

Rotterdam is a harbour city of the Netherlands. Even for being in the contemporary nowadays, not every individual will have the opportunity to visit the city. Thus to imagine, for the potters of Jingdezhen in the late 17th century, Rotterdam must had been unreachable. Nevertheless, this porcelain plate in underglaze blue is decorated with a painting in reminiscence of the riots of Rotterdam. The painting shows a figure climbing the ladder to reach the top of the wall, and is about to tear the house down. This imagery is seemingly peaceful and silent, but in fact it had documented a homicidal incidence that happened in the year 1690. Owing to the composition and the arrangement are similar to the commemorative medal that was reproduced from the prints, accordingly this supports the statement that the Dutch had taken the medal as the model, and had customized the porcelains. Given the facts above, the Dutch might also hold the concept of using porcelain plates to document the social events.



老花磚紅眠床 1920年

紅眠床是早期臺灣民間生活中相當重要的家具，傳統臺灣嫁娶禮俗中，由男方準備眠床，女方附帶嫁妝，因此對床的要求格外的重視，裝飾圖紋也具備祈福、長壽、富貴、平安、吉祥等涵意。紅眠床在臺灣易見，但花磚妝點的床眉紅眠床稀少，以致現今國內研究的歷史文獻鮮少無提到相關內容。

老屋所收藏的這款紅眠床，檜木、車枳、老花磚、墨畫融合於其中，充分表現日治時期文化交流下家具式樣的融合與轉化，主結構的左右遮風裝有木鉤，可吊掛衣裳，左右遮風間架設眠床櫃，附拉門小格、小抽屜便於收藏貴重物品，架上還可放置衣箱等衣物細軟，此床可置放的床墊尺寸為219x182cm，屬於大型眠床。由花磚年代的推敲，大約於

1920年間製作，距今約100年歷史。



46. 八腳紅眠床

206 × 143.5 × 坐面高55，通高218.5公分

台灣民間把睡眠用的大床通稱為紅眠床，因多漆以朱紅色而名之，即所謂的架子床，基本形式即床的三面有圍，四角立柱，上有頂棚，頂下四周通常還有橫欄，大陸南方因它有柱四根而稱為四柱床。但台灣一般說是八腳眠床，八腳的意思有二義：一是指其床底架的結構共有八根腳，即二組床架組合而成；另一說法是指除四面圍之外，還要有罩在其外的花罩而形成完整的方形結構，則內架外罩共有八根立柱的關係而稱為八腳眠床，是較考究的作法。

本件為大溪邱石枝先生捐贈，約有七

十五年以上的歷史，保存狀況良好、完整，是台式眠床的基本形式。三面圍架可各別分離，其左右兩面有立柱，略往內傾，與頂棚聯結，後面一片只有短圍板，兩端以望柱收尾。而蚊帳直接罩住頂棚再順著圍架垂下；如果圍架是垂直的話，則帳子不能密貼，是一種從生活體驗發展出來聰明的作法。床裡側的上方有多格架倒掛，以存藏細軟珍玩。床的前沿是一根粗厚的直材，連接雕花牙條和裏腳，下附小托泥板。如果從側面觀察，可以看到底部支架的組合方法，是由兩床底架併聯而成，共有八腳。

What is queer reading?

It is a technique that came out of queer theory in the late 1980s through the 1990s and is used as a way to challenge heteronormativity by analyzing places in a text that use heterosexuality or identity binaries.

-- Siobhan Somerville, Eve Sedgwick

Queer readings challenged heteronormativity, and they often did so by searching for cracks and fissures in supposedly heteronormative surfaces, which revealed subversive queer connotations.

-- Jenny Björklund

Queer readings of texts allow audiences, queer or not, to see the possibility for queerness in media that does not explicitly name LGBTQ identities.

-- Adrienne Shaw, Christopher J. Persaud

Queer reading provides a lens and an approach to excavate and interpret the way (cultural material) already is sexed, and, further that it begin to interpret the ways in which it is explicitly heterosexed, by turning our attention to the subjectivities that we take for granted.

-- Caitlin L. Ryan, Jill M. Hermann-Wilmarth

What is queer reading?

It is a technique that came out of queer theory in the late 1980s through the 1990s and is used as a way to challenge heteronormativity by analyzing places in a text that use heterosexuality or identity binaries.

-- Siobhan Somerville, Eve Sedgwick

Queer readings challenged heteronormativity, and they often did so by searching for cracks and fissures in supposedly heteronormative surfaces, which revealed subversive queer connotations.

-- Jenny Björklund

Queer readings of texts allow audiences, queer or not, to see the possibility for queerness in media that does not explicitly name LGBTQ identities.

-- Adrienne Shaw, Christopher J. Persaud

Queer reading provides a lens and an approach to excavate and interpret the way (cultural material) already is sexed, and, further that it begin to interpret the ways in which it is explicitly heterosexed, by turning our attention to the subjectivities that we take for granted.

-- Caitlin L. Ryan, Jill M. Hermann-Wilmarth

Crafting Desire (2022)



As a dowry, the craft of the traditional Taiwanese bed documented the ideal projection of marriage from family and society – gender role, patriarchy, fertility, and heterosexuality. How can I, as a queer, relate to the traditional bed within my culture and what it represents?

What will happen this workshop?

9

Queer reading methods

3

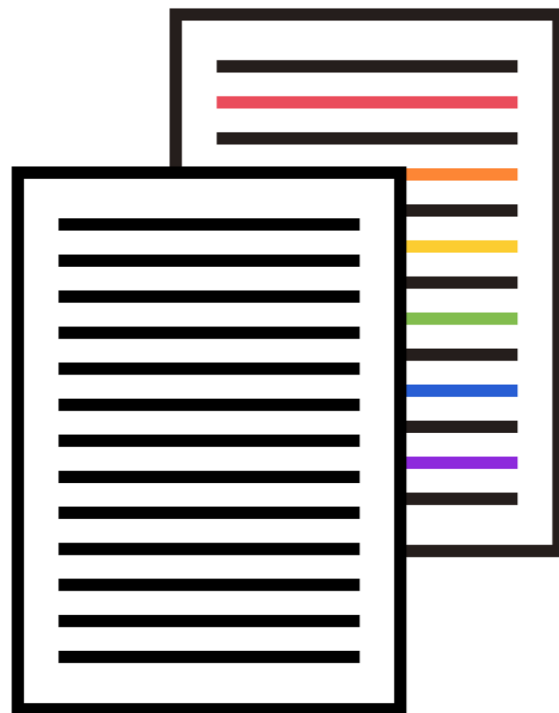
Collections to read

1

Documentation

Queering the canon

Focus on undermining the hegemony of heterosexuality.



Texts have depth

Semantic layers can be uncovered by literary critics.

Resistant readings

Reading counter reveals the author's inherent sexism/ heteronormativity.

Searching for cracks

Revealing subversive queer connotation under the supposedly heteronormative surface.

What is queer about it?

Queering the canon

Critiques about the approach

Miss the surface

Assuming the true meaning is behind it may miss the text on the surface.

Useless for explicit queerness

The text cannot be analysed with the symptomatic reading approach if the queerness is not hidden underlayer.

Maria Margareta Österholm

Dominated by whiteness

Ignorance of other norms when reading well-established literary tropes that excluded non-white bodies.

Tara Atluri, Mara Lee Gerdén

Intersectional perspectives

Combining with the postcolonial theory, analysing the normative background widely.



Queer reading as a tool

Even though queer reading is centred on the hegemony of heterosexuality, it can also be used to analyse other power dimensions.

Challenging the norm

Exposing how subversive characters are under the taken-for-granted norm and power structure.

Postcolonial theory

Pointing out the history of oppression and violence toward non-white bodies, especially in the western context.

What is the hierarchy here?

Queering new genres

Understand that queer characters are misrepresentative and stigmatising being used as criminals in the genre.



Queerness and criminality

In the crime fiction genre, non-normative gender or sexual identity are used to create surprise, and these characters are often criminals.

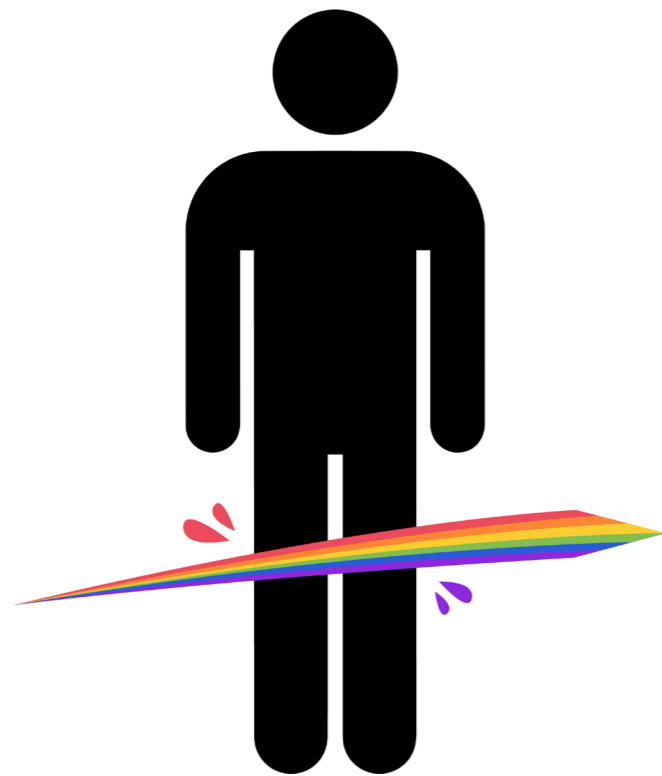
Finding new approaches

There are more affirming ways to depict queer gender and sexuality than criminal activity. As well as critiques of heteronormative society.

Why is the criminal a queer?

Queer and crip readings

Considering the past condition of homosexuality and transgender being seen as a deviation from normal sexual development and a threat to a healthy nation.



Queerness and disability

Demonstrate how queerness is connected to disability and asynchrony.

Critical intervention

Interrogate the use of disabled and disfigured subjects by queering and crippling LGBTQ+ representations.

What a (dis)functional body in the overall context?

Uses of queer fiction

See slash fiction as a political activity. The use of queer fiction is a means for young people to take a more active role in their media consumption.



Mainstream deconstruction

The contrary sexual orientation of the character in derivative work can be seen as the deconstruction of mainstream stories.

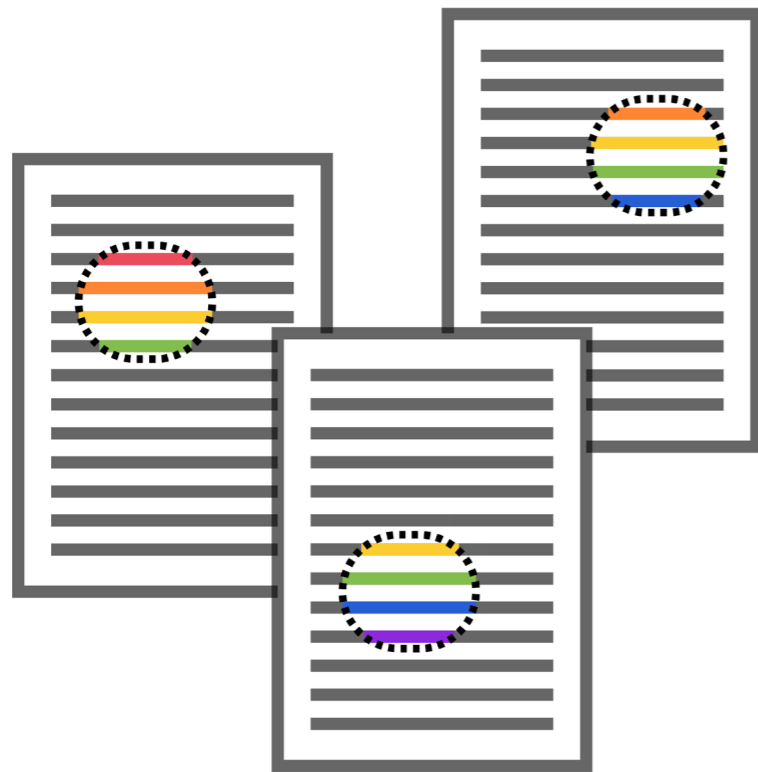
Author's agency

Use sexual identity formation theories to emphasise the agency of authors from the social development perspective.

How the author interprets the gender expression?

Queering national literary history

Induce the representations of queer characters from national literature to understand how the narratives are constructed.



Overview of gay characters

Provide an overview of queer characters from canonical works mainly written by heterosexual authors.

Narrative construction

Explores the narrative concerning gender, social-politic, and legendary contexts.

Heteronormative frame

Analyse how normativity or male gaze governed the gender expression of queer characters.

What is heterosexual about these queer characters?

Materialist perspectives

Examine the trope and show how processes of othering take the place of figurative language.



Hidden path

Explore the hidden path, histories, and connections in language, which lead to the neutrality of texts.

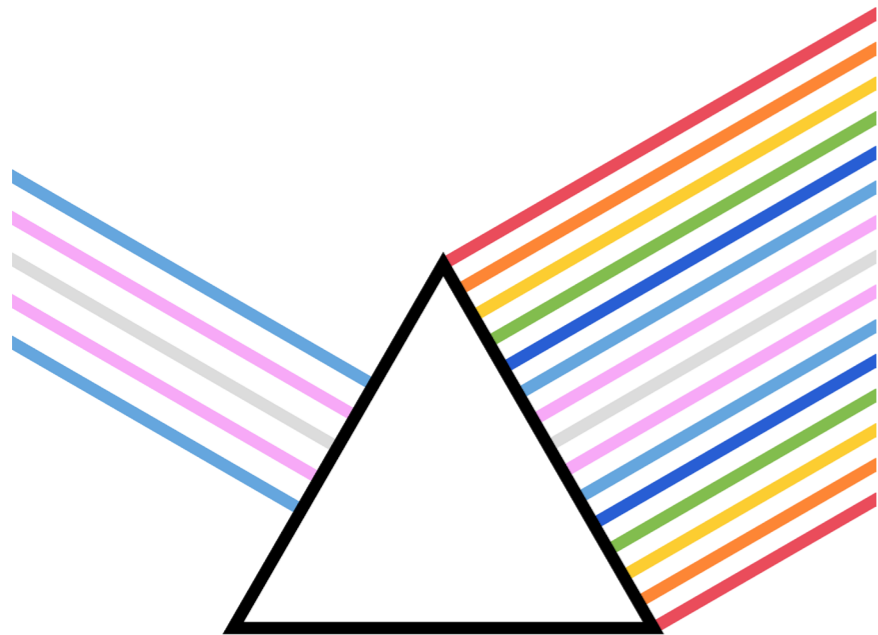
Language embodiment

Acknowledge who embodies the language because people are given power and agency through text.

Why does the author use this analogy?

Trans readings

Conduct trans reading as a practice for containing trans views in reading.



Broaden the terminology

Includes other possibilities more than just the modern understandings of LGBTQ+ terminology.

Alias and connotation

Search for the alias and connotations been used to research the gender variations in different eras.

What can be the alternative of trans in this text?

What will happen this workshop?

9

Queer reading methods

3

Collections to read

1

Documentation



The Venus of Willendorf, exhibited at Naturhistorischen Museum, Vienna, is estimated to have been made between about 28,000 and 25,000 BCE. It was found in 1908 by a workman, during excavations at a Paleolithic site near Willendorf.

Belonging to an ancient past and having exaggerated female forms have established the 'Venus' of Willendorf as an icon of Prehistoric Art.

Venus of Willendorf is an erotic figure according to her pose and the way she presents her body: her head is bowed down, her arms rest on her breasts, and her legs slightly touching each other on the knees complete her charming pose. The emphatic treatment of the vulva's labia and the prominent, slightly protruding pubic area also emphasize the erotic posture of this statuette.

The purpose of the carving was the subject of much speculation. Through the male dominated history writing it was said that this figure was associated with fertility and childbearing. From a patriarchal point of view, being both nude and woman, this figure fitted perfectly into the patriarchal construction of the history of art: the woman with this shape at a prehistoric age must have been associated with motherhood and fertility. But this should also remind us that being a woman is not all about motherhood or giving birth.

This beautifully shaped female figure is a great example of the attractiveness and beauty of women in all forms and eras. The Venus of Willendorf is posing from the matriarchal ages with her persona, fully aware of her attractiveness and showing us the pleasure of being a woman.



Practical tools

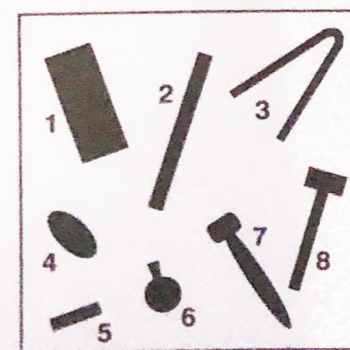
These hair removal instruments [1–3] have been collected on several Indonesian islands. The flat broad brass tweezers [1] were used by the Dayak close to the Mandalam River to remove beard and upper lip hair. The bamboo clip [2] was used on the Kai Islands for hair removal from the face, armpits and pubic area. The Mentawai in Pagai epilated almost their entire bodies, including eyelashes and eyebrows, with wide tototok tweezers [3], that could also be worn over the ear as jewelry.

Before European ideas about masculinity and body hair spread through colonialism, it was a mark of beauty in Oceania to remove hair from the entire body. A Nutshell [4] was a handy tool.

Older men in Korea had a higher status within Confucianism. It was proper and respectable for them to have a beard and moustache. Tweezers like these [5] were essential to maintain facial hair.

These round tweezers [6] were used in pre-Columbian Inca culture to remove facial, chest, arm, leg, and eyebrow hair. Hair on the head, on the other hand, was very long. This custom changed after Spanish colonization. From then on, one had to conform to European ideas about 'decency', with a clear difference between men and women. Chest hair then became 'masculine', just like having short hair.

This hair clipper [7] and razor [8] can be found in Dutch stores today. The design of the products emphasizes gender-specific standards about body hair, even though gender-neutral tools can do the exact same job.



[1] Dayak; Indonesia, Kalimantan; 1839-1899; brass, wool; RV-1219-173. Donated 1899

[2] Kai; Indonesia, Moluccas; before 1891; bamboo; RV-831-20. Donated 1891

[3] Mentawai; Indonesia, Pagai; before 1894; bamboo, rattan, chicken feathers; RV-985-27. Donated 1894

[4] Solomon Islands, Santa Isabel; before 1897; nut shell; RV-1134-349. Purchased 1897

[5] Korea; 1800-1888; bras; RV-666-20. Purchased 1886

[6] Inca; Peru; 1450-1532; copper; TM-3842-981. Donated 1969

[7] Braun 'women's bikini trimmer'. Purchased as prop

[8] Gillette 'men's razor'. Purchased as prop



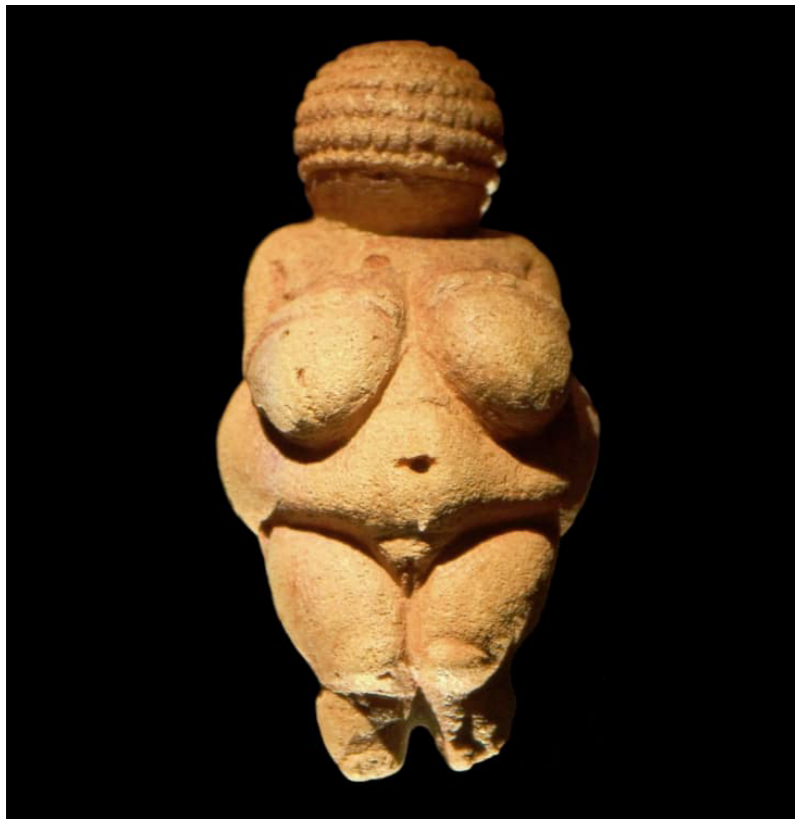
ENGLISH RIDING BOOT, TURN OF THE 18TH CENTURY

As the 17th century wore on, the type of heels worn by men expressed two distinctly different forms of masculinity. Leather-covered heels suggested refinement, while stacked leather ones connoted action and were commonly found on men's riding boots. This thigh boot denatures a high stacked leather heel and was clearly designed to be worn in harsh riding conditions. The use of hard, thick, jack leather provided a great deal of protection while the stacked leather heel would have been of use to the rider keeping his foot in the stirrup.

Let's take a break!

or not (?)

Queer Reading the Heritage



Let's imagine a zine!

or not (?)