This is a Call for Papers for the following **Study Day**:

**Imagining ‘We’ in the Age of ‘I’: Romance and Social Bonding in Contemporary Culture**

**University of Warwick, Friday 29th March 2019**

Following an exciting symposium on 28th September, the key aim of this forthcoming event will be to continue raising questions about conceptualising couples and related social groups today. It will achieve this through an emphasis on the evolving roles and forms of such social units in the cultural imaginary, taking stock of both novel means of engaging with tropes of romance, the family and adjacent forms of bonding and new ways of constructing these that respond to, mediate and feed back into shaping cultural trends in this domain.

In other words, we welcome culturally-oriented research, as well as sociological, psychological or more theoretical interventions.

**We especially welcome submissions from graduate students and early career researchers, for whom travel bursaries of £50-100 will be available to cover costs (possibly even for non-speaking delegates,** tbc depending on numbers – please keep an eye on the website for details when registration opens in January). The event itself is FREE (lunch and refreshments included).

The Study Day asks questions such as:

* What new means of depicting romance, broadly defined, have evolved of late in the multi-media age?
* How do romantic fictions negotiate newly fluid ways of understanding gender, the role of technology in courting and work and other related, rapidly changing practices in coupling and related cultures?
* How do such new instantiations inflect other trends in imagining the couple, for instance in relation to non-normative sexualities?
* Related to this, how does fourth wave feminism – associated with online cultures and alliances with marginalised groups other than women – engage in dialogue with a genre, romantic fiction, often seen as feminine-accented?
* How has #MeToo impacted on romantic courting rituals and inter-gender relations as a whole? In turn, how do new representations construct contemporary masculinity?
* How might depictions and modes of imagining children, parenting, family structures, friendship and communities generally shift in response to the emphasis on cultivation of the self, and the erosion of private-public boundaries, potentially catalysed by both neo-liberalism and screen technologies?
* Finally, how might these questions be nuanced differently in specific cultural contexts?

As well as stimulating debate, we hope the event will lead to a critical reappraisal of certain common assumptions about couples in particular and social bonding in general.

**Confirmed keynotes:**

Professor Diane Negra (UCD)

Professor Tamar Jeffers McDonald (University of Kent)

We are particularly open to proposals on:

* Narratives of romance and the family involving non-Western or non-Anglophone identities
* The influence of new technology on conceptualisations of the couple and the family, whether within texts or as channels for their dissemination
* Masculinity in contemporary romantic discourse
* Romance after #MeToo
* Papers considering the growing importance of friendship as romance may be co-opted by neoliberalism

However, any topic speaking to the themes of the event will be considered.

Please send proposals of no more than 250-words for a maximum 20-minute presentation and a short biog. to imaginingromance@warwick.ac.uk.

**Deadline for proposals: 12 December 2018**

This free event is part of a series funded by a British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award.

For more information see our website:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/news/events/imaginingromance/studyday/>

or contact Dr. Mary Harrod m.g.m.harrod@warwick.ac.uk.