



Women's Studies Research Centre
The University of Hong Kong



ENGENDERING A BUZZ

June 2019 Issue

Dear WSRC members and friends,

Welcome to the third issue of the WSRC Occasional Newsletter, **ENGENDERING A BUZZ!**

In this issue, we are excited to be sharing with you highlights from the various events and initiatives organised by WSRC and partners at HKU around **Women's History Month 2019**, and a thought-provoking blog post from Board member **Dr Jason Coe on *Feminist Fatherhood***.

As always, if you are leading any initiatives or research at HKU related to gender, diversity, inclusion and equality, whether it is an upcoming event, research project or publication which you think may be of interest to our subscribers, we would be delighted to hear from you and start a conversation on how we could feature your work in this space. This applies to students and staff! Please drop us a line at womensrc@hku.hk.

**Puja Kapai, Associate Professor of Law,
Convenor, Women's Studies Research Centre**

Celebrating Women's History Month

WSRC International Women's Day Research Workshop: *Situating Gender & Diversity Studies Research in 2019*

We held our signature International Women's Day Research Workshop, *Situating Gender & Diversity Studies Research in 2019* on 1st March and were delighted to see a large and engaged audience comprising scholars and students from across disciplines, and community members from civil society organisations joining us in kicking off Women's History Month with this event.

Our speakers this year included WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai ('When Equality Elides the Gatekeepers of Equality: A Gender Gap Analysis of the Legal Profession'), WSRC Board members Dr Stacilee Ford ('Leading Men: Gender, Generation, and Globality'), Professor Gina Marchetti ('The Look, the Leer, the Glare and the Gaze: #MeToo, Visual Politics, and Screen Culture in Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China'), Dr Elizabeth LaCouture ('The Intersectionality of Everyday Life in Chinese History'), and Dr Caroline Dingle ('Women in Science in Hong Kong'), as well as Isabella Seif of the Centre for Comparative and Public Law ('CEDAW and Refugee Protection in Asia', a project she is working with WSRC Board member and CCPL Director Kelley Loper on).

WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai gave a thought-provoking opening address about the importance of critically reflecting upon the meaning of gender equality and diversity and ‘celebrating’ women:

International Women’s Day usually has a theme and on occasion, we have worked around such themes. However, we are increasingly troubled by the commercialisation of this work – it has become a form of institutional branding and marketing, a talking shop celebrating ‘progress’ or where there has not been any, courageous ‘leaders’ among us who call that out. As we watch events unfolding around us globally and in Hong Kong, highlighting the continued oppression of those living life on the margins, we found that in many respects, the themes represent ideas which ‘sell’ something troublesome. This year’s theme for example, is #BalanceforBetter with the tagline, “Better the balance; Better the world.” What does that mean? Balance for whom? Balancing what? The implicit suggestion appears to be that balance is possible and that balance is *enough*.

But I like to think that we are more critical-minded and astute than believing that. Simply balancing gender cannot lead to better. Not until we understand who the balance is working for and who gets a seat at the table. And what do these individuals do with their seat, their voice, their agency? And at what cost? We often laud women or minorities for being outliers, for achieving unparalleled advancement in their careers or pursuing their passion in spite of the ways in which society or tradition (or both) have held them back as a result of systemic barriers and inequities. However, I question our celebration of ‘superhero’ women who seem to have made it at all and any costs to themselves, and others around them. We are selling an idea; pushing all women towards the fallacy that balance is the epitome – the fulfilment of our quest to be treated as equals and with dignity. I prefer the language of integration. How can we present our complete selves in the spaces we occupy – without being diminished on grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, disability or other difference? How do we sustain our inclusion in the conversation, how do we cultivate a *culture* of receptivity, engagement that is effective and inclusive? How do we work towards recognition and respect that allows everyone to thrive and reach their full potential to contribute to their communities and beyond?

For us at WSRC, this interrogation of IWD themes has inspired our own theme for today’s event, which is to situate our current understanding and knowledge around leadership in the face of marginality. What are the different forms and practices of marginalisation and inequities that we experience in different domains given the identities we inhabit? What explains the lack of parity despite the façade of balance? When we look behind the scales of balance, we see that things do not improve without programmatic action. This is the bitter truth of balance. How do *we* see and value ourselves, and our capacities? How are we seen or invisibilised by *others* and the structures around us? And most importantly, where do we go from here, given our understanding of the status quo? Who are our allies and how do we enlist collaborative partnership without being spurned as feminists or burned in this climate; where the commercialisation of feminist practices as a form of celebrating visions for

progress we are so far from achieving, is all the rage? How do we stay connected with the real challenges? How can we use our individual agency and collective power to *actually* better the world?



European Union Film Festival – International Women’s Day Screening and Discussion: #Female Pleasure

On International Women’s Day (8th March), HKU and the European Union Office to Hong Kong and Macao, in collaboration with WSRC, the Committee on Gender Equality and Diversity in the Faculty of Arts (CGED), CEDARS, HKU Around the World, Equal Opportunities Unit, Goethe-Institut Hong Kong, and China Women’s Film Festival, hosted a screening of the documentary *#Female Pleasure* followed by a panel discussion on women’s rights. WSRC Board member, Professor Petula Ho spoke on the panel alongside Anne Misselwitz (cinematographer of *#FemalePleasure*), Professor Mette Hjort (Chair Professor in Humanities and Dean of Arts at the Hong Kong Baptist University), Rachel Cartland (Board member of the Women’s Foundation), Dr Travis Kong (Associate Professor of Sociology at HKU), and DJ Gia. The documentary portrays the lives of five courageous and self-determined women breaking the silence imposed on them by their respective societies.

You can view photo highlights from the event on the [Chong Yuet Ming Cultural Centre Facebook page](#).

Gender Studies Programme launches new Gender and Religion Series

The Gender Studies Programme in the Faculty of Arts has launched a new research and knowledge exchange area on Gender, Sexuality and Religion. This semester, working with partners across the University and Hong Kong including WSRC, the programme hosted eight events under the aegis of this new research area. Highlights included a fireside chat on *Faith and Feminism* with Dr Donna Freitas, author of *Sex and the Soul*, with WSRC’s HKU Honorary Professor Maureen Sabine as Chair (11th March). The Gender Studies Programme hosted Rabbi Dena Bodian of Wellesley College who led a well-attended interactive Gender Studies Seminar titled ‘Beyond the Binary: Gender in Biblical and Rabbinic Texts’ (26th March). Rabbi Bodian, along with Dr Ronit Stahl, Assistant Professor of History at University of California Berkeley, led a CGED policy discussion on religious diversity and inclusion in US higher education, which included HKU administrators, staff, students, and local clergy and practitioners of multiple faiths. The Gender Studies Programme has been pleased by the enthusiastic response to these events and will be planning more. Follow Gender Studies on [Facebook](#) and their [website](#) or via [email](#) to stay informed.



Dr Donna Freitas (left) and Professor Maureen Sabine (right) at the 'Fireside Chat on Faith and Feminism' event. Photo courtesy of the Gender Studies Programme.

Women's Month Celebration with HKU HeForSheForUs

The HKU HeForSheForUS Student Society hosted a three-day *Women's Month Celebration* event in collaboration with WSRC from 26th to 28th March at the James Lee Building & Shaws Building Open Space, in an effort to enhance awareness of gender equality and diversity issues and to bring together those working on these causes on campus. Students, academics, and members of the wider community were invited to give music and dance performances and presentations on gender and diversity. WSRC Board members were also invited to speak: Professor Gina Marchetti gave a presentation on post-1997 Hong Kong women filmmakers, Dr Caroline Dingle discussed the experiences of women scientists in Hong Kong, and WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai spoke about what it really means to promote equality and diversity and combat injustice in everyday life, especially in the wake of rising xenophobia against religious and racial minorities.



Other Event Highlights

A Global Dialogue on Women and Girls in STEM

WSRC co-hosted the knowledge exchange event, 'A Global Dialogue on Women and Girls in STEM' with the Gender Studies Programme, HKU Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), and the Consulate General of Israel in Hong Kong on 30th May. The event featured a panel discussion with WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai and WSRC Board member Dr Caroline Dingle alongside Esther Barak Landes (Asana Bio Group), Professor Mouna Maroun (University of Haifa), and Dr Rachel Oser (ISF Academy), on the representation of women and girls in science research and education. They shared strategies for encouraging girls to go into STEM, mentoring, and increasing diversity in positions at the top in each of their fields.



Photos courtesy of the Gender Studies Programme.

WSRC Research Initiatives

WSRC Gender & Diversity Writing Workshops

WSRC officially launched the *WSRC Gender & Diversity Writing Workshop Series* in January 2019, hosting a small group of scholars and undergraduate students working on gender and diversity studies from different Faculties for a week-long writing workshop where they worked on their own research in a welcoming space stocked with coffee and snacks and shared best practices and challenges pertaining to the work they were undertaking, whether in the field, in terms of mentorship, reviewer comments and publication and of course, on safeguarding regular writing time.

The second run of the workshop was hosted in the first two weeks of May (6th to 10th and 14th to 17th), again with enthusiastic responses from gender and diversity scholars from various disciplines including English, Fine Arts, Gender Studies, History, Law, and Sociology. We welcomed some returning participants who had attended our January workshop and found the workshop immensely helpful to their productivity. At the end of the workshop, participants shared that they valued the workshop for providing a dedicated time and space for them to focus on their research and at the same time network and exchange ideas with gender and diversity scholars from other disciplines. The support network and relationships participants have built will be continued through different channels where they remain engaged beyond the workshop. We hope this will open up possibilities for future collaboration in research and other knowledge exchange activities in the field across the University.

Celebrating women's achievements

Professor Gina Marchetti and the Common Core Team awarded Outstanding Teaching Award

WSRC Board member Prof Gina Marchetti (Department of Comparative Literature, HKU) and the rest of the Common Core Team were recently awarded the Outstanding Teaching Award for 'Transdisciplinarity in Action: Creating Multiscalar Teaching and Learning Platforms in the Common Core'. Congratulations, Gina!

Dr Priscilla Song's *Biomedical Odysseys* awarded 2018 Francis L. K. Hsu Book Prize

Congratulations to Dr Priscilla Song, Assistant Professor in the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine, HKU, whose book, *Biomedical Odysseys: Fetal Cell Experiments from Cyberspace to China* (Princeton 2017) was awarded the 2018 Francis L. K. Hsu Book Prize by the Society for East Asian Anthropology. *Biomedical Odysseys* presents ethnographic research in hospital wards, laboratories, and online patient discussion forums to shed light on how patients' journeys in search of foetal cell cures become tangled in complex webs of digital mediation, the entrepreneurial logics of post-socialist medicine, and fraught debates about the ethics of clinical experimentation.

Dr Julia Bowes' doctoral dissertation awarded 2019 Lerner-Scott Prize

Congratulations to Dr Julia Bowes, Assistant Professor in the Department of History, HKU, who was recently awarded the Lerner-Scott Prize for the best doctoral dissertation in US women's history by the Organization of American Historians. Her dissertation, 'Invading the Home: Children, State Power, and the Gendered Origins of Modern Conservatism, 1865-1933', discusses the histories of gender, the state, and conservatism in the US.

Publications by WSRC members and friends

Puja Kapai, '#MeToo in Asia: Breaking Down Barriers'

WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai's article '#MeToo In Asia: Breaking down barriers' appeared in the April 2019 issue of the Asian Jurist. The article charts the journey of #MeToo in Asia, surveying a wide range of countries including, China, Japan, Korea, India and Hong Kong. The first step towards addressing the challenge of sexual harassment in Asia is to recognise the role of cultural, social, legal and political contexts which produce and perpetuate gender imbalance and other forms of patriarchy. These are the enabling structures which work together to entrench structural and substantive inequalities and provide fertile conditions for the perpetration and continuation of sexual harassment on grounds of gender. A context-specific approach to gender justice is indispensable – Asia, like other parts of the world, must forge its own approach to tackling these issues.

[J]ust as global history does not begin with the story of colonialism, tracking the development and spread of the #MeToo movement as a trend moving from the West to the East should give us pause to reconsider.

The trajectory of #MeToo in Asia reveals the importance of understanding developments within their distinct contexts and local settings in order to map the unique journey taken by different communities to forge pathways to gender justice against sexual violence.

...In China, Korea, Japan and India, the movement is clearly building on decades of feminist organisation and activism to challenge the widespread perpetration and tolerance of sexual violence as a privilege of the elite, powerful and well-connected.

...It is this system that #MeToo threatens to destabilise. It is now possible to use anonymous reporting to seek out other victims to build a case against a serial sexual predator in a manner that was not conceivable before. This helps address multiple facets of the gender justice gaps, including victim-blaming and shaming, undermining the testimony of victims on grounds of credibility, and the silencing of victims for reasons of honour. However, #MeToo has centred the perpetrator as the subject of dishonour and distrust. This has fomented the unravelling of the tight networks connecting powerful men together and, as these ties begin to fray, such connections are deemed politically, socially, and professionally corrosive.

As the revival of gender justice forges forth, there is much work to be done. Home-grown approaches and cultural shifts are essential for lasting and meaningful change. These serve as the seeds and soil to ensure their proper conditioning to enable the protection of all women against GBV and the success of any legal claims brought against abusers. It is time to work within our communities to turn bystanders and enablers into allies who act against the perpetrators of such abuse, and to create a tipping point for a new normal – one which is free from gender-based violence.'

Read the full article [here](#).

Puja Kapai, 'Dreams of Pakistani Children: In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys'

WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai recently launched a research report on *Dreams of Pakistani Children: In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys*, a collaborative project, commissioned by the Zubin Foundation and funded by Plan International Hong Kong. The report was presented to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare Dr Law Chi-kwong and has served as the basis for discussion with relevant stakeholders at the launch, including the Chief Imam in Hong Kong, school teachers, parents, the Equal Opportunities Commission and various NGOs serving ethnic minority communities in education, employment, health and other community services.

As the research findings show, practices, expectations and experiences of a sample of Pakistani girls in Hong Kong is indicative of challenges to their access to education, their developmental rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the realization of their full potential towards a life they aspire to lead. There are inequalities on the basis of gender in terms of equal access to having these rights realised for Pakistani girls. The findings confirm that early engagements to their future life partners are a prevalent practice among Pakistani girls in Hong Kong. This sets

them on course to abandon their dreams to study or work and to devote their efforts towards the fulfillment of their family's expectations for married life and building a happy home life as a dutiful wife and young mother.

The research findings provide detailed insights into the different contexts and factors which constrain the dreams and aspirations of Pakistani girls in Hong Kong at different stages of their lives. In particular, it highlights key areas for support and the provision of opportunities and incentives for all related Hong Kong stakeholders to address the gendered impact of the operative norms and structures on Pakistani girls, with the hope of identifying a multi-disciplinary approach to enhancing the prospects for equality of access to education and other forms of empowerment of Pakistani girls'.

Read the full report [here](#).

Jason Coe, 'Serial Authentication: Gamifying Hong Kong Action Cinema in Sleeping Dogs'

WSRC Board member Dr Jason Coe's (Department of Comparative Literature, HKU) article, 'Serial Authentication: Gamifying Hong Kong Action Cinema in Sleeping Dogs', was published in Volume 13, Issue 1 of the *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* recently. Jason's article examines how the video game *Sleeping Dogs* (United Front, 2012) appropriates and transforms the conventions of Hong Kong action cinema to a new media format for North American audiences. He argues that the game constructs the cultural authenticity of its particular brand of diasporic masculine subjectivity by subjecting the player to serial authentication – the repetitive integration into the diegetic world and its highly mediated reproduction of Hong Kong.

WSRC and Centre for Criminology, *Doing Gender and Why it Matters*



WSRC Board member and Director of the Centre for Criminology Professor Karen Laidler has developed a MOOC (massive open online course) on gender to be launched on **9th July 2019** on EdX. The MOOC, *Doing Gender and Why It Matters*, is the first course on this platform to examine Gender in Asia using an integrated and interdisciplinary approach, scrutinising social and legal constructions of gender which continue to operate as though gender is binary and exploring a more inclusive approach which reflects the gender continuum within the context of entrenched power structures. Through understanding gender and its relations with society, participants can start to look for solutions to eradicate gender discrimination and gender-based violence. Course content is contributed and curated by topic experts from WSRC,

CGED, the Centre for Criminology and from across different faculties, including WSRC Convenor Puja Kapai, WSRC board members, Professor Karen Laidler, Professor Gina Marchetti, Dr Stacilee Ford, Dr Jason Coe, as well as Professor Nirmala Rao, Dr Travis Kong, Dr Carmen Tong and Dr Aditi Jhaveri, among others.

The course is OPEN and FREE for everyone, and will commence on **9th July 2019**. We are very excited that many have already signed up for the course – if you haven't done so yet, **enroll NOW** and **like the MOOC's Facebook page** to stay updated!

[WSRC Blog: ‘Feminist Fatherhood #1: Gendered Expectations’](#)

By Dr Jason Coe (Department of Comparative Literature, School of Humanities)

This series of ruminations represents my explorations into the possibility, or maybe even impossibility, of “feminist fatherhood.” As a first-time parent, I find myself confronting many difficult questions: am I being patriarchal? Am I doing enough to support my partner? What am I teaching my child about gender, race, class, and politics through our everyday activities? Do I make enough money to be a good father, husband, and son? Am I a productive member of society? How do I benefit from being male, Han Chinese, and an expat living in Hong Kong? Can I do and be better? And am I really that bad?

First-time parenting can be an anxiety-ridden landscape, full of dark spots, dead-ends, and second-guessing. We grope around in the dark, and yet, experience transcendent in the process. In this series of blog posts on feminist fatherhood for the WSRC, I will map out the contours as best as I can. Any conclusions I make are not prescriptive and entirely personal. Your mileage may vary. Lastly, I reserve the right to change my mind later – mostly because one day I’ll probably look back on these entries and realize that I got it all wrong.

Feminist Fatherhood #1: Gendered Expectations

So, why feminist fatherhood? The impetus for finally writing up this collection of thoughts is becoming a father and having a son. Before now, I considered this work on myself to be a personal journey, something that I need not share with others. Everyone learns in their own way, so why go around telling others what I’ve learned and why it matters? Moreover, who wants that kind of responsibility? But parenthood is different – a lesson I relearn every day. From now on, we are responsible for our child’s welfare, and his future depends upon our best efforts. Like it or not, every decision we make about what is right or what is best has tremendous implications for how he grows up. That being said, I didn’t realize how much joy and satisfaction I would find in doing my best to be a good parent and partner.

To be honest, my wife and I both wanted a girl, but for rather different reasons. These reasons reflect both of our ingrained beliefs about gender, but in surprising ways. I wanted a girl because I wanted the child to be just like my wife: smart, high-achieving, athletic, and dependable. I was very afraid of having a boy, who I unfairly assumed would grow up to be a spoilt brat that believes the whole world owed him something. At worst, he could become a sex offender, alcoholic, and/or drug and video game addict, with a gambling problem. Of course, women can also be entitled layabouts, drink too much, play too many video games, and commit sexual violence, but since when do parental expectations and anxieties about their unborn children have anything do with reality? When I thought of having a girl, I imagined coaching her basketball team, teaching her how to code, and her becoming the first ever Asian American female astronaut and POTUS. When I thought of having a boy, I just hoped he wouldn’t grow up to be creepy or a drunk driver. Raising a son seemed like a real drag with mostly downsides, whereas raising a daughter seemed like the sky was the limit. In retrospect, none of these gendered assumptions make any sense and mostly reflect my insecurities and anxieties about my own shortcomings, but ideology never really makes sense.

It wasn't until the second trimester of my wife's pregnancy that I began to recognize these assumptions. When we went to our second ultrasound, I noticed a tiny protrusion extending from in between the baby's legs. Immediately, I realized that the child would be born male, thus changing my entire outlook on my responsibilities as a parent. It was an immediate and visceral experience, both exciting and terrifying. Moments later when the doctor announced the baby's sex, my wife let out an audible cry of disappointment, so loud that I worried the child had heard and would be telling a therapist about it decades later. Only at that moment did my wife realize how badly she wanted a daughter. After some rumination, she told me that she was disappointed because she wanted a child to do things with in the kitchen, who could wear the cute dresses that grandma desperately wants to buy, and mostly I think, because she likes hanging out with other women. Of course, our son could very well love to cook, wear dresses, and I certainly expect him to enjoy hanging out with his mom, but it felt like these options had already been precluded to the child before he had even left the womb.

I, on the other hand, felt a sudden surge of responsibility upon learning that the fetus floating in my wife's womb making her nauseous every day would be biologically male, or at the very least would be assigned that way according to current norms of medical practice. Immediately, I understood that whether I liked it or not, my ways of being gendered would inevitably condition this child's understanding of their own gender. This would also be true had my contribution to the zygote been an "x" instead of a "y" chromosome, but the significance of my role as a father in our child's understanding of gender only dawned on me then. That I only realized this at the moment of primary gender identification with our unborn child illustrates how gender ideologies function upon and through me. I felt a much greater sense of investment in the child's future behaviour because we share the same biological sex. I only saw myself as a role model after I found out we were having a boy, which is rather silly seeing how my greatest role model is my mother, but ideology never really makes sense.

Things got real for me as a parent when I began to carry our son. By comparison, my wife had been carrying him for 9 months already, so I had a lot of catching up to do, which actually, has been a total joy. Even something so simple as carrying a baby held a sort of mystique for me with its own ideological sway. First of all, I'm a pretty big and clumsy guy who has broken his fair share of Ikea furniture, and I've been told more than once that I don't know my own strength, so the thought of holding something as precious as a newborn has always been nerve-wracking. I never carried other people's infants in fear of breaking them, perhaps irrationally, or maybe to get out of babysitting. I don't know for sure. Those feelings changed pretty quickly.



Like all newborns, our son was tiny, but I wasn't afraid to hold him. If anything, I felt safe in my strength, almost as if unbeknownst to me all of this time, the purpose of being born a bumbling oaf was to carry this child as far and as long as necessary — an important skill for soothing a crying baby! Moreover, he's pretty responsive to all of the high-flying movements that we do. He smiles in delight when we prance across the room with him raised above my head, when I gently support his neck and abdomen to

keep his mouth above the water while he splashes in the kiddie pool, and when I rocked him back and forth when he wouldn't even yet open his eyes. I take his inherent trust in me with gravitas, and I scoff when his grandparents tell me I'm too rough or that it's dangerous. Of course, they don't know that when the baby is in my arms, every process in my body — from my tensing abdominals and firm but pliant hold to my brain's instantaneous calculations of spacing, speed, and distance — is focused on assuring his safety. It's a primal instinct that I'm sure other parents understand.

(Interesting side-note, a Taiwanese confinement nanny in a baby clinic waiting room once lectured me about bouncing our baby because I would give him shaken baby syndrome. She then proceeded to shame my wife for not having her parents around and for deciding to forego the 1-month confinement period. She didn't ask about my parents' whereabouts. We decided to ignore her before she could recommend us some professional services to us because I was a clueless man and my wife an irresponsible woman. I will always remember that experience as a prime example of how capitalism and sexism often share a common agenda.)

At the same time, I've also had to question my confidence about carrying our son. My wife sometimes asks me if I would be so hands-on and "rough" with the baby if he were female. The truth is, I'm not sure. Just as my wife felt like she would forge a trust and deep understanding with the child simply because of their shared sex, do I feel like my son and I have a mutual trust in safe roughhousing simply because of our shared sex? I'd like to think not, but when I ask myself this question, I can't help but think that part of me might be gentler, or at the very least behave differently, were the baby born a girl instead of a boy. When he couldn't do so on his own, I used to hold his head up to drink from the bottle and burp, and sometimes, I would worry that my palms gripped his cranium and chin too tightly, so I would self-consciously relax my hands. Were the baby female, would these types of worries arise more often? Would I expect her to be as receptive to roughhousing as my son? Wouldn't she be missing out on a parent-child pleasure that he and I share if I let those worries inhibit our interactions? Moreover, does my wife only trust me with our son because I know "what a boy can handle"? Would she trust me with a daughter in the same way? Unless it happens, how could we know? And even then, how much will our experiences with our son shape how I interact with a daughter? I just don't know.

After these experiences from the first weeks of our son's life, it became quite clear to me that we can't possibly be gender neutral because we actively shape our performances of gender through the very act of parenting. I learn my own masculinity and fatherhood through our family interactions: confirming, denying, growing, and accepting different aspects of myself by way of socializing with them. And just as I feel empowered to perform masculinity because of my child's sex, my wife may feel inhibited in her own gender expressions. We'd be fooling ourselves if we thought our parental roles were neutral or natural, but I'd like to think we will become aware of our biases as we go along. At least, we can only try. Parenting requires a particular kind of bravery: even though it's basically the most important thing we will ever do, we can only do our best given the circumstances and accept the outcomes no matter what. If we screw up, hopefully he'll forgive us once he works it out with a therapist.