

Soutenance de thèse de **Madame Erika Sadler**

Le jeudi 8 février 2024, à 13h00

Thèse présentée au
Centre d'études du religieux contemporain
comme exigence partielle du
Doctorat en études du religieux contemporain
offert à l'Université de Sherbrooke
pour l'obtention du grade de
Philosophiae Doctor (Ph.D.)

**La soutenance est publique, il est possible d'y
assister en présentiel (A7-235) ou en ligne (Teams)
Inscription obligatoire à l'adresse suivante :
religieux.contemporain@usherbrooke.ca
Avant le mercredi 7 février, 14h00.**

Bienvenue à toutes et à tous!

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Titre de la thèse**REDRESSING MASOCHISM: FEMDOM
CONFESSIONS AND THE SACRED
TREASURES OF SUBMISSION****Direction**

Pr Patrick Snyder, directeur

Autres membres du jury

Pre Julie Lavigne

Pr Jacques Quintin

Pre Ummni Khan

Pre Melissa Wilcox

Résumé

Erotic heterosexual male submission is an esoteric and marginalised sexual practice. In contemporary Western society, it is popularly known as femdom (from female or feminine domination). In practice, femdom, while having a presence in BDSM subculture, remains largely confined to a commercialised sex industry serving alternative masculine desires. Femdom relies on an unusual sexual script that differs markedly from that of mainstream heterosexual masculinities and BDSM performances in what I will argue are two significant influences in its construction: the contemporary commoditization of femdom sex, and the reproduction of masochism.

This dissertation focuses primarily on the latter by reframing femdom as a heterodox and recondite erotico-religious intertextual phenomenon which has deep roots in the original genesis of masochism. It fills a notable lacunae in the study of male erotic submission and advances the historical analysis of masochism as a sexualized religious practice shaping contemporary femdom performances.

I argue that a redress of masochism, and the masochistic confessions informing it as a queer Judeo-Christian theology of passion (suffering) and resurrection (rebirth, transformation), establishes a thematic framework in which we can trace a history of erotic female domination to its century old literary beginnings. Sacher-Masoch's confessional script, notable for its explicit prudery, has in turn been reworked by the sex industry to produce the contemporary femdom sexual script: this relatively arcane erotic performance upends mainstream sex roles and manifests itself as an esoteric reproduction of religious culture.