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PROCEEDINGS OF THE ICGL12
ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΤΟΥ ICGL12

Thanasis Georgakopoulos, Theodossia-Soula Pavlidou, Miltos Pechlivanos, Artemis Alexiadou, Jannis Androutsopoulos, Alexis Kalokairinos, Stavros Skopeteas, Katerina Stathi (Eds.)

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και της Αγγελικής Μαλικούτη-Drachman (†4.5.2015)
για την τεράστια προσφορά τους στην ελληνική γλωσσολογία
και την αγάπη τους για την ελληνική γλώσσα

ΣΗΜΕΙΩΜΑ ΕΚΔΟΤΩΝ

Το 12ο Διεθνές Συνέδριο Ελληνικής Γλωσσολογίας (International Conference on Greek Linguistics/ICGL12) πραγματοποιήθηκε στο Κέντρο Νέου Ελληνισμού του Ελεύθερου Πανεπιστημίου του Βερολίνου (Centrum Modernes Griechenland, Freie Universität Berlin) στις 16-19 Σεπτεμβρίου 2015 με τη συμμετοχή περίπου τετρακοσίων συνέδρων απ᾽ όλον τον κόσμο.

Την Επιστημονική Επιτροπή του ICGL12 στελέχωσαν οι Θανάσης Γεωργακόπουλος, Θεοδοσία-Σούλα Παυλίδου, Μίλτος Πεχλιβάνος, Άρτεμις Αλεξιάδου, Δώρα Αλεξοπούλου, Γιάννης Ανδρουτσόπουλος, Αμαλία Αρβανίτη, Σταύρος Ασημακόπουλος, Αλεξάνδρα Γεωργακοπούλου, Κλεάνθης Γκρώμαν, Σαβίνα Ιατρίδου, Mark Janse, Brian Joseph, Αλέξης Καλοκαιρινός, Ναπολέων Κάτσος, Ευαγγελία Κορδώνη, Αμαλία Μόζερ, Ελένη Μπουτουλούση, Κική Νικηφορίδου, Αγγελική Ράλλη, Άννα Ρούσσου, Αθηνά Σιούπη, Σταύρος Σκοπετέας, Κατερίνα Στάθη, Μελίτα Σταύρου, Αρχόντω Τερζή, Νίνα Τοπιντζή, Ιάνθη Τσιμπλή και Σταυρούλα Τσιπλάκου.

Την Οργανωτική Επιτροπή του ICGL12 στελέχωσαν οι Θανάσης Γεωργακόπουλος, Αλέξης Καλοκαιρινός, Κώστας Κοσμάς, Θεοδοσία-Σούλα Παυλίδου και Μίλτος Πεχλιβάνος.

Οι δύο τόμοι των πρακτικών του συνεδρίου είναι προϊόν της εργασίας της Εκδοτικής Επιτροπής στην οποία συμμετείχαν οι Θανάσης Γεωργακόπουλος, Θεοδοσία-Σούλα Παυλίδου, Μίλτος Πεχλιβάνος, Άρτεμις Αλεξιάδου, Γιάννης Ανδρουτσόπουλος, Αλέξης Καλοκαιρινός, Σταύρος Σκοπετέας και Κατερίνα Στάθη.

Παρότι στο συνέδριο οι ανακοινώσεις είχαν ταξινομηθεί σύμφωνα με θεματικούς άξονες, τα κείμενα των ανακοινώσεων παρατίθενται σε αλφαβητική σειρά, σύμφωνα με το λατινικό αλφάβητο· εξαίρεση αποτελούν οι εναρκτήριες ομιλίες, οι οποίες βρίσκονται στην αρχή του πρώτου τόμου.

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TALKING ABOUT SAME-SEX PARENTHOOD IN CONTEMPORARY GREECE: DYNAMIC CATEGORIZATION AND INDEXICALITY

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Περίληψη

Εστιάζοντας σε ημιδομημένες συνεντεύξεις με δύο ομόφυλα ζευγάρια που επιδιώκουν να γίνουν γονείς επιχειρώ να προσεγγίσω τις αφηγήσεις που προκύπτουν με τα εργαλεία της Ανάλυσης Λόγου και της Ανάλυσης Συνομιλίας. Η ομόφυλη γονεϊκότητα υπογραμμίζει το διαχωρισμό της αναπαραγωγής από τη σεξουαλικότητα με αποτέλεσμα να αναδύονται νέες νόρμες σε σχέση με αναγνωρίσιμες κοινωνικές κατηγορίες. Συνεπώς η μελέτη της γλώσσας-και-σεξουαλικότητας δεν μπορεί να αγνοήσει τη συνεπακόλουθη αλλαγή στις συναφείς ενδεικτικές σχέσεις αλλά ούτε και να μην προβληματοποιήσει το ίδιο το περιεχόμενο των κατηγοριών, εφόσον αυτό δε μεταβάλλεται απλώς, συν τω χρόνω, αλλά επιβάλει ριζικές ανανοηματοδοτήσεις.

Keywords: gender and sexuality, parenthood, queer linguistics, (dynamic) categorization, indexicality

1. Introduction

This work focuses on discourses of same-sex parenthood in contemporary Greece based on data derived from semi-structured interviews conducted by Aspa Chalki-

dou[1] for (*In*)*fercit*,[2] an interdisciplinary project on parenthood and kinship vis-à-vis assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs). It picks up where earlier work (Canakis 2015a, 2015b) has left off, attempting to take some of the arguments further.

I argue that, as ARTs have crucially enhanced the chances of parenthood for same-sex couples in Greece (Kantsa 2006, Kantsa and Chalkidou 2014, Chalkidou 2015), there have emerged new opportunities for the investigation of narratives produced by a part of the population for which parenthood has been habitually relegated to the realm of the unthinkable. This notable development –especially in a society where childbearing and parenthood weigh heavily towards enhancing social capital (Paxson 2006, Athanasiou 2006, Kantsa 2015)– has far-reaching consequences for the "erotic projects" (Valentine 2011 [2008]) of lesbians and gay men and the indexical relations among gendered and sexed predicates. Indeed, as same-sex parenthood has underscored the dissociation of reproduction from sexuality, there have emerged new norms vis-à-vis established social categories (their names, conceptual and evaluative content, and the indexical relations they establish; cf. Canakis 2015c, to appear). Therefore, the informants in these interviews position themselves (cf. Bamberg et al. 2011, Archakis and Lampropoulou 2011) as gendered and sexual beings vis-à-vis both established and changing norms and expectations.

The transformation of the indexical relation (cf. Ochs 1992) between reproduction and heterosexual orientation, and the conceptualization of kinship in a way that goes beyond genealogical procreative relations (Kantsa 2006, Sahlins 2014: 109) has played a pivotal role in this development, which the study of language and sexuality has, so far, largely ignored (but see Hall 2013, Canakis to appear). Perspectives on sexuality as identity and desire (Canakis 2010, 2011) and more recent, "queer linguistic" approaches to discourse (Motschenbacher and Stegu 2013) can be explored to this effect, especially if more attention is paid to the shifting content of "(homo)normativity" (Hall 2013) and the dynamic nature of categorization and, thereby, of indexicality (Hanks 2000, Canakis to appear), which is interpersonally constituted (Sidnell and Enfield 2016) and interactionally based. The challenge for any such study is to combine pragma- and sociolinguistic as well as discourse- and conversation analytic findings with ethnographic research.

1 I am as grateful to Aspa for sharing her data so generously as I am to Eleni Antonopoulou for editing.

2 (*In*)*fercit* http://www.in-fercit.gr/en/ is a research program jointly funded by the European Social Fund and the General Secretariat of Research and Technology of Greece and run by Venetia Kantsa at the Dept. of Social Anthropology and History, University of the Aegean, Greece.

2. Context

2.1. The people

Two gay men (Aris and Andonis,[3] 43 and 30 years old, respectively) and two lesbian women (Despina and Kalliopi, 39 and 34 years old, respectively) in same-sex relationships have decided to have a child by DIY artificial insemination of Despina with Aris's genetic material. The interviewees reposition themselves vis-à-vis social institutions and gender-appropriate expectations, negotiating proscriptions and possibilities and resignifying their position as gendered and sexed citizens.

2.2. The data

The data are excerpted from a database of 12 semi-structured interviews, conducted by Aspa Chalkidou, with lesbian mothers in same-sex relationships aged 27-54 (over 20 hours of recordings) and one interview by a couple of gay men. This paper is based on three interviews:

1. Despina, 02:14:58
2. Kalliopi, 00:54:17
3. Aris and Andonis, 02:32:55

Although not video-recorded (cf. Duranti 1997, Enfield 2009), the data are still misrepresented in a short paper, hence readers are referred to other treatments of the same material (Canakis 2015a, 2015b).

3. Analyzing the data

3.1. Despina

Despina problematizes her decision to have a child (8-12, 14, 16-17) in relation to her sexual orientation (11, 14), underscoring the unprecedented level of acceptance resulting from her pregnancy (21-30), which causes her contradictory feelings (33-34). Her

3 Names are obviously changed.

narrative performs crucial identity work in context (Benwell and Stokoe 2006: 161, De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012: 155, 176, Bamberg et al. 2011: 178).

EXTRACT 1: Despina [00:12:49 – 00:16:32]

8 D: η επιθυμία σε τι αναλύεται; (.) […]
[…]
11 μπορεί/ >είναι κάτι σαν μια φιλοδοξία< ότι::: είμαι λεσβία αλλά μπορώ να το
12 κάνω κι αυτό;
13 A: αχά:
14 D: άμα γουστάρω
15 A: =αχά:
16 D: κι ότι έχει ένα κομμά:τι::: (2) τς ε:: (.) fuck off (.) κιόλας (2) […]
17 βέ:βαια:: (2) ε::: ντάξει (.) τους λες (.) το κάνω αλλά απ' την άλλη ((laughs))
[…]
21 >ξαφνικά έχω γίνει πολύ πιο acces/ πολύ πιο προσιτή< (.) το βλέπω
22 στο πως μου μιλάνε οι άνθρωποι
23 A: α:::
24 D: =τώρα ως έγκυος εννο/ εννοΕΙται (.) οι γυναίκες συνάδελφοι κατά αρχήν (.)
25 ξέ:ρουνε:: π/ έχουνε ένα πράγμα να μου κά:νουνε:: τς (.) να κάνουνε bonding μαζί
26 μου (.) δηλαδή: είναι ενθουσιασμένες, δεν ξέρω γιατί
27 A: ((incomprehensible word)) είσαι σε ενδιαφέρουσα
28 D: =εί[μαι σε ενδιαφέρουσα
29 A: [αρκετά ενδιαφέρουσα
30 D: =είμαι πραγματικά ενδιαφέρουσα
[…]
33 συμβαίνει και κάτι ύποπτο (.) όταν έτσι σε αποδέχενται[4] (2)
34 ο ετεροφυλόφιλος κόσμος

8 D: this desire, what does it amount to? (.) […]
[…]
11 maybe/ >it is something like an ambition< tha:::t I'm a lesbian but I can

4 Sic.

12 do that too?
13 A: ahu:h
14 D: if I so please
15 A: = Ahu:h
16 D: and that there's also a pa:::rt (2) tch e::r (.) fuck off (.) too (2) …
17 su::re (2) e:::r OK (.) you tell them (.) I do this but on the other hand ((laughs))
[…]
21 >suddenly I have become much more acces/ much more affable< (.) I see it
22 in how people talk to me
23 A: O:::h
24 D: =now as a pregnant woman of cou/ of cOUrse (.) women colleagues to begin with (.)
25 they kno::w th/ they have a thing to do:: with me tch (.) to do bonding with me
26 (.) that i:s they are thrilled, I don't know why
27 A: ((incomprehensible word)) you are pregnant[5]
28 D: =I [am pregnant
29 A: [quite pregnant
30 D: =I am really pregnant
[…]
33 (5) there is also something fishy going on (.) when they accept you like that
34 (2) heterosexual people

Despina suggests various reasons for her pregnancy. Yet, connecting childbearing and lesbianism with *αλλά* 'but' (11), she presents their relation as noteworthy, which justifies her characterization of child-bearing as *φιλοδοξία* 'ambition' (11) but also as in-your-face appropriation of "transgression" (16). Crucially, the slangy and strongly assertive *άμα γουστάρω* 'if I so please' describes her pregnancy flatly as a matter of choice. Furthermore, while conscious of the stigma attached to lesbianism (18-21; cf. Kantsa 2011) and aware that motherhood among lesbians is unexpected (11-12; an inference arising from *κι αυτό* 'that too' in 12), she still opts for "doing being ordinary" (11-15; Sacks 1984), a pivotal move for normalizing stigmatized practices (Lawrence 1996) –to which the interviewer contributes with her affiliative minimal responses (13, 15).

5 Pun featuring the idiom *σε ενδιαφέρουσα* 'pregnant' and *ενδιαφέρουσα* 'interesting$_F$'. Incidentally, the semantic potential of *pregnant* approximates that of *(σε) ενδιαφέρουσα* in Greek.

Despina negotiates the social consequences of her pregnancy online and is suspicious about what it may index (33-34). Yet, in focusing on how others perceive of her pregnancy, she negotiates the category lesbian in relation to her own gendered and sexed subjectivity (her own womanhood). The use of extreme formulations (Pomerantz 1986) when describing her relation to other women at work and frequent use of English words in narrating her reactions position her as an outsider by choice. Indeed, the ironic comment (27-30) co-constructed between Despina and the interviewer by exploiting a pun (see footnote 4), targets this outgroup and its values (cf. Tsakona 2013) which the two women (as members of another ingroup) do not share. This becomes particularly clear later, where she expresses unease at doing *κάτι τό:σο: <κεντρικά: κανονικό: και::>* *(.)* 'something so: <u:ltimately o:rdinary a::nd> (.)', since reproduction *εί:ναι: εί:ναι: κά:τι εί:ναι: […]* είναι *παίρνει:ς; πώς το λέν*ε*::; πα/ ε:: σα προαγωγή σε κάτι έτσ' αιστάνομαι (.)* 'i:s i:s something i:s […] is taking how shall I pu::t it? pr/ u::h like a promotion to something that's how I feel (.).' The "promotion" she is talking about is not necessarily a "privilege" she is comfortable with, as it indexes a set of values she hardly espouses.

3.2. Kalliopi

Tensions relating to the concept of (either attributed or claimed) "normalcy" also appear in Kalliopi's interview with regard to conceptualizations of the reproductive body as a locus of erotics. She problematizes "normal procreation" through heterosexual activity as opposed to the perceived markedness of insemination with sperm injection, contending that Aris's and Despina's bodies are not sexualized (9-10, 33-35) in this procedure. Moreover, she suggests there is something transactional, "mechanical" (30, 33) and "non-magical" (31) about DIY insemination which is "annoying" (16, 30) to people who have children as a result of heterosexual desire.

EXTRACT 2: Kalliopi [00:30:23 – 00:33:02]

9 K: τη διαδικασί:α […] που θα τραβήξ' τη μαλακία ο Άρης το σπέρμα π/ ότ/ αυτό
10 όλο το σεξουαλικό […] είναι σα να εξαφανίζεται: (.)
[…]
15 λέγαμε ότι προσπαθούμε: μ' αυτό τον τρόπο και τα λοιπά υπήρχε: μία: σαν
16 εΝΟ:χληση (.) […]
17 από πολύ/ πολλές διαφορετικές πά:ντες ερχόταν αυτό ε:::
[…]

29 ή υπάρχει πρόβλημα; >ναι και πας στο νοσοκομείο< (.) αυτό το άλλο που είναι
30 λίγο αυτά τα:: σα:ν μηχανικό: (.) ήντα[6] σα να δημιουργούσε ενόχληση (1) ή ότι
31 […] σα να απομαγικοποιούσε:::: (.) το δικό τους τρόπο (2) ε: […]
32 το δικό τους τρόπο (2) ε: [...]
33 τι: (3) υπήρχε μια από-σεξουαλικοποίηση (.) ενώ:: >ξες […]
34[…]τα σώματα εκείνη την ώρα
35 κι αυτές οι διαδικασίες <δεν εί:ναι:: σεξουαλικοποιη[μένα>
36 A: [ναι: (.) ναι.

9 K: this proce:dure [...] when Aris will jerk off the sperm wh/ th/ this
10 whole sexual thing […]
11 body, it's like it's disappeari:ng (.)
[…]
15 we said we are try:ing in this way et cetera there wa:s something like a:n
16 anNO:yance (.) […]
17 from very/ many different si:des this kept coming from
18 e:::r
[…]
29 either there is a problem? >yes and you go to the hospital< (.) this other thing which is
30 a little like tho::se li:ke mecha:nical (.) was like it caused annoyance (1) or […] as if it demy::::stified (.)
32 their way (2) e:r […]
33 τι: (3) there was a de-sexualization (.) wherea::s >y'know […]
34 […] the bodies at that time and
35 these procedures <a:re no::t sexua[lized>
36 A: [ye:s (.) yes.

Kalliopi theorizes the desexualization of reproduction as a crucial step in understanding her role as a mother, especially since dominant discourses place her in the marginal position reserved for the corporeally uninvolved. She returns regularly to the *εNO:χληση* 'annoyance' (30) DIY insemination causes to others, which gives coherence to her narrative and promotes interpersonal involvement (Tannen 1987: 584). The mechanical

6 Sic.

aspects of sperm injection (30) and the "de-sexualization" of the bodies (33) are pivotal points in her negotiation of lesbian (social or genetic) motherhood; for they disassociate reproduction from sexuality. Her reference to Aris's sperm as the product of *μαλακία* 'jerking off' (9) contributes to her argument of bodily absence and desexualization, by dramatically underscoring the absence of a desired other. She thus produces a technical and desexualized narrative of procreation claiming recognition for herself and her companion as lesbian women and mothers in terms that do not collide head-on with their lived experience.

3.3. Aris and Andonis

Aris, who contributes genetic material, also focuses on issues of normativity from his perspective as a gay man who will soon become a father. In Extract 3, Aris recognizes the difficulties of same-sex parenthood (4) but claims normality for his decision to have a child (5), and justifies it by invoking the changing (indeed favorable) social conditions for gay men (9-10) compared to a past (12-13, 15-16) which he invokes throughout the interview.

EXTRACT 3 [02:29:19 – 02:32:10]

((Aspa has just contributed a turn on the difficulties of same-sex parenthood))

4 Aris: (3.5) απ' την άλλη ξες > […]

5 ότι::: (.) >δεν γίνεται και μει:ς να μην κάνουμε παιδιά<

6 Aspa: =((whispering)) καλά ναι:

[…]

8 And.: [((whispering)) όχι

9 Aris: [κά:ποτε >εγώ όταν ήμουνα παιδί< ○εγώ: έχω δει διαφορά στην

10 Ελλάδα:: στο θέμα::: τη:ς eligibili::: ταυτότητας.○

11 Aspa: (.) Τι διαφορά έχεις δει;

12 Aris: (1.5) […] δεν υπή:ρχανε ορα/ δεν υπή:ρχε ορατότητα,

13 υπήρχε μηδέν

14 Aspa: ((whispering)) ναι:

15 Aris: =όταν λέμε μηΔΕν (.) μηδέ:ν δεν υπήρχε θέμα ας πού:με >ξέρω γω που είναι

16 αυτό< με τον Παπακαλιάτη και το φιλί (.) <δεν υπήρχε φιΛΙ::>

[…]
37 And.: τώρα με το παιδί θα πά:θουνε ((laughs))
38 Aspa: ((laughs))
39 Aris: =ας πάθουνε
40 Aspa: =((laughs)) ναι
41 And.: ((γελαστά)) θα πουν πού βρέθηκε αυτό;
42 Aris: ((ironically, softer)) ○ θα ψάχνουν να βρουν τη μήτρα ○
43 All: ((laughter))
44 Aris: θα τους γράψουμε απ' έξω δεν υπάρχει μήτρα
45 All: ((laughter))

((Aspa has just contributed a turn on the difficulties of same-sex parenthood))
4 Aris: (3.5) on the other hand y'know > […]
5 tha:::t (.) >there is no way we: can't have children too<
6 Aspa: =((whispering)) sure yea:h
[…]
8 And.: [((whispering)) no
9 Aris: [=befo:re >I when I was a kid< ○ I: have seen a difference in
10 Gree::ce as rega::rds elgibiti::: identity.○
11 Aspa: (.) What difference have you seen?
12 Aris: (1.5) […] there we:re no vis/ there wa:s no visibility,
13 there was zilts
14 Aspa: ((whispering)) yea:h
15 Aris: =when we say ZILTS (.) we mean zi:lts there was no […] >you know
16 […] this things< with Papakaliatis and the kiss (.) <there was no KI:SS>
[…]
37 And.: now with the child they will have a co:w ((laughs))
38 Aspa: ((laughs))
39 Aris: =let them have a cow, then
40 Aspa: =((laughs)) yes
41 And.: ((γελαστά)) they'll say where did this come from?
42 Aris: ((ironically, softer)) ○ they will be looking for the uterus ○
43 All: ((laughter))
44 Aris: we will write outside there is no uterus for them
45 All: ((laughter))

In saying (5), Aris presents gay parenthood as ordinary, the highlighted phrase being an encoding idiom for presenting something as unnoteworthy, even self-evident. *Μει:ς* 'we' constructs collectivity (Pavlidou 2014) evoking a wider group of people, while *και* 'and' intensifies it (Canakis 1995), so that *και μει:ς* is idiomatically glossed as 'we of all people'. This emphatic performance of ordinariness is conversationally achieved, as it is backed up by Aris's interlocutors (6, 8) in contributions latching onto his own. Furthermore, Aris moves on very swiftly to a justification of his position (9-10), invoking more favorable social conditions for gay men than "when [he] was a kid", a point on which he later elaborates at length. To that effect, extreme formulations (Pomerantz 1986), such as *μηΔΕΝ/μηδέ:ν* 'zero, zilts' (2, 4), legitimize his claims. Aris's repetition of *μηδέν* (2, 4) contributes to creating "a discourse, a relationship, and a world" (Tannen 1987: 601), reconfirming his negative evaluation of the mores of a past in which he keeps projecting himself.

And yet, despite capitalizing on these changes as favorable, Aris is still ready to stand his ground and defend his choices against possible odds: towards the end his tone becomes bitingly antagonistic, since the potential for stigmatization is as thoroughly inscribed in the experience of these men as is the precarious tolerance/acceptance of their social milieu. Andonis's (37) rather playful and teasing *θα πά:θουνε* 'they'll have a co:w' is met with Aris's flat *ας πάθουνε* 'let them have a cow'(39) and his second comment on the neighbors' surprise (41) motivates a couple of acerbic remarks (42, 44) –apparently, yet misleadingly, *in absentia*. All three participants co-construct a narrative of contestation, employing humor to demarcate two groups with competing value systems (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012: 176), while simultaneously enhancing the image of the ingroup by targeting the values of the outgroup (Tsakona 2013: 122-127). Aris's subsequent change of subject at an eligible transition-relevant point (45) and return to positive developments for gay men is emblematic of his ambivalence between contestation and expectation of acceptance, thus indexing both a craving for acceptance and readiness to defend his choices. The ordinariness he claims is intelligible precisely because it evokes ordinary demands of *face* (cf. Tannen 2009).

4. Conclusions

The thread connecting all interviews is a preoccupation with claiming ordinariness (cf. 'doing being ordinary') while being aware of the relative extraordinariness of the

circumstances. In talking about their joint parenting "project", the speakers position themselves vis-à-vis dominant discourses on gender, sexuality, and parenthood attempting to make sense of their past and current experience. In particular, Aris's reference to changing conditions for gay men is crucial for a queer linguistic approach to language and sexuality as critical to (hetero)normativity (Motschenbacher and Stegu 2013), which has been gaining ground despite its epistemological shortcomings (Canakis 2015c). Aris's references to changing normativities is a useful reminder that the content of (hetero)normativity is not static (Hall 2013), for it could not be: a concomitant of the dynamic character of categorization and its interplay with indexicality (Canakis 2015c, to appear). The "regimes of the normal", so persistently focused upon by queer theorists, already encompass heretofore non-normative practices and states of affairs – which is precisely why *homonormativity* is a big (and thorny) issue. Closer attention to emerging interactional regimes will probably endow queer theory with the cogency it now lacks (but see Barrett 2014 for a notable exception).

Incidentally, *in talking* about their experience, speakers contribute to changing normativities *online*. Therefore, language and sexuality research has to historicize normativity while focusing on interaction as opposed to merely the views presented therein; and this presupposes an understanding of specific social categories as dynamic rather than as inescapable, non-negotiable straightjackets; and it calls for (much) less theorizing (*pace* Motschenbacher & Stegu 2013) and (much) more attention to data (Canakis to appear) and data collection (Mortensen 2015). It is precisely because categories (e.g. [lesbian] woman, [gay] man, and a variety of kinship predicates) are interactionally negotiable that the narratives examined here are meaningful.

In talking about themselves, these parents-to-be renegotiate the content of [(")lesbian(")] woman, [(")gay(")] man so as to include parenthood and kinship; and, in so doing, they redefine [(")homosexual(")] couple. Unavoidably, this creates tensions on many levels, as it is connected both with their gendered and sexual self-identification and with broader issues of citizenship and national belonging (to point out just a few strands). However, it also has significant consequences for the "erotic projects" undertaken by non-heterosexuals and the ensuing "political economy" (Valentine 2011 [2008]) of sexually relevant language, in its inexorable complexity.

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