

**Love and Lenses: Photographic Couples, Gender Relationships, and Transatlantic Networks
in the Long Nineteenth Century**

Dr Carolin Görgen (Online): ‘I know what I’m doing’ – Female Empowerment and Gendered Ideas of Photography in the Transatlantic Camera Club Network’

Thursday 12th of October 2023, 4pm

Register here: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UsqMYbm4S62y5SgY0-TJBw

Over the past decades, women photographers have gained increasing visibility in histories of the medium, from Frances Benjamin Johnston’s influential work as practitioner and collector to the transatlantic line-up on display in the seminal exhibition “Who’s afraid of women photographers? 1839-1945” at the Musée d’Orsay & the Musée de l’Orangerie (2015). While these histories have unearthed many an unknown practitioner and drawn a more complex picture of women in photography around 1900, they remain largely monographic, focusing on individual achievements and hardships. In this paper, I explore camera club networks as places for women to bond, to improve, and to collectively navigate patterns of gendered exclusion. The West Coast camera clubs – with twice the average female membership of U.S. clubs – provide an apt point of departure for a larger inquiry into practice, partnerships, and emancipation. While the male-dominated territories of the Sierra Nevada, Gold Rush pioneers, and industrial extraction seemed to confine women to domesticity, it was in fact this very geography which allowed clubwomen from Seattle to Los Angeles to disrupt Victorian-era stereotypes and create lasting visibility for one another. Ultimately, I will trace how place and practice, from the darkroom to the outdoors, transformed the gender-biased camera club community into a platform for national and international exchange and exhibition.

Professor Elizabeth Edwards (In-person at the RAI) ‘Bonds, Attachments and Networks: Photographies of Connection’

Friday 13th of October 2023, 4pm

Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford, 1a S Parks Rd, Oxford OX1 3UB

There has been much recent work on photography and feeling, emotion and memory. Likewise networks of photographic practice have become almost de rigeuer in contemporary analysis. In this overview paper I bring them together to consider affection as a connective tissue within photographic practice. Drawing on my work on the late 19th and early 20th century photographic survey movement, I consider ways in which its activities were driven by networks of affection – familial and social, local, national, and international embracing both the sentimental and pragmatic. It was also driven both by a sense of potential loss and by pride and hope in the future, precisely the sentiments of personal relationships on which many photographic and survey activities were founded. Drawing on recent work on emotion as a historical modality, I shall use my survey material as a case study of the affective triangulation between people, place and photography, and ask to what extent can we write a history of photography through a history of emotion.