

Dear Mad Reading folk,

Please join us in July for a discussion on *Love and Madness* with Jo Farmer. We'll be looking at themes such as love/madness as social justice issues, and at love during/after trauma and madness. The focus of the readings is primarily on romantic love, but we encourage you to think more broadly about other forms and settings of love in our discussion.

**Date:** Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**Time:** 7pm-8.30pm Melbourne/Canberra/Sydney

**Zoom link:** <https://vla-vic-gov-au.zoom.us/j/65738039451>

**Passcode:** 786587

[Link to calendar invite](#)

**Readings:**

1. *Grace: Touched by love* – the Introduction to *All About Love: New Visions* (2000) by bell hooks. Content note: references to gender in this piece are binary in nature; please be aware that Mad Studies reading group is a safe and welcoming space for trans and gender diverse people and welcomes discussion from this lived experience.
2. Poetry by @madetobeebe: '[some thoughts on love and stuff](#)' and '[on the days where all I know are painkillers & bed](#)'.
3. A song from the romantic comedy-drama musical series 'Crazy Ex Girlfriend', [You Stupid Bitch](#), written by Rachel Bloom and Adam Schlesinger. (Crazy Ex Girlfriend is a show that explores lead character Rebecca's romantic relationships - a strong theme of the show is Rebecca's own 'mental illness', trauma and madness. It's not realistic to set the whole four seasons of the show as a reading, so we've chosen this song - the context for which is that Rebecca's 'obsessive' behaviour towards her love interest, Josh, is called out.) Content note: the song includes stigmatising language that Rebecca uses about her self.

**Some possible discussion questions:**

- What does Mad love mean to you?
- What is the role of love in advocating for and achieving social justice?
- To what extent is the adage 'If you can't love yourself, how are you going to love somebody else?' realistic?

Take care and see you soon,

Antonia, Zara, and Jo