

Research Seminar: Transgender Gaze, Neoliberal Haze

Representations of trans women in the Americas through the prism of neoliberal society

a seminar with Gina Gwenffrewi

My PhD thesis deals with the impact of the Americas on our conception in Scotland and the UK regarding trans identity, specifically trans female identity. This is partly the intellectual and activist legacies from mainly North America since the 1990s, but also the terrible rate of violence suffered by trans women in Latin America and African American communities in the North. I'm interested in the narratives that we encounter in the arts and the media, including which narratives get seen by us, and which do not. My work deals with the power structures that decide, within our current neoliberal culture, what is the right kind of trans narrative and which is not. Accordingly, my thesis begins with an analysis of the novel *The Danish Girl*, with its narrow depiction of a white, hyper-feminine, upper-middle-class trans woman with a tragic ending, the perfect narrative for a white, non-trans audience. I then look at narratives including storytelling and biography by trans women of colour which challenge our understanding of society and how it is meant to enrich any hardworking citizen irrespective of class, race/ethnicity, or nation.

