

Register of Expertise

The Staff Pride Network is creating a subject specialist database bringing together scholars – PhD students, early career researchers, and established academics – working on LGBTQIA+ topics, reflecting the combined strength of the University of Edinburgh expertise in the field.

What is the Register of Expertise?

The register of expertise will be a database of scholars engaged with LGBTQIA+ research. The register will aim to enable knowledge exchange and facilitate contact between those with common interests or areas of research. The database would be comprehensive in terms of disciplines and research approaches.

The aim of the database is to contribute to the sharing of research and ideas across the university and beyond. This could be supported through a variety of both on and offline spaces. The base for this will be an online register of expertise in LGBTQIA+ research. Possibilities for development could be a regular feature in the Staff Pride Network Blog ('LGBTQIA+ research in focus'), a 'Staff Pride Network Seminar Series' to disseminate completed research and work in progress.

The information to provide will be: contact details, areas of interest, research (relevant books, publications, projects, other outputs), and a summary of current work.

How to join?

If you are a scholar working on any aspect of LGBTQIA+ research and are interested in joining the 'Register of Expertise', please let us know by emailing our Research Officer – Edgar Rodriguez-Dorans at edgar.rodriquez-dorans@ed.ac.uk

A welcome message from our new events officer David

My name is David and I've recently joined the Edinburgh Research Office as a Solicitor, Contracts Manager in the Research Contracts, Governance and Integrity team. I'm really passionate about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and serve as Secretary of the Glass Network, the Law Society of Scotland's advisory body on LGBT+ matters and Scotland's organisation for LGBT+ legal professionals. Most recently I was elected to the University's Staff Pride Network as Social and Events Officer.



The Staff Pride Network is now running our weekly Wednesday lunchtime coffee meetups and our monthly social event online. More details are available at the following link with details on further events to follow in due course: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/staff-pride-network-virtual-social-tickets-101570819054>

Staff Pride Network Event: Lavender Menace LGBT+ Book Archive

Forty years ago, when Lavender Menace Bookshop opened, positive depictions of LGBT+ people in books were rare. One lesbian pulp novel of the 1950s was called Women in the Shadows. There were similar shadows over all queer people in print and film. And legal censorship was alive and well in the 1980s. It simply had to be more focussed than before, as with Section 28.

Today our lives can be explored straightforwardly in fiction and non-fiction – but how did the change come? It was mainly LGBT+ writers and presses, along with radical bookshops and book distributors, who took the risk and opened the door. Their success surprised everyone and gave a lead which others followed.

But now many of the original LGBT+ and feminist presses have closed and well-known books have been forgotten. Lavender Menace Returns hopes to create an archive and database of the material we knew best. They want to also include LGBT+ writing of today to form one body of work telling the story of our community – and our demand for equality and honesty.

Follow Lavender Menace Returns on:

Twitter: @menacesof2019

FaceBook: lavendermenacereturns

A response to the School LGBTQ+ Diversity Since Section 28/Clause 2a event

February is LGBT history month and in Scotland, the focus is on that Clause 2a/Section 28 was repealed 20 years ago (<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/2019/announcing-the-theme-for-lgbt-history-month-2020/>). There were three more years for it in England and Wales and the less said about Northern Ireland the better. I grew up under Section 28 and it was a confusing time. We had no internet, and no school or medical resources about homosexuality or bisexuality so all we had was the media and that was ... varied.

Most media articles were hysterical in tone. Gay men were either said to be or implied to be paedophiles, gay women were often ignored or considered frigid or man-hating and bisexuals needed to pick a side. Where there was variation in representation it was HUGE and isolated. The famous Brookside lesbian kiss (<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/1994-same-sex-kiss-between-two-women-brookside-builds-first-kiss-between-two-men>) was often reported for being “saucy” and framed through the male gaze. The gay kiss between Simon and Tony in EastEnders (https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/loud-proud-eastenders-gay-kiss-mark-homer_uk_5725ad16e4b0a1e971cb84f0) meanwhile should never have been shown before the watershed. Because sexuality was inherently sexual and not to be discussed.

For me growing up as bisexual in that world, and wanting to get married and have kids one day, “pick a side” meant picking

men because there was no way I could have those things with a woman. I was still outspoken about gay rights but did not think that could apply for me. Things have changed but Section 28 cast a long shadow over the lives of so many people and has influenced the way children are taught, even today. There are more resources outside of school but they still take courage to find. It is still hard.

The Staff Pride Network held a schools event that highlighted the parallels between Section 28 and the treatment of trans rights and some attendees asked if there really was a parallel. For me, there are some obvious ones. Media representation of trans people has the same hysteria I remember from my childhood and teen years. Trans women are presented as sexually deviant, trans men are all but forgotten, non-binary identities? Pick a side. A recent Guardian Blind Dates column with a trans woman and a lesbian led to people claiming the trans woman was somehow tricking the lesbian. Thankfully she rebutted it in the strongest possible terms (<https://twitter.com/aigroe/status/1199431598929784838?s=20>).

I know the internet is a resource now, but not everyone has it in their homes. Imagine suspecting you are trans now in this media environment? How much courage would it take to look it up at school where people might see, particularly when everything you see is so hysterical and claims you are such a threat to the fabric of society (recalling Thatcher's words as she introduced Section 28)?

The fact that so many of the arguments and tropes that were used against lesbian, gay and bisexual people are being used against out trans siblings is something many of us can't ignore because we remember the impact those things had on our

own lives, and our own opportunities to be who we really are.

The shadow of Section 28 is still long, and the impact on trans lives is still harder. Research from LGBTYS (<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/1354/life-in-scotland-for-lgbt-young-people.pdf>) shows that when asked if they had a mental health problem, 40% of LGBT young people and 66.7% of transgender young people said “yes”, while half (50%) of LGBT young people and 63% of transgender young people experienced suicidal thoughts or behaviours. 73% of LGBT young people, and 83% of transgender young people, who had experienced at least one mental health problem, had been bullied at school and this shows why the work of organisations like LGBTYS is so vital.

The parallels are real. We need to learn from the past, I know the 80s and 90s are back in fashion but prejudice, discrimination and bigotry never should be.

Siobhán

Staff Pride Network Event: School LGBTQ+ Diversity Since Section 28/Clause 2a

It has been 20 years since the repeal of Section 28/Clause 2a in Scotland. This event was held to provide an understanding of current equality law pertaining to schools, to discuss the

experiences and challenges that our students and staff had in school before and after Section 28's repeal, in particular young trans students' experiences.

This event was intended as a positive experience for staff and students to share their LGBTQ+ experiences, for the audience to learn about the similarities and differences of their times.

Event Co-Chairs are Elliot Byrom, EUSA Trans & Non-Binary Liberation Officer and Sharon Cowan, Professor of Feminist and Queer Legal Studies.

Panellists were: Sarah Quinn (PrideSoc Faith rep who has done work in the background to section 28), Hazel Sanderson (PrideSoc Trans and Non-Binary Rep), Levi Mitchell (PrideSoc President) and LGBT Youth Scotland Head of National Programmes (including schools guidance), Cara Spence.

<https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/staffpridenetwork/>

<https://pridesoc.com/>

<https://lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

Filmhouse event



The Everyday Cyborgs and Humanimals event on April 14th at the Filmhouse was the first public screening of four short films exploring fears, hopes and anxieties, as well as the everyday reality, of being not-fully-human. The films were made by local artists, creatives, and a group of young people, as part of the Animal, Mechanical and Me: The Search for Replaceable Hearts project led by Dr Gill Haddow in Science Technology and Innovation Studies at the University of Edinburgh and funded by the Wellcome Trust.

The project explores patient experiences and public reactions to using material from non-human animals or from implantable cybernetic systems to repair, replace or regenerate the human body. It seeks to bring patients' experiences, anxieties, and wider questions around human identity and selfhood, to bear on conversations about recent developments in medical technology. The film screening was part of a more general attempt to showcase social science research at Edinburgh University to wider audiences, and to generate public awareness and debate about these issues.

We decided to wear rainbow lanyards in addition to the classic dark-blue one to promote a more inclusive public image of the University, but also to pay tribute to the LGBT+ contributions to academic thought around identity, selfhood, and embodiment, and around the figure of the cyborg in the Western cultural imaginary.

Pride Edinburgh



Pride Edinburgh is on Saturday 16th June 2018 and we have LOTS of plans! All are welcome to join us for the march, wear a Rainbow Lanyard and a University Staff Pride Network t-shirt and stay for the Queer AF cabaret.

We'll meet at Levels Cafe, Holyrood Road from 11am in advance of the march moving off from the Scottish Parliament at 12.

We have set up an ePay link (<https://bit.ly/2xrpIaz>) and an order form (<https://bit.ly/2xpWwRj>) so you can buy a Staff Pride Network t-shirt for the march at cost price of £13.20, and we'll send it to you internal mail. You can also collect from Central or Little France. With or without a t-shirt, feel free to wear your Rainbow Lanyard and join us to celebrate Pride and show solidarity with LGBT+ people around the world.

Once you've marched, applauded the speeches, visited the community fair in Teviot and Potterow and ceilidh-danced your wee heart out, SPN are proud to present a special Pride Edition of Queer AF Cabaret. Drag queen host Georgia Tasda will be joined by a selection of Edinburgh's finest queer performers. The fun begins at 6pm in Teviot Underground. Free entry to all!

Rainbow Lanyards



We have been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm for our Rainbow Lanyards and are delighted that the latest batch of 4000 Rainbow Lanyards has been delivered. Our RL Distribution Team of 6 has a small backlog at the moment, and will send out your order as quickly as they can. Any help with this would be appreciated. If you'd like to help, let us know!

Of the 4000 lanyards already delivered, Card Services have funded 1400 for new staff who will be able to choose between a blue and rainbow lanyard; Finance, Student Wellbeing, ISG Library Services and Informatics have paid for 700 lanyards for their own staff; Finance, Card Services and Social Responsibility & Sustainability have donated 1400 to the Staff Pride Network for us to supply others throughout the University; and the shop ordered 500 to sell at a reasonable £2 to students, alumni and members of the public.

We were even contacted by an Edinburgh Business School PhD student who wanted to wear one of our rainbow lanyards to her viva!

What does your Rainbow Lanyard mean to you?

LGBT+ Research Promoted In The University

By Anabel Noelke & Jonathan MacBride



As part of February's LGBT+ History Month calendar, Anabel Noelke hosted a seminar 'LGBT+ and the Media'. Both staff and students attended and after an introduction and video showing her research Anabel led a vibrant discussion. The following month Anabel presented her research at Dentsu in London and has since been published in a journal. The following email was sent on 15th March to the entire Business School staff mailing list and it made me proud to see my workplace promoting a colleague's work in the LGBT+ sphere.

Email:

I'm delighted to let you know about a tremendous piece of engagement and knowledge exchange arising from Anabel Noelke's PhD research that she undertook last week

in London. Anabel was invited to speak about her research to employees of the Dentsu Aegis Network, a multinational media and digital marketing communications company headquartered in London, owned by Japanese advertising and public relations firm Dentsu.

Anabel spoke to around 50 practitioners, including some clients such as Diageo and Vodafone, as well as representatives from Campaign UK, Marketing Week and BuzzFeed. She was also interviewed by the Campaign UK reporter for a piece she is writing on the topic.

The talk revolved around the history of LGBT portrayals in advertising and recent changes based on her recently accepted sole-authored Journal of Homosexuality publication:

Making Diversity Conform? An Intersectional, Longitudinal Analysis of LGBT-Specific Mainstream Media Advertisements.

She discussed the challenges of advertising to any stigmatised/marginalised consumer group as well as the harm that can come from the use of stereotypes or tropes, before describing the ways in which brands have navigated the issue in recent years – for example through the use of TV or print ‘trailer’ ads combined with ‘Human Interest’ ads or ‘making-off’ videos online. She drew on quotes from her qualitative research to illustrate how different types of portrayals and ad formats were experienced by participants, before ending the talk with three successful features of LGBT advertising and six suggestions for best practice.

Anabel’s presentation was followed by just under two hours of networking and informal discussion with participants, and she has been asked if she would come back to present to a client-oriented event later in the year.

Anabel has also developed a video to tell her research story, which has been shared with Dentsu Aegis and is on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X82Q8QW8IJQ&t=12s>

It is really inspiring to see how Anabel's research is already making a difference and what an excellent ambassador she is for the School and the PhD programme!

LGBT & Internationalisation



By Ali McDonald

In January along with two colleagues, I attended the Stonewall Scotland LGBT and Internationalisation Seminar, hosted by the University of Dundee. Having worked in International Student Support for over 8 years and more recently becoming a Staff Dignity and Respect Advisor, this sounded right up my street. Part of our remit in the International Student Advisory Service is to provide help and guidance to students transitioning into their lives in Edinburgh – though we currently offer a lot of cultural advice and highlight the diverseness of our ever-expanding international campus, do we explicitly offer sufficient support and advice to LGBT+ students at the pre-arrival and induction stage? This was one of numerous questions I had in my mind whilst travelling through to Dundee.

The seminar itself was really thought-provoking and had great representation from Universities throughout Scotland and Northern England. Early in the seminar, we were split into teams for a quiz. Our team sadly didn't win however we did learn some stark facts, such as: Same sex relationships or sexual acts is illegal in 76 countries and homosexuality is punishable by death in 13 countries – scarily, this number is actually on the increase.

Through a variety of discussions and knowledge sharing between the Universities, I felt proud of the University of Edinburgh and the work we have already done in this area. BLOGS – the LGBT+ Student Society are very active and it's fantastic to see the LGBT+ staff network has been newly revived. The International Student Advisory Service also provides a lot of pre-arrival advice and cultural support to students, particularly highlight the diverseness of our campuses and how we promote inclusivity. There is definitely more we can do in this area and I am keen to develop this further.

We are quick to celebrate – and rightly so – how wonderfully diverse our University is, with staff and students coming here from over 135 countries. Each individual will arrive with their own set of values, beliefs and ideology. It's important to acknowledge and appreciate an individual's journey is not linear and with such a diverse staff and student body, it is inevitable that beliefs and values will unfortunately clash. I believe our job as representatives of the University is to encourage open, honest but most importantly accepting and understanding conversation with no judgements made. I think our biggest challenge here is with such a diverse population, how do we promote inclusivity whilst not excluding any particular group at the same time?