

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.

Research Seminar: World AIDS Day 2020

In recognition of World Aid's Day 2020 and this year's theme of "Resilience", the University of Edinburgh Staff Pride Network hosted a panel event to address the question: How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Scotland and around the world? and share insights as to how communities and health systems have demonstrated resilience and sought to strengthen HIV prevention services in the context of a global pandemic.

Our Panel members were:

- Robert Pollock from Waverley Care
- Socorro García – Casa de la Sal (Mexico)
- Germán Martínez Blanco – AHF Mexico
- Rocío Sánchez Granillo – preVIHene (Mexico)
- Fraser Serle – HIV Scotland volunteer

Robert Pollock is a Health Improvement Coordinator at Waverley Care, he's based in Edinburgh, currently working from home. He has been part of Waverley Care since 1995, initially as a befriending volunteer and since 2011 as a paid employee. He works in a small team offering outreach support to people

living with HIV and/or HepC. This team has worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, offering a blend of in-person and telephone support and advice.

Socorro García Estrada is a psychologist graduated from the National University of Mexico (UNAM), psychotherapist, and thanatologist. She delivers person-centred awareness training for medical staff on topics of care for people living with HIV. She has 25 years of experience providing psychological orientation to people living with HIV. She is part of the Citizen Council on HIV in Mexico City and is Programme Director at La Casa de La Sal, a Civil Association that provides comprehensive care for people with HIV/AIDS and their families.

Germán Martínez Blanco is an independent actor and psychologist graduated from the National University of Mexico (UNAM). Since 2003 he has worked in NGOs, coordinating community psychological care programs. Since 2010 he has specialised in the HIV field doing prevention, early detection, and accompaniment of people living with HIV. He currently coordinates the Linkage to Medical Care programme in AHF Mexico and promotes the cabaret play entitled "Lights Out" with the Doom Cabaret company.

Rocío Sánchez Granillo López is a Psychologist, Psychotherapist, and PhD candidate in Human Sexuality. In her role as a lecturer at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, she supervises psychology trainees working with people living with HIV. As a result of this work, she co-founded 'preVIHene Por tu Vida', an organisation dedicated to deliver comprehensive sexual education programmes on primary prevention of STIs, unplanned pregnancies, and sexual health promotion.

Fraser Serle is a member of HIV Scotland's Community Advisory Network and Lothian HIV Patient Forum. He was also vice-chair of Positively UK in London until earlier this month.

Research Seminar: Imagined Futures of Older Same Sex Couples in Scotland

This talk was based on PhD research which explored how older same-sex couples in Scotland imagine their futures. The research looked at how people talk about their past and present, and how their experiences were reflected in the imagination of their future. Based on interviews with 7 older same-sex couples living in Scotland, the talk presented some of the key results, which show that the couples who participated in this research imagine their future in a very similar and specific way. The talk also explored two ways of imagining the future, the short- and long-term one, and how these differ in terms of the concerns and hopes reflected in each. Through the stories presented in this talk and in Dr Jandrić's doctoral research, she hopes to raise awareness of the experiences these couples went through and what these experiences mean for their present and future lives.

Dr Dora Jandrić is a researcher in sociology. She obtained her PhD at the University of Edinburgh. Her research interests include the intersection of sexuality, time, and ageing. Her PhD thesis explored how older same-sex couples imagined their future. She worked on a project which investigated experiences of invisibility of bisexual employees in the UK, and currently works as a senior tutor on undergraduate-level sociology at the School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh.

Research Seminar: ‘Heavier than Air’ premiere and discussion

‘Heavier than Air’ is a stage-to-screen film based on interview data from research conducted with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer teachers working in different educational settings in Australia. Since 2015, this play, devised by Anne Harris (RMIT University) and Stacy Holman Jones (Monash University) has been staged in Australia, Singapore, USA, and Scotland. This is a film adaptation directed by Edgar Rodríguez-Dorans.

With this event, the Staff Pride Network for LGBT+ Colleagues & Allies launched its Research Seminar Series. Heavier than Air helps to educate non-LGBTQIA+ audiences, along with education administrators, students, and staff about the experiences of social inclusion and mental health needs of LGBTQIA+ people, providing LGBTQIA+ teachers with an opportunity to see their sometimes welcoming, sometimes violently exclusionary experiences at their workplace depicted on film. The film was followed by a discussion on how qualitative research and performing arts converge to rethink research methodologies and research communication in humanities and social sciences.

The Film

The Discussion

Bi Visibility Day 2020: Solidarity Across The Distance

Co-hosted by the University of Edinburgh Staff Pride Network and OurStory Scotland.

We marked Bi Visibility Day on Wednesday 23 September 2020 with an online event where members of the Staff Pride Network and the Pridesoc student network, as well as LGBT+ community members and allies, learned more about the Bi+* experience through shared stories. We particularly welcomed BAME/PoC Bi+ people and Bi+ people with disabilities.

During the event, the co-chairs prompted discussions with a number of active participants, using questions from OurStory Scotland's Queer Distance questionnaire as prompts. All attendees were encouraged to consider the participants' personal responses alongside their own – what were the differences and similarities, and how does the Bi+ experience uniquely affect the context?

Attendees were encouraged to add to the discussions using text chat and raise-hand functions if they wished to do so.

Co-chairs: Cathy Naughton (she/her, Bi+ Rep, UoE Staff Pride Network) and Lindsay Horsham (she/her, Volunteer Researcher, OurStory Scotland).

*The term 'Bi+' in this context relates to an umbrella definition of bisexuality that includes people who are attracted to more than one gender, and may self-identify as bisexual, pansexual, omnisexual, bi-romantic, questioning or

bi-curious, to name but a few identities. We recognise that identities are unique and sometimes cannot be easily defined with labels. The Bi+ community is inclusive of trans and non-binary people. (UNISON, 2020)