



7th EUROPEAN GEOGRAPHIES OF SEXUALITIES CONFERENCE, University of Brighton BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Monday 2nd September

9:00-9:30	Registration (<i>Elm House foyer</i>)	
9:30-10:00	Welcome Address (<i>Huxley 300 lecture room</i>)	
10:00-11:30	Parallel Sessions (* indicates a session organiser; ^Δ indicates a digital presentation):	
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		Joseli Maria Silva and Debora Lee Comassetto Machado – p. 7
		Laura Soler Rodríguez – p. 7
	Creative Reimaginings (<i>Elm House 104</i>) – chaired by Joe Jukes	Ray Abu-Jaber – p. 8
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	Transit, transition and translation: sexualities on the move (<i>Elm House 302</i>) – chaired by Jason Lim	Sarah Best – p. 10
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	Out in Public (<i>Elm House 104</i>) – chaired by Joe Jukes	Roisin Ryan-Flood – p. 15
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16:30-18:00	Unruly Dis/comfort: ‘Unsexy Spaces’ and Later-in-Life Sex (<i>Elm House 103</i>) – chaired by Joe Jukes	Giulia Nazzaro* ^Δ and Gabriëlle de Pooter* ^Δ – p. 32
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18:30-20:00	<p>Central Brighton queer history walking tour (<i>booked at registration</i>)</p>	<p>Rachel Aldred and August Reid – p. 40</p>
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18:30-20:00	Central Brighton queer history walking tour (<i>registration</i>)	Rachel Aldred and August Reid – p. 71



Monday 2nd September

10:00 – 11:30 Parallel Sessions

Getting Comfy – creating and experiencing comfortable spaces for different sexualities #1

Alexandre Rodolfo Alves de Almeida, University of Aveiro

Bearbie Party: (Dis)comfort Space for Bears in São Paulo, Brazil

This study presents an analysis of Bearbie, a party held in São Paulo, Brazil, since 2016, as a place of comfort and/or discomfort for its attendees. The methodology adopted is of a qualitative matrix with the use of content analysis techniques of in-depth interviews conducted with members of the local Bear community, aiming to capture their experiences and perceptions about the community and its parties. Bearbie is described by its organisers as a haven for the “new Bears” — young people who adopt the Bear aesthetic but challenge traditional conventions, including the imposition of exaggerated masculinity — the party positions itself as an inclusive space for all bodies and gender performativities. The Bears, a subgroup of the LGBTQ+ community, are mostly cisgender, bi, or homosexual men, with bulky or fat bodies, and often with facial hair. This community emerged in opposition to exclusion based on conventional beauty standards. São Paulo appears as a locus of cultural diversity, offering a variety of socialisation spaces for the LGBTQ+ community, with Bearbie being one among several focused on the Bear audience. The results indicate that the party is perceived as an environment of freedom and welcoming, especially by young and fat people. However, there are reports of discomfort from older or slimmer attendees, indicating a divergence from the traditional standards of LGBTQ+ party spaces. The study underlines the complexity of gender dynamics within the Bear subculture, evidencing a fluidity and questioning of gender norms, aspects particularly visible in the São Paulo community.



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Joseli Maria Silva and Debora Lee Comassetto Machado, Federal University of Paraná

Transforming hate into pride: Brazilian travesti funk as public space subversion

This work aims to analyze the movement of resistance of the travesti identity in Brazilian society, mainly after the strengthening of global communication networks. Intercultural contacts in the globalized world enabled the simultaneous appearance of different sexual and gender identities in Brazil, and also promoted processes of refusal and abandonment of identities rooted in Brazilian society such as those of travestis. In this work, we explore the complementarity between peripheral art, focusing on the funk produced by black travestis, and travesti activism. The ritualized performances of the funk produced in slums managed to connect this group's past struggle with their present, keeping the sexual dissent to create insubordinate sexual possibilities. Our analysis is supported by the disidentification, theory by Muñoz (1999), understood as social processes of re-elaboration of heteronormative injustice/violence for the creation of worlds oriented to utopic queer futures. By means of artistic creation, new languages connect the travesti resistance policy, which has stood strong in the combat of normative discourses that discipline and monitor sexual and gender identities within the growing conservatism experienced in Brazil. Two procedures were employed in this work. One of them included six interviews with political leaders of the transexual and travesti movement in Brazil. The choice of interviewees resulted from a survey carried out with 78 transexual and travesti individuals, who were questioned about who they considered to be the most influent people in the Brazilian transexual and travesty movement. Thus, those interviewed for this chapter and their ideas are legitimated within the travesti and transexual group. The interviews revealed the art influence in political processes of claims for their citizenship rights as well as in the visibility of their struggles using alternative media that have become more common in Brazil such as the YouTube. Another procedure was the exploration of the funk artistic universe produced by black travestis who live in the slums (Linn da Quebrada, Bixarte and Irmãs de Pau). Their performances have contributed to transform the hate speech about the travesti and trans existence into pride, as Butler (1997) explained in 'Excitable Speech'.

Laura Soler Rodríguez, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Navegando entre el confort y el desafío: motivaciones para la migración urbano-rural de jóvenes disidentes en Cataluña



La identidad sexual suele pasar desapercibida en los estudios sobre geografía, género y ruralidad. La sociedad rural se ha caracterizado típicamente por la heteronormatividad, lo que ha llevado a la exclusión de los jóvenes que no se sienten aceptados o libres en las zonas rurales. A pesar de ello, existen personas con identidades disidentes que optan por iniciar un proyecto de vida en una zona rural, lo que constituye una tendencia poco explorada. Mientras que muchos estudios se centran en la migración del campo a la ciudad debido a la disidencia sexual y de género, la migración contraria, hacia contextos rurales, apenas es estudiada.

Esta presentación se centra en examinar las experiencias de jóvenes que se identifican como disidentes sexuales y/o de género y que han tomado la decisión de abandonar las zonas urbanas y establecerse en entornos rurales en Cataluña. La investigación pretende responder a varias preguntas clave, entre ellas: ¿qué les impulsa a elegir las zonas rurales como su nuevo hogar? ¿Qué aspectos únicos de los entornos rurales valoran que no se encuentran en las zonas urbanas? ¿Cómo influye su identidad sexual y de género en la decisión de migrar? Además, el estudio explora la influencia de los vínculos personales y territoriales en su decisión de trasladarse a una zona rural.

Todas estas cuestiones se exploran utilizando una metodología cualitativa, basada en entrevistas en profundidad con jóvenes LGBTI que viven en diferentes zonas rurales de Cataluña.

Creative Reimaginings

Ray Abu-Jaber, Goldsmiths University London

Cruising Dystopia: playing neurodivergent Queer and Trans worlds in dystopic table-top games

Following Muñoz's (2009) notion of queerness as a "utopian mode" and its potential to dream and enact new worlds and ways of being, this paper explores how neurodivergent Queer and Trans players in Calgary enact their ways of being in hostile worlds. Using play and dystopic table-top games as a lens, this project is interested in how their experiences in dystopic gaming worlds like *call of cthulhu* reflects or impacts their navigation of hostility beyond those worlds, and how these communities forge pockets of utopia in the present. Focusing on the table-top game *call of cthulhu*, this paper draws out the challenges and possibilities of Queer and Trans life within the game (Posocco, Gonzalez-Polledo et al 2025), focusing on how play shapes ways of being in and experiencing the world, experimenting



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with the conditions of living through and against contemporary anti-trans hate. By exploring how these players create pockets of utopia in such dystopic uncomfortable spaces, we can begin to explore how neurodivergent Queer and Trans communities and people can not only survive but thrive and find joy in the uncomfortable state of the world now. And by doing this, we can find and inspire hope for our community and, following Audre Lorde's notion, remind us of our capacity for joy.

Mons Bissenbakker University of Copenhagen

A Soundtrack of Discomfort: Trans poetics as trans politics

My talk discusses the possibility of using different literary-political strategies against the cis-normative gaze. It does so by comparing two Danish literary works on transmasculinity and discomfort: Alex Zichau's *The Soundtrack of Discomfort* [Ubehagets soundtrack] from 2013 and Luka Holmegaard's *The Sea in the Mouth* [Havet i munden] from 2013. Both address gendered dysphoric discomfort, which presents as closely connected to a linguistic discomfort – a fundamental sceptic relation to language and description when portraying trans bodies. Shying back from the danger of using language as “a dissection knife” (Aliko 2020) when describing the transgender body and experience, the two works employ different alternative strategies. Where Zichau disrupt reader expectations surrounding traditional gender transition narratives and hides his protagonist inside dysphoric rants, Holmegaard reinterprets the relationship between language, power, and desire by offering a BDSM-ethics and aesthetics as an alternative to medical language of gender and power confronting trans people in the Danish Gender Identity Clinics. The two works can be seen as offering different literary reactions to discomfort that may also illustrate a development in transmasculine discourse, identity, politics, and art over a decade. When compared to trans classics of older and newer dates, such as Lily Elbe's *Man into woman* (1933) and Poul B. Preciado's *Testo Junkie* (2008/2013), Zichau and Holmegaard thus offer an alternative literary interpretation of the relationship between cisnormativity, language, and discomfort.

Anna Marocco, University of Lisbon

Queer Urbanism: participatory art-based practices towards the common



This paper, based on an ongoing PhD research, wishes to analyse some place-making practices towards collaborative dwelling projects, observing how gender minority groups, as subaltern urban communities, conceive, organise and co-design their living spaces and which imaginaries of urban co-existence, affective intimacy and reproduction they feed. Drawing on queer theories and ecologies and under the prismatic lens of care, we will invite critical reflections on how we could forge pathways of empowerment, solidarity and engagement by breaking some analytical segregations of traditional urban practice. Indeed, despite decades of queer geographic studies questioning the heteronormative assumptions embedded in city planning and management, social inclusion in support of sexual minorities has not yet been integrated into urban planning, policies and governance processes despite some recent signs of interest. Tush, this contribution, by adopting an intersectional lens, focuses on socio-spatial justice issues, particularly concerning gender and sexual minorities, by promoting participatory art-based practices for queer urban planning. In particular, analysing some case studies of residential projects promoted by grass-rooted urban queer communities between Rome and Lisbon, we will reflect on how art-based practices such as the ones focused on embodied experiences, visual media production, and collaborative cartographies could enhance, sustain, empower these agencies towards the "doing-in" common and "doing-for" the common with care.

Transit, transition and translation: sexualities on the move

Sarah Best, Philipps-University Marburg

“Coming-Out as a White Thing”: Queer Tunisians Navigating Identity and Sexuality in a Postcolonial Society

In both media discourse and academic debates (Massad 2002), agency is frequently denied to queer subjects, such analyses often remain on a theoretical level and fail to engage with the subjects in concern. Concurrently, Arab and Muslim nations are often portrayed as inherently inhospitable to queer identities. On one hand, a noticeable gap exists in empirical research addressing the negotiation of sexuality and gender identity in postcolonial societies (Lachheb 2016, Lachheb & Hamdi 2022). On the other hand, there is a dearth of studies that engage in genealogical analysis of historical discourses transcending a Eurocentric perspective (El-Rouayheb 2009; Habib 2007).



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Based on these observations, my dissertation attempts to employ a decolonial research design aiming to unearth subaltern histories of same-sex loving people in Tunisia and clear space for queer Tunisians to speak (Spivak 2011; Tuhiwai Smith 2012). To achieve this, a situational analysis (Clarke 2018) combines the mapping of a wide variety of historical materials with 20 interviews conducted in 2019 and 2023 with queer Tunisians. The discourse analysis unravels how queerness was negotiated historically (Labidi 2020, 2021; Khouili & Levine-Spound 2019) and sheds light on ambiguous social practices and categories that have been made invisible by colonial sexual discourses particularly as they are (re)negotiated in crosscultural contact zones (Pratt 1991). The second part of the analysis reveals how (post)colonial heteronormativity subjectivizes queer individuals in an affective dimension. Queer subjects often experience a sensation akin to sitting in an uncomfortable chair (Ahmed 2014), navigating through discursive formations that are both structurally and affectively constraining. The analysis underscores that, particularly when navigating the complexities of their identity as Arab (Muslim) queers, queer Tunisians express the need for non-Western queer role models and explicitly local queer knowledge production and spaces that account for the ambiguity in which sexuality is negotiated in society.

Shu Cean Chua, Birkbeck University of London

An Inquiry into the Lives of Queer Chinese Malaysians: The Quest for Queer Space and Identity Reconciliation

Drawing upon intersectionality and Queer theory, this study conducts an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted identities of Queer Chinese Malaysians (QCM) within the dynamic social fabric of Malaysia. Situated within Malaysia's cisheteronormative context, the research seeks to unravel the complexities of Queer spatial navigation, especially amidst the changing terrain of new media and migratory patterns. This qualitative study is based on a post-structuralist paradigm and a nuanced blend of relativist ontology and social constructionist epistemology. It aims to capture lived experiences with unparalleled authenticity. The aim of adopting a bottom-up, inductive approach is to discern the subtle strategies employed by the participants as they negotiate the intricate intersections of Queer identity and prevailing sociocultural norms. Leveraging an innovative data collection method that integrates the go-along methodology with the depth of semi-structured interviews and the visual richness of photo elicitation, this study will shed light on the multifaceted ways in which QCMs navigate migration pathways and harness the transformative power of new media to assert their identities and carve out Queer spaces in an environment marked by heteronormative hegemony. This study aspires to transcend mere inquiry, offering a profound narrative that not only elucidates the challenges and barriers faced by QCMs but also serves as a beacon of insight into the



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broader discourse surrounding identity, space-making and Queer rights, ultimately contributing to the ongoing struggle for equality and social change.

David Murphy, Lancaster University

Queering International Solidarity: What does a queer British response to queerphobia in Uganda look like?

The Anti-Homosexuality Acts in 2014 and 2023 in Uganda massively ramped up the criminalisation and securitisation of Uganda's queer population, resulting in international condemnation, including from the British state. Whilst this was an unprecedented reaction by the British state in terms of international queerphobia, it also did not address the colonial history that led to this modern queerphobic legislation. The response from Britain to this act, which ranged from words of condemnation to the pulling of international aid, as well as being part of the international response to this Ugandan queerphobia, did not address the part British colonisation played in this legislation's formation. In this presentation, I ask the following question: what would a queer British response to Ugandan queerphobia look like?

The findings in this presentation are based on both relevant literature, Queer International Relations theory and findings of focus groups conducted with British queer people surrounding international queer solidarity. This will examine both how a British queer response will interact with the British state, and how this solidarity may occupy spaces outside of the state. I will then relate this to other work, such as the work of NGOs and solidarity with LGBT+ asylum seekers. Therefore, the overall approach I will take to formulate a queer British response to Ugandan queerphobia is to both examine the British state response through the theoretical lens of Queer International Relations, and to examine the response of queer British NGOs and the opinions of the queer British community.

Chen Misgav, Tel-Aviv University

Queer Urban Displacement: The Case of LGBTQ adolescents' shelter in southern Tel-Aviv

This paper aims to look up the concept of urban displacement by focusing on the case study of Beit-Dror, an adolescent's shelter that is currently based in HaTikva Neighborhood in southern Tel Aviv. The study investigates the relationship dynamics between neighborhood



newcomers and long-timers, and the latter's attitudes towards the transition of LGBTQ public services into the neighborhood. This transition is part of the broader phenomenon of gentrification, whereby inhabitants, mainly youngsters, move into Tel Aviv's southern neighborhoods due to the high cost of housing and living elsewhere in the city. The internal urban migration is accompanied by the transfer of LGBTQ municipal services such as shelters for LGBTQ adolescents and youngsters, services as largely seen as "NIMBY" – an undesirable phenomenon pushed away to less affluent neighborhoods at the city's margins. The paper will focus and analyses the story of such a service. The findings raise issues of sociospatial conflicts familiar from the gentrification literature, and innovate in pointing out LGBTs as "new-generation" gentrifiers. These are no longer members of the middle class who acquire assets in rundown neighborhoods and increase their value while displacing longtime inhabitants, as suggested by former studies in the 1980s and 90s which viewed LGBTs as the vanguard of gentrification, but rather youngsters who have themselves been displaced from more affluent, central neighborhoods. The displacement of certain LGBTQ services from those neighborhoods to the city margins complete the picture of queer urban displacement, which includes pull and push factors of both individuals and community services.

12:00 – 13:30 Parallel Sessions

Getting Comfy – creating and experiencing comfortable spaces for different sexualities #2

Ine Martens, Heriot-Watt University

Constellations of comfortable spaces: deaf lesbian orientations

How do deaf lesbians navigate an audist cis-heteropatriarchal society and create comfortable spaces? In this presentation, I explore the impact of deaf lesbians' complex positionalities at the intersection of disability, sexual orientation, gender and as a language minority (as sign language users) on the spaces they create and inhabit.

This study was conducted through mental mapping interviews with 17 deaf LBQT people and participant observation in London. Mental mapping captures how people imagine, experience and produce space and can articulate complex and often invisibilised stories of marginalised groups (Giesekeing, 2013) and is therefore useful to research the spatialities of deaf lesbians.



Building on this data and using Ahmed's (2006) 'orientations' as framework, I demonstrate how deaf lesbians orient themselves towards certain spaces and people. While some participants orient themselves towards queer people and spaces, others are more lesbian oriented, deaf oriented or even oriented towards a specific sub-group of deaf lesbians (e.g. deaf lesbians from deaf families). However, a deaf orientation does not (necessarily) equal an orientation away from lesbian people and spaces, and vice versa. Instead, deaf lesbians develop strategies to create an inhabitable world consisting of comfortable spaces such as adding deaf or lesbian elements in their lives (e.g. working in a deaf organisation, having hearing lesbian friends) and producing own spaces (e.g. a weekend for deaf lesbians only). In addition, they build upon existing deaf national and international networks to create translocal constellations of comfortable spaces.

Susanna Jussila, University of Jyväskylä

Body as site of resistance and resourcing – Creating safety and comfort through reconnecting with our bodies

Referring to Sara Ahmed, feminism starts from the embodied experience. You feel it in your body when something is wrong, or you have been wronged. (Ahmed 2017: 22.) While discomfort as an affective and visceral experience can ignite and guide our action (Chadwick 2021), committing oneself and one's life to feminist resistance takes a hard toll on our bodies (Ahmed 2017: 255).

My presentation focuses on body awareness as a way to support agency and connect to the experiences of safety and comfort. I approach the body from the lens of critical phenomenology as a lived experience and a site where social norms and intersectional power relations meet (e.g. Magri & McQueen 2023). The perspective draws on my ongoing PhD, where I study the meaning of critical body and trauma awareness in social justice activism. In addition to theoretical discussion, I use illustrative examples from my empirical material, which comprises 26 interviews with experts working at the intersection of social justice, trauma, and embodiment.

Following black feminists pioneers of radical self-care (Lorde 1988, 2007, hooks 2001, 2002) and applying Rae Johnson's idea of embodied resilience, I suggest that utilizing body awareness to connect with our bodily capacities for feeling grounded can assist us in nurturing experiences of safety and comfort, thereby enhancing our capability to create an inclusive and supportive space for everyone's vulnerabilities (Johnson 2018: 126-127). The research presented in this presentation contributes to understanding the role of embodiment in activism and diverse activist spaces concerning sexualities and beyond.



Max Andrucki, Temple University, and Adam Gaubinger, William Alanson White Institute

Domestic Discomforts: Eros, Sexuality, and the Home

Safety and comfort for marginalized people, and the creation of comfy spaces for our sense of inclusion and mutual acceptance, is a self-evidently important and worthwhile political project. But if a “space for sexuality” is thought outside of a framework of sexual identity categories, and instead through the psychoanalytic lens of “the Sexual”, a comfy space is perhaps not possible nor desirable. This leads us to ask, does the framing of a space as comforting/comfortable actually serve to efface important experiences of discomfort? We propose to use the distinction drawn within recent work in psychoanalysis (eg Davis & Dean 2022) between the unbinding forces of the sexual and the binding forces of the erotic to unsettle assumed relationships between comfort, sexuality. A review of the literature on the creation of comfy queer homes indicates that they are repeatedly imagined as spaces that are erotic, that is, subject to binding forces that buttress identities and shore up the subject from an often hostile outside. However, the comfy home is never stable, and the forces of the sexual also unbind and unsettle these porous spaces. We therefore turn to work on the uncanniness of home and apply this framework to recent work within geography and adjacent disciplines on domestic queer sexual practices like chemsex and the use of gay dating apps like Grindr to argue that the home is always already the site of binding the subject together, and to the social, as well as a glitch space with the power to destroy these fragile fictions.

Out in Public

Roisin Ryan-Flood, Univeristy of Essex

Holding hands: LGBTQ people's experiences of public displays of affection with their partner

Many LGBTQ individuals grow up with a sense of being “other” in a heteronormative society. This is not just an internal psychological experience, as many LGBTQ individuals report being recipients of hostility, victimisation and harassment. Interpersonally, homophobia and transphobia (both actual and fear of) may play out between partners and inhibit partners from commonplace displays of affection (e.g. holding hands in public). Holding hands in public, a taken-for-granted act of interpersonal affection for many heterosexual couples, may carry particular anxieties and/or significance for LGBTQ partners. This article reports on findings from a research project that



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explored 27 participants' personal experiences of holding hands with their partner(s) in public, utilising a participatory, creative research approach. The analysis of data identified themes of vigilance, daily inhibitions, partner negotiations, inside/outside boundaries, and community dilemmas.

Alexandre Chanady, Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique (INRS)

Beyond the heteronormative city: the making of LGBTQ heritage in Montréal **Δ**

In Europe and North America, heritage places and sites of LGBTQ communities have historically been subject to destructions and alterations, as well as underrepresented on state heritage lists and registers. In Montréal, Canada, while efforts to preserve and make visible the city's rich LGBTQ history in the urban fabric were met with such difficulties, many did succeed since the 1990s and especially after 2015. This presentation will explore some of the factors that determine the success or failure of LGBTQ heritage projects in the city, among them the existence of a highly integrated and institutionalized LGBTQ territory (the « Village » as it's called), itself a product of the city and the province's rich tradition of citizen participation and territorial governance. The results stem from a PhD field that consisted of (1) 20 semi-structured interviews conducted with community organizations, elected officials and activists involved in LGBTQ heritage projects over the course of 2022 and 2023, and (2) the analysis of archival documents and grey literature, mainly from the City of Montréal and the Archives gaies du Québec (Gay archives of Quebec). This research is a contribution to queer and LGBTQ studies as few researches, so far, have been conducted on LGBTQ heritage sites, and none in the Canadian context specifically.

Shannon Grimes

Making the Extra-Ordinary Ordinary: Changing Spatial Relations of Queer People in Brighton

This dissertation uses a phenomenological lens to analyse changing spatial patterns in Brighton, UK. Inspired by the work of Sara Ahmed's *Queer phenomenology* (2006) this study attempts to further her work by focusing more on Gender, given the ordinary nature of Queer sexualities in Brighton and the increasing Anti-Trans mindset of the UK. Data was collected through people and flag counts, as well as discrete observations via walking methodologies. However, the bulk of data stems from primarily online interviews with Queer people



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in Brighton to determine if and how their relationship to space is changing. Analysis conveyed that spatial relations in Brighton are changing because Queerness in general has been rendered ordinary, the impact is that there is a conscious orientation of Queer bodies towards spaces that are inclusive to Queer Genders, not just Queer Sexualities moving away from the general idea that Queer bodies are forced into spaces that are created for them to be themselves. Furthermore, Queer Spatial relations in Brighton are directly affected by the notion of 'Queering' the self; how one presents and performs their identity. In

Brighton there is a push towards freedom of expression which created an orientation of Queer bodies towards alternative fashion to make visible their identity. Finally, this research evolves ideas of the heteronormative line [Ahmed 2006] to the cis-heteronormative line, since the normalisation of Queer sexualities for young people in Brighton means they are more aware of how their gender is orientated into line by family and their environments rather than exclusively their sexuality.

Marta Maria Nicolazzi, University of Milan

Body, Self and Space: How women's fear articulates in Milanese public spaces

Research shows that women experience discomfort or feel unsafe in a variety of situations to the point that this becomes a “gender specific tax” that limits their right to the city (Andreola & Muzzonigro, 2021). Moreover, studies have reported that women feel the most vulnerable or in danger when in public spaces, especially if unknown and at night; while most gender-based crimes actually happen during the day, in familiar populated places or behind closed doors. After decades of feminist analysis of the relationship between marginalised bodies and public spaces, this discrepancy between the social structuring of women's fears and the actual circumstances in which gender-based violence occurs needs to be investigated as social sources that limit women's freedom of movement have not been identified yet and the heteronormative “masculinization of public spaces” still goes unchallenged (Kern, 2020). Influenced by a range of existing studies different disciplines, the study develops a conceptual lens that is based on the hitherto un-theorised nexus of relations between body-space-fear, where the three dialectically linked, to investigate the existence, persistence, resistance and social structuring of women's fears and their implications for women's daily lives in Milan, Italy. Aiming at the production of new counter-hegemonic forms of knowledge that resist the dominant gender-space paradigm and weaken the prevailing space-gender determinism, a feminist methodology is adopted and data are being collected through ethnographic observations, semi-structured one-to-one in-depth



interviews and focus groups structured around collective walks, participatory photovoice and community emotional mapping rethinking the concept of security.

Contemporary perspectives on Pride events #1

Anat Kraslavsky, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Homophilosemitism

In May 2019 the German parliament declared the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement anti-Semitic. BDS is a Palestinian-led non-violent movement to pressure Israel through economic means to adhere to international law and stop human rights violations. The Queer Radical March (QRM) was organized some months later with the aim to protest the commodification of the main pride event under the motto “let’s get critical - Pride is political”. However, participants were prohibited from supporting BDS publicly by claiming it was anti-Semitic. This led to a conflict that occurred initially on Facebook but ultimately manifested in a self-organized coalition to have a BDS supporting presence at the march that was dissolved because police were invoked.

The context of this conflict is the ‘New Anti-Semitism’ discourse, which is deployed to target LGBTIQ+ bodies of color, especially migrant, Palestinian, Muslim, and some Jewish bodies as agents of anti-Semitism in the framework of a transnational racial governance. In this epistemic regime and State-Philosemitism some bodies are seen as ‘at home’ while others are thought to have imported anti-Semitism into a ‘post-racial and sexually free’ Germany.

The events at pride reflect what I call Homophilosemitism. I argue that Homophilosemitism reflects homotransnationalism and homocolonialism, within which a transnational ‘civilized’ vs. ‘uncivilized’ binarity emerges. This gives certain bodies access into a ‘civilized and proper’ sexual and homo citizenship through adoption of policing mechanisms of the state that also changed the face of pride events in Berlin since 2019.



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Jordi Calabuig Serra, Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne and University of Girona

Pride! Circuit Festival and Orgull demonstration: when LGBT+ events are not unitary

Barcelona is a city that has been significant for decades in the LGBT+ imaginary from different angles, such as the associative, with very active protest, social and cultural movements, and also the economic, with a specific leisure offer and an attractiveness that have made it a popular LGBT+ tourist destination.

This dynamism has translated into various events that take place annually -Pride Barcelona!, the Circuit Festival and the alternative Orgull (pride) march- around which debates are generated about the politicisation, commodification and touristification of the LGBT+ movement. Each event has its places, its audiences and its impact on society. And also, its internal networks and international circuits.

This contribution will focus on the LGBT+ territorialities in the city and the place of these three events in the imaginary. Territorialities constructed by residents and migrants, visitors and tourists. Shaped in real and digital spaces, temporary and fragmented spaces, micro-spaces from the individuals and macro-spaces from the perspective of global tourism.

The results of a research conducted from a relational point of view of the LGBT+ fact will be presented. Interviews were conducted with LGTB+ residents living in Barcelona, on-site observations of LGTB spaces and a survey of LGTB+ tourists who have visited the city.

Priyam Ghosh

Whose Pride is it anyways: Articulating Intersections of Gender, Class, and Caste in Queer Prides Parades in Indian Metropolitan Cities

There have been several arguments made that the queer struggles in India while celebrating transgressions ends up promoting 'geographies of exclusion', which states that the struggles of symbolic meaning of space are inseparable from the materiality of the space" (Binnie and Young 2006). The neoliberal cityscape enables a unique liberation for assertion of varied identities, but also enfolded within itself discriminatory nature. Features such as anonymity and absence of immediate social control allows non-normative sexualities to be materialised within the cityscapes. However, the same space upholds differential access to various social and political subjects. This is reflected by the various hierarchies and discriminations that this visibility in turn permits and reproduces. The queer



subjectivities are enmeshed with intricacies of intersectionalities of class, caste, and gender, which are deeply influenced by the neoliberal cityscape. This paper delves into the multifaceted dynamics of queer pride movements in urban India.

Drawing from ethnographic research and participant observation conducted across various metropolitan cities, the paper examines how individuals negotiate their queer identities within the larger framework of social hierarchies. This paper further explores the nuanced interplay between gender, class, and caste within these spaces, shedding light on the complexities of identity formation and activism.

Workshop: What makes us feel good in community spaces?

Lee Eisold, KU Leuven

More and more activist or community spaces want to be safer spaces for everyone to participate and feel accepted as they are. Organizers express that any form of discrimination has no place at their event or in their location. They might provide rules or people to contact in moments of discomfort, conflict, pain or fear. Often, we turn to easy categorisations to describe who is welcome (or not) to make a space “safer”. As scholars working on gender and sexuality, what is it that actually makes us feel good in spaces? What encourages us to participate actively in a community or join an activist group? Which role does the physical space, its design, sounds and smells play? And is it possible to keep all forms of discrimination in mind, but outside the door at the same time?

In this (self-)reflective workshop, we will explore these questions with the help of all our senses. Sculptures, collages, drawings, movement, videos, voice notes, writings... whatever method helps you to express your thoughts and experiences is welcome. You can use a form of expression that you know well or experiment with something completely new. Some material will be provided but feel free to bring your own as well.

After very brief instructions in English (with translation on the slides), we will spend most of the time working on our own, largely non-verbal reflections. An online pad will be provided to share outcomes and experiences afterwards. Language and format can be chosen by each participant.



14:30 – 16:00 Parallel Sessions

Queer-feminist spaces of sexual harassment and violence

Simone Kreutz, Humboldt University Berlin

Sexualized Violence in ›Feminist‹ Spaces: Turning Comfortable Spaces into Uncomfortable Ones

Sexualised violence occurs in all social spaces. However, social spaces are associated with sexualised violence in different ways. In some, the occurrence seems almost ›natural‹, or at least unsurprising – think of the much-discussed fraternity party. In other spaces, such as self-proclaimed ›feminist‹ spaces, the occurrence seems almost unthinkable. After all, sexualised violence contradicts the shared values and ideals of ›feminist‹ spaces; contradicts the idea of ›feminist‹ spaces as a refuge in patriarchal societies, as a comfortable space in an uncomfortable world.

However, when sexualised violence occurs within ›feminist‹ spaces, the contradiction between self-image and reality creates problems on several levels. The self-image does not necessarily lead to a productive way of dealing with sexualised violence, but can make it even more difficult. As a result, ›feminist‹ spaces become uncomfortable spaces for victim-survivors.

The presentation is based on interviews with victim-survivors of sexualised violence within left-wing groups in Germany that identify as ›feminist‹. The interviews were conducted as part of my doctoral research at the University of Kassel, in which I am investigating the question of collective responsibility for sexualised violence in hierarchy-critical collectives. The presentation will explore how ›feminist‹ spaces become uncomfortable spaces for victim-survivors, when they experience sexualised violence within these spaces. Thereby, the central question is what role the ›feminist‹ self-image plays in the (non-)handling of sexualised violence.

Erzsébet Barát, CEU Vienna and University of Szeged, and Hanna Hacker, University of Vienna

Beyond disaffected consent: Testimonies as tactical repertoires in academia



In our understanding contemporary western academia is caught in a post-democratic neoliberal capitalist system that extensively draws on a strategic normalization of verbal and physical forms of violence. This violent strategy of interaction of culture wars is mobilized at the intersection of multiple relations of power, generating a general sense of “disaffected consent” (Gilbert 2015). We would like to find ways of hope, queer futurities of building collectives against the dominant disposition of targeting “enemies”. We have selected a few infamous cases that could be seen as blueprints for exploring the fights against academic forms of violence.

In particular, our talk will address the prerequisites and consequences of "testimonio" as a form of transgressive and counter-hegemonic articulation of subversion (cf. Cruz-Malavé 2007; Gugelberger 1996; Rodríguez 2019). The recent prominent "occurrences" of sexual and racist harassment and exploitation perpetrated by highly influential, high-ranked academic agents of anti-, post-, and decolonial knowledge production. These cases and constellations have their own specificities that do not entirely tie in with the moment of #metoo in academia. The dimensions of (post-)coloniality are abundant in these cases: firmly written into the hierarchical structural relations of universities, and rewritten into the bodies of those who experience the violence. We shall explore their testimonios as discursive sites that invite us as resistant readers for building a caring collective that holds space for our injuries as well as for ways of mobilizing our rage against the ongoing violence.

Janina Smietanka, University of Plymouth

Uncomfortable comfortability: A sensory exploration of unwanted sexual attention in the LGBTQ+ night time economy (NTE)

LGBTQ+ venues in the NTE are often seen as areas of comfort that act as safe havens for LGBTQ+ individuals. These spaces are historically known to be social spaces of unity, expression, and sites of transgression from hetero norms (Hartless, 2019; Valentine and Skeleton, 2003). However, a neglected feature of these spaces is the common perpetration of unwanted sexual attention. As such, this paper draws on ethnographic research that uses a sensory criminological approach to discern how the atmospheres of these spaces contribute to and confuse these experiences in the LGBTQ+ NTE.

Venues of the NTE are specifically designed to produce particular atmospheres (Tutenges, 2023) and shape individual and collective experiences that occur within them. Collective atmospheres in LGBTQ+ venues are often perceived to be one of shared freedom, unity and joy, but under the surface of glitter and pounding bass, it is often fuelled by hedonistic pleasure and the desire for self-gratification.



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In this paper I argue that these highly sensorial spaces and atmospheres implicate how people understand, navigate and articulate experiences of unwanted sexual attention.

The 3 key points that this paper highlights are: 1. The LGBTQ+ NTE has its own atmospheres that are individually and collectively experienced through the senses. 2. When unwanted sexual attention is experienced, an individual's sensory engagement with the atmosphere is disrupted, and a comfortable space mutates into an uncomfortable space. 3. Engaging with these sensorial and atmospheric environments allows deeper understandings of unwanted sexual attention, outside of the heteronormative frameworks and continuums. Overall, this paper argues that unwanted sexual attention both constitutes and disrupts the atmospheres of the LGBTQ+ NTE.

Panagiota Vogiatzi, University of Birmingham

Exploring the Queer Past and Travelling in Discomfort Places

Researching queer history entails both physical and non-physical travels across various geographical, cultural, and political environments and time periods—an excavation that is neither simple nor reassuring, often uncovering dark, shameful, and painful moments of the queer past (Love 2007). In this presentation, my focus will be on exploring literary archives as non-physical travels in diverse geographical and cultural contexts across different historical periods. Drawing from my experiences during my PhD research's examination of literary queer archives in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, I will now delve into what kind of discomforts might be caused by or be unveiled during this form of "reading-visiting" or "visiting-without-visiting" geographical spaces (e.g., France, Greece, Egypt). The return to spaces where various degrees of conservatism and violence prevailed, particularly towards female sexuality, and where numerous instances of repression against queer women, including objectification, rape, and systemic oppression, were brought to light, led me to continual grappling with feelings of anger, disgust, and depression.

In addition to my emotional and mental discomfort, in the presentation, I will also highlight the uncomfortable truths raised not only for our past but also for our present; realizations around how uncontrolled women's bodies and lives still are, how patriarchy still dominates, how queer lives still do not matter as much as straight lives, and how easily they are ostracized. Painful reminders of how tightly linked we are with transhistorical and transnational queer beings of the past and present. For the conclusion, it is crucial to underscore the



challenges researchers encounter in acknowledging and integrating these painful experiences into their projects, allowing them to shape their perspectives and arguments, while also acknowledging the added difficulties of discussing these emotions and experiences in academic conferences; spaces which often heighten feelings of discomfort, especially for those engaged in queer studies.

On The Edge: questioning the urban periphery as an uncomfortable space for LGBTQ* people

Milan Bonté and Cyril Blondel, University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne

When social marginalization encounters territorial peripheralization. A case study on LGBTI mobilities in the French Ardennes

Geographies of gender and sexuality have focused on central areas, producing research that is considered metronormative (Halberstam, 2005), or peripheral areas, dispersing into as many 'formula stories' (Stone, 2018) as there are rural or peri-urban LGBTI people. The relations between centres and peripheries - commuting, residential migration, tourist or leisure mobilities, access to healthcare, etc. - have been little discussed. In this presentation, we would like to present the initial results of a field study looking at the mobilities of LGBTI people in the highly peripheralized region of the French Ardennes. The research is based on twenty semi-structured interviews with LGBTI people from or living in the French Ardennes. These qualitative data were supplemented by a geolocalised database recording changes in the living spaces of the participants over their life course, exploited using a GIS. At the intersection of class and gender power relations, LGBTI people negotiate access to territorial resources differently regarding the context of peripheralization. While cisgender gay men deploy long-distance tourist mobility strategies that give them access to sexual and affective encounters in an extended living space, trans people and lesbian and bi women suffer more from the consequences of relegation. The gradual abandonment of the region by public policies (transport, access to healthcare) is reflected differently in individual trajectories: negotiating with peripherality is a socially situated practice.

Maria Kherbouche, University of Geneva and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Reconfiguring the margins: LGBTQI+ activism in Saint-Denis and Nørrebro



This communication tackles protest practices of LGBTQI+ emerging in working-class peripheries and how they shed light on two reconfigurations of spatial and social margins. Pride des banlieues in Saint-Denis, France, is compared with Nørrebro Pride in Copenhagen, Denmark. Both emphasise their belonging to the urban margins. This paper explores first their shared characteristics. The groups advocate for pride politicisation as “protest marches”, criticise the central prides of Paris and Copenhagen. They support the creation of their own representation spaces. They acknowledge the specific interests of multi-marginalised groups: demands related to race are crucial and prides organise blocks when demonstrating, putting “QTIBIPoC” to the front. They share anti-gentrification claims and have unified discourses on urban margins as “safe places”. Doing so, they reverse the geography of violence associated with LGBTQI+ people and valorise their spatial location. However, the findings unveil two opposite uses of the margins. In Copenhagen, the group positions itself with sought-after margins and keeping the center at a distance. They detach from central activists and institutional groups and participation is bound for QTIBIPoCs only, yet without geographical constraints. Here, margins are a synonym of borders. In Saint-Denis, activists adopt a centralised perspective on margins. They maximise their relations with other protest units and local authorities. The aim is to become the main LGBTQI+ actor in French working-class neighbourhoods. Margins are seen as strategic places to feed endogenous innovations in a polycentric model in which Saint-Denis would be “at the center of the margins”.

Matt C Smith, University of Brighton

“I feel like I can breathe properly. I feel open”: Centring the liminal in trans urban geographies

Trans life in and movement to the city has been associated with the concentration and access to healthcare, support services, and community. I demonstrate that while these are of course important, centring them within the trans urban imaginary overlooks what can make everyday life in the city liveable (Banerjea & Browne, 2023). This paper draws upon creative mapping workshops and interviews conducted with trans inhabitants of the city of Brighton & Hove, UK, as part of the author’s doctoral work. As a city caught between the South Downs and the sea, the constrictions of clay and channel have shaped the social and material dynamics of this extraordinary (Browne & Bakshi, 2013) queer city since its inception. Participants narratives of floating in the sea by the nudist beach and finding space to breathe in the peri-urban fringe, are contrasted with the intensities of surveillance felt in relation to trans-hostile publics experienced throughout the city. The assembled material, social, and discursive elements of place afford experiences of being seen and unseen simultaneously (Malatino, 2020). I foreground the experiences of these affirming ecologies as part of a mundane liminality grounded in



the everyday (March, 2021). I argue that this opens up space to theorise how, far from being as-yet-made, it is as we inhabit green and blue spaces in and around the city that we make the publics we desire and require (Gieseck, 2022). This paper thus contributes to production of a radical trans imagination within the discipline of geography (Brice, 2023).

Reimagining Bodies and Spaces: Queer and feminist perspectives on censorship, expression and normativity #1

Andrew McCartan & Kath Browne, University College Dublin

“That actually felt so much more real to me... than pretending we could coexist”: Uncomfortably imagining spaces ‘beyond opposition’ in relation to sexuality, gender and abortion

The Beyond Opposition project has been researching contemporary social polarisations in Ireland, Canada and Great Britain over issues of sexuality, gender and abortion. Recent years have seen place-based normativities transform in these contexts following increased social, political and legal recognition and acceptance of certain LGBT, queer, trans, and/or feminist positionings, such as those surrounding marriage equality, gender recognition, and abortion. Rather than ushering in a ‘gay utopia’, moral panics and resistances to these changes, including heteroactivist and gender critical activisms, have intensified and social divisions are being aggravated along us/them, right/wrong, good/evil binaries. For many who hold various positions on these changes, everyday spaces are becoming more uncomfortable and ‘toxic’ – highlighting the limitations of opposition in creating liveable spaces for coexistence in relation to gender, sexuality and abortion.

Beyond Opposition workshops sought to explore how we might live together differently within these shifting ‘post-equality’ power relations. A series of discussion-based and artist-led workshops in the project’s second phase brought together people with fundamentally different positions to do the uncomfortable work of imagining new modes of co-existence with those whom we disagree with. This paper examines a key moment in the final artist-led workshop in Scotland in which participants, who were asked to act out a short piece of theatre imagining a ‘perfect’ utopian space where the ‘other’ still exists, rejected the premise that a space could exist in which their conflict(s) would be resolved. Through an analysis of the scene and the participants and audience’s reflections, we explore



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the limitations of finding ‘common ground’ across polarised social issues, and the possibilities for creating/sharing space together with those in opposition to your rights and/or existence.

Ekaterina Filep, University of Freiburg

Mapping anti-gender discourse in Swiss and Hungarian media and politics

Over the last years, anti-gender politics manifested itself in different areas of life. It opposes or challenges the principles and goals of gender equality, gender identity recognition, and the dismantling of traditional gender roles. Although fluid and characterized by interchangeable discourses and targets, anti-gender politics commonly opposes reproductive rights, same-sex marriage, transgender rights, Gender Studies at universities, sex education in schools and the notion of gender itself (which is often framed as a foreign imposition and a source of risk to children, the heteronormative family, and the nation).

This presentation will discuss some key ideas associated with the production of media and parliamentary anti-gender discourses in Hungary and Switzerland and reflect on how these discourses contribute to production of uncomfortable spaces. Drawing on the analysis of selected parliamentary records and media outlets and by tracking key controversies predominantly in the period of 2017-2022, the presentation will:

- Discuss the key ideas and claims mobilised in political and media discourse and practices in Hungary and Switzerland, which are used to justify the oppressive practices and policies undermining gender equality, diversity, and freedoms.
- Discuss a few empirical examples that illustrate the role of such discourses in promoting a sense of exclusion and contributing to making certain spaces uncomfortable when viewed from an intersectional perspective.

Focusing specifically on Hungary and Switzerland, this presentation will draw on the collaborative research findings from the RESIST Project (<https://theresistproject.eu>) which studied anti-gender mobilisations across 5 case-studies: the European Parliament, UK, Poland, Switzerland and Hungary.



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Roberto Kulpa, Edinburgh Napier University

Mapping so-called 'anti-gender' discourses in parliamentary and media spaces across the 'eastern' and 'western' geopolitical imaginations of 'Europe'

Anti-feminist and anti-LGBTIQ+ mobilisations have taken roots transnationally, denying individuals autonomy, rights to bodily integrity or self-determination, and attacking selected groups of people (e.g. trans* people, people doing abortion) in order to pursue dehumanising and exclusionary agendas. In the ongoing battle against them, national and international queer-feminist insurgencies have been developing spaces of resistances and fightback. 'Identity politics', one way or another, is thus a space of tensions and dis-comforts of politics, where actors, issues, and strategies constantly manoeuvre and reposition themselves to aggregate or ease the arising frictions. Symbolic and real geo-temporalities of political loci have been a significant contributing factor in these processes.

This presentation will empirically draw on the research findings from the RESIST Project (<https://theresistproject.eu>) on the parliamentary and media 'anti-gender' debates in the UK, PL, HU, CH, and the European Parliament to engage with the following issues:

- how 'dis-comfort' features as an element of the 'anti-gender' politics in Polish and transnational contexts;
- porous and un-comfortable thresholds across media and parliaments as places of (trans)national politics;
- syncretic benefits and obstacles emerging from those 'threshold of dis-comforts' that re-create imaginary geopolitics of 'the 'east' and 'west' in the 'anti-gender' (scholarly, political, activist) debates;
- thinking forward about recommendations and next steps needed in our fight against inequalities and for the better, queer-feminist futures.

Michal Pitoňák, Charles University

Contours of Resistance: LGBT+ Activism Amidst Populism and Morality Politics in Central and Eastern Europe

This presentation explores the transformative journey of LGBT+ activism within the challenging socio-political terrains of Central and Eastern Europe, with a spotlight on Czechia. It traces the roots of the movement, from its nascent stages under restrictive regimes, through its flourishing in the early post-socialist era, to the contemporary struggles against the rising conservative tide, populism, and so-called morality politics. Through vivid examples, I explore the strategic responses of activists to counter populist narratives and actions that seek to marginalize sexual and gender minorities. Furthermore, I delve into the concepts of ontological insecurity and uncertainty,



illustrating how these sentiments can be exploited by morality entrepreneurs who foster societal divisions by manipulating emotions. By highlighting the entanglement of activism with the broader political and social milieu, I underscore the complex dynamics at play in the fight for LGBT+ rights and recognition. Finally, I will showcase the resilience and adaptability of the LGBT+ movement, shedding light on the broader implications for social justice, policy formulation, and the ongoing quest for equality and acceptance in the region. This narrative not only offers insights into the resilience of the LGBT+ movement but also reflects on the broader implications of these struggles for democracy and social cohesion in the face of rising authoritarianism.

The Invisibility of Bisexuality Research: looking for bisexual presences and absences in geographies of sexualities #1

Robin Rose Breetveld, Kent University

You Don't Belong Here: Navigating the Complex Socio-Spatial and Epistemic In- and Exclusion of Bisexuality

Bisexuality is an identity that has been historically rendered invisible throughout epistemic practices, as well as forcibly positioned as a non-valid identity through public discourse, which has placed bisexuality in a unique – and uncomfortable – socio-spatial and academic disposition (Breetveld in Maliepaard & Baumgartner 2020, Breetveld 2023, Breetveld forthcoming). The presentation draws on the Author's doctoral thesis, which focusses on the lived-experiences of bisexual and plurisexual individuals, and how they navigate 'divisive hierarchies of unbelonging' within the wider LGBT+ community (socio-spatially and socio-linguistically), as well as bisexuality's place within the far more welcoming feminist intersectional queer spaces (Breetveld 2023). There will be a particular emphasis on the need to address the pervasive lack of narrative ownership of bisexual experiences, and the imposed nature of discursive, social, spatial, affective, and epistemic harmful practices that reinforces bisexual invisibility, and more so, bisexual silence. Therefore, the presentation will not only focus with the sexual geographic elements of in- and exclusion of minorities within minorities, it will also critically engage with the equally complex hermeneutic dis/position of bisexuality within sexuality scholarship, by addressing the discomfort of negotiating the place of a "stand-alone Bisexuality Studies" in relation to the (historically erasing but currently intersectionally driven) sociological strand of Queer Theory. In other words: If empirical research indicates that queerness guarantees a sense of safety and belonging (Breetveld 2023), there should be a, potentially painful, readdressing of the pervasive rhetoric that bisexuality has no epistemic place within Queer Theory (Callis 2009; Maliepaard 2015; Monroe 2015; Breetveld 2020, Breetveld forthcoming).



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Rowan Dowling, University of Oxford

Dark Blue, Half-Blue, Bi: Tracing Bisexual Identification in Russia

This paper delves into the history of bisexual (self-)identification in Russia through analysing bisexual content in print journals published in the 1990s and archived web pages from major LGBTQ+ Russian websites in the 2000s. In the early post-Soviet period, an influx of information on LGBTQ+ topics, coupled with the relaxation of censorship, meant that multiple discourses about bisexuality suddenly vied for attention when in many Anglo-European spaces it was already felt to have solidified into an authentic sexual identity. What was considered bisexual in these sources? And where did bisexuality fit into the queer Russian vernacular? Scholars have suggested that the terms *goluboi* (“light-blue”, a man with same-sex attraction) and *rozavaya* (“pink”, a woman with same-sex attraction) did not mean ‘homosexual’ but were inclusive of sexual fluidity broadly. Yet I argue that bisexuality was considered both inside and outside the spaces of identification that these terms offered. I show that bi men toyed with terms such as *polugoluboi* (“half-blue”) or *sinii* (“dark blue”), as well as using the loaned labels *bi*, *biseks*, and *biseksual*. The language of bisexuality was in flux, used variously by different speakers, some of whom existed uneasily in the overlapping concepts of being “bisexual” and being a “married gay” as ideas of bisexuality as behaviour versus identity were being negotiated in Russia for the first time. I end by contrasting the excited uncertainty documented in these sources to the situation today. As LGBTQ+ identities became increasingly politicised under Putin’s authoritarian rule, homophobic legislation was introduced which censored LGBTQ+ content, and, ultimately, caused many activists to leave Russian geographical and virtual spaces alike. Under these pressures, Russian bi/pansexual activism has drawn heavily on the strategies of global bi activisms, loaning terminology and concepts from English while trying to map them onto specifically Russian contexts.

Penny Harvey, California Institute of Integral Studies

Exploring Gender Dynamics in Sexual Interactions: Insights from Bisexual, Queer, Pansexual, and Polyamorous Individuals

This study centered on bisexual, queer, pansexual, and polyamorous individuals as key agents in challenging cis/heteronormative assumptions about sex, pleasure, and sexual scripts. Initial findings revealed that these populations offered rich insights into deconstructing societal norms surrounding sexuality. Specifically, it was found that gender was relational, with a person's partner influencing their gendered role in sexual interactions. This discovery underscored the importance of understanding how gender dynamics



shape sexual pleasure and well-being. By centering on bisexual, pansexual, and queer individuals, we aimed to deepen our understanding of their sexual and pleasure-based experiences while examining the impact of gender inequality in partnerships with different gendered individuals. Our research concentrated on analyzing how these findings applied specifically to bisexual individuals' experiences of sexual pleasure, consent, and well-being. Through qualitative data collection and a mixed-methods approach involving 200 participants, we sought to uncover nuanced narratives and intersectional understandings of how factors such as gender, religion, race/ethnicity, and culture shaped sexual scripts and norms. This comprehensive analysis was expected to inform various domains including sex education, academic literature, medical practice, faith-based programming, and policies related to consent and sexual violence. Ultimately, this research aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of pleasure, sexual well-being, and the experiences of bisexual, pansexual, and queer individuals in sexual contexts.

Maria Rodó-Zárate, Júlia Pascual-Bordas and Juliana Souza, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

The Imposed Sexual Binary on Bisexual Experience: Heterocisnormativity's Impact on Everyday Places

The binary framework of sexuality has historically marginalized bisexuality, particularly within the field of Geographies of Sexualities. Bisexual individuals confront biphobia and negotiate their identities through processes such as passing, and blurring the boundaries between heterosexual and homosexual presentations. This study examines how heterocisnormativity obscures bisexual identities and the limited focus of academic research on same-sex partnerships in Geographies of Sexualities further perpetuates this invisibility. Therefore, the complex dynamics of passing remain largely unexplored in the context of relationships perceived as both homosexual and heterosexual. Our research focuses on the lived experiences of bisexual people from an emotional and intersectional perspective. With a sample of 76 participants from Catalonia and the use of the Relief Maps (reliefmaps.upf.edu) as a research method that combines qualitative, quantitative, and spatial approaches, we analyse their experiences of comfort and discomfort in the spaces of their everyday lives. These narratives underscore how societal norms impose rigid sexual categories upon individuals. Through this lens, we consider emotions as indicators of social inequalities and discriminations and a source of knowledge production. In this line, we aim to contribute to research on bisexual geographies by exploring the role of place in the (re)production and transgression of binary and biphobic conceptions of sexuality. By doing so, we contribute to a deeper understanding of the nuanced experiences of bisexual people and the spatial dynamics of sexual identity formation and resistance within a monosexual hegemonic context.



16:30 – 18:00 Parallel Sessions

Unruly Dis/comfort: 'Unsexy Spaces' and Later-in-Life Sex

Giulia Nazzaro and Gabriëlle de Pooter, Ghent University

"Out of here": older women's unruly sexuality in a care home **Δ**

The desires, intimacies and sexual practices of older women are inscribed in paradigms of successful and unsuccessful ageing. While the narrative of successful ageing insists on remaining sexually attractive and active within heteropatriarchal norms, the narrative of unsuccessful ageing renders women's desires in later life as something abhorrent or as an object of ridicule (Sandberg, 2013). These narratives extend themselves upon the care sphere, a sphere that signals dependency, frailty and even abjection (Gilleard & Higgs, 2011; Przybylo, 2019).

Nevertheless, there has been little research on the impact of the spatialities of care on desire, sexual practices and intimacies in later life, and how experiences of intimacies, sex and desire help shape space (Gorman-Murray et al., 2022). Simultaneously, the lived experiences of older persons remain largely understudied in geography (Finlay & Finn, 2021), specifically older women (Milligan & Tarrant, 2018). This paper situates itself at the intersection of these two oversights, and addresses unruly later in life sexuality for women specifically in the spatiality of the care home. Care homes have been understood in terms of Goffman's framework of total institution (1961) in general (El-Bialy et al., 2022; Stöhr et al., 2022; Wiersma & Dupuis, 2010), as well as in terms of sexuality specifically (Cornelison & Doll, 2013). The notion of total institution refers to an enclosed space where people live or work following a certain regimen while under constant observation. However, total institutions also include practices of adaptation and resistance to the regimen, i.e., "underlives" (1961/2017, p. 305). This research paper asks how those underlives may be a site for unruliness, a form of resistance for older women to defy impositions on their desires and sexuality (Bracke et al., 2017; De Vuyst, 2022; Halberstam, 2011), and zooms in on the significance of the spatial dimensions of unruliness. These spatial dimensions include notions of physical space, but also consider powerful spatiotemporal imaginaries as a site of resistance (Talburtt & Matus, 2014). The paper draws from ethnographic research in a care home in Belgium, consisting of long-term participant observation and qualitative interviews. The lived



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experiences of the participants bring to the fore intersectional understandings of unruly later in life sexuality as they materialize through the women's negotiation with the confined space of the total institution.

Valerie De Craene, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

"I don't want to have sex between 6pm and 8pm on Thursdays because it suits the staff" Home-making as a contested space for intimacy and sexuality at old age

Heteronormative idea(l)s of space have historically aimed at restricting sexual practices to private spaces while dividing them from public spaces that are presumed to be asexual (Brown & Browne 2016). As people grow older, however, the home space increasingly becomes less private, especially when the health situation of older adults requires (informal and formal) caregivers to enter the home at any moment of the day (and even night). As a result, older people do not have much space outside of moral supervision (or are not even considered to be in need of private space) (Mahieu & Gastmans 2015), rendering home spaces almost always public or semi-public for them.

In this way, home spaces for older adults with varying degrees of care needs can be considered 'unsexy spaces'. This paper reports on an ongoing research project which explores the relationality and complex interplay of space, materiality and practices in the construction of sexuality and age. Looking at the (material and emotional) modalities of the 'home' in which older people live, using different research methods (in depth interviews, auto-driven photo eliciting, relief maps, etc.), this paper will focus on how 'traditional' housing constellations (i.e. residential care homes and ageing-in-place) affect if and how older adults can express their intimate and sexual desires. It explores different home-making practices, bodily transformations, and the role of both human (care givers, family members, peers, ...) and non-human (medical aids, incontinence diapers, memorabilia, etc.) actors shape the daily life of older adults and how these affect their (self) perception and impact on their sexual life.

Ela Przybyło, Illinois State University

On the Pressures of Vigor, Productivity, and Pleasure: Aging With Asexuality Studies Δ



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In this talk, I revisit my work from 2019 on ageing, disposability, and asexuality. I first unpack how compulsory sexuality (or the imperative to be sexual and have sex) operates alongside desexualization for ageing adults in western countries at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, where the pressure to have sex and remain vigorous into late life looms strong. Following asexuality studies and critical disability studies scholar Eunjung Kim (2010), I mark a difference between asexuality and desexualization. Asexuality, or low-to-no sexual attraction to others, I take for granted as a real sexual identity and orientation that can exist at any age as well as emerge later in life (Przybylo, 2016). Further, I mark desexualization as a harmful process of barring or preventing access to sex, sexual fulfilment, and sexual identity and affecting many people including ageing adults, people with disabilities, and racialized people. Desexualization is at work in a complex way in contemporary western contexts in relation to older adults. On the one hand, through being encouraged not to have sex – through being desexualized – older adults are left out of the fold of full social and intimate participation. In this sense, the desexualization of ageing adulthood is a form of harm. On the other hand, new discourses have surfaced that encourage ageing adults – especially when wealthy or upper middle class, white, heterosexual, and able-bodied – to be sexual and ‘sexy’ for as long as possible and by any means possible, as a way to preserve youth and ability. In the words of Stephen Katz, there is a ‘[broad] cultural background of contradictory images that marginalize, denigrate, and desexualize older people’ even while older adults are enjoined to ‘resist their own ageing through active and independent lifestyles’ (2011, p 187). Exploring these two twin sets of discourses for ageing adulthood, this talk holds on to the possibility of imagining ageing bodies as affirmatively asexual, emphasizing asexual identities and experiences as valid and life-making. Towards this goal, I draw on the work of Tricia Hersey’s *The Nap Ministry* and the work of asexuality studies to briefly examine two recent novels that center sleeping, rest, and resist a productivization of sexual vigor: Patrick deWitt’s *The Librarianist* (2023) and Ottessa Moshfegh’s *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (2018). I argue that perspectives that hone sexual vigor at any and all cost align with discourses of ableist productivity that alienate people from their sexuality and deny the possibility of affirmative asexuality.

Zofia Holewajusz, University College London

Geographies of asexuality

My paper argues that introducing asexuality to the discipline of geography offers a new approach to both space and sexuality, particularly as the very notion of space produced as sexual has been overlooked. I demonstrate the importance of the inclusion of asexuality in



geographies of sexualities both as an embodied subjectivity and as a critical lens. In my argument, asexuality challenges compulsory sexuality (Gupta, 2015), the centrality of sex in queer politics and what came to be understood as “queer space” and the practice of “queering space”. From an asexual perspective, appropriation or claims to space and sexual citizenship made exclusively through queer sex (see Brown, 2004; Gandy, 2012) are not productive. Those practices reinforce the idea that queerness is inherently sexual, which delegitimises asexual experiences while at the same time regulating norms and practices regarding queerness. In other words, the contestation of the “heterosexual space” tends to be done through negotiating what kind of sex is normal, desirable or allowed, and under what circumstances, rather than whether or not it is necessary. Moreover, as noted by Przybylo (2011), compulsory sexuality regulates which (queer) bodies can belong where and how. I will address the question of belonging of asexual bodies in space following Sara Ahmed’s work on affect and sexuality. For Ahmed (2004), the experience of discomfort associated with norms of sexuality and space results in a feeling of disorientation. I aim to elaborate on this spatial metaphor particularly concerning asexuality and compulsory sexuality reproduced in (queer) space.

Reimagining Bodies and Spaces: Queer and feminist perspectives on censorship, expression and normativity #2

Meg Poff, City University of London

‘Take Ecstasy with Me’: An embodied autoethnography of hope(fulness/lessness) in London’s queer night-life scenes*

In a world that remains fundamentally homophobic and transphobic, ‘queer’ spaces are frequently, and often uncritically, conceptualised as islands of safety, freedom and community, world-making utopias where new and radical forms of relation can come into being (Buckland, 2002). This may be especially true of queer night-life spaces, where the dance floor, the toilet, the smoking area serve as critical hotbeds of self-expression, experimentation and pleasure (Adeyemi et al., 2021). But so frequently, however, the boozy haze in the club scarcely masks the subtle (or not so subtle) hierarchisation and policing of bodies and identities, the re-creation and reinforcement of power dynamics based on race, age, ability, appearance, class, and unchecked cis-heteronormativity that manifests in who takes up space and how (Nash and Bain, 2007; Browne, 2006; Hartless, 2018). And yet, there are moments when utopian promise of the queer party is fulfilled, a moment, a touch, a song, and perhaps this ephemeral quality is what brings us back time and time again, hoping for transformation and connection. This autoethnographic submission, based on my participation in London queer and trans



night-life and ‘embodied interactions’ with fellow party-goers and connection/pleasure-seekers, emerges from a fundamental hopefulness that there is ‘somewhere out there’ where identity and expression can be experimented with, piloted, bent and broken. At the same time, I recognise that the ‘comfort’ and ‘safety’ queer spaces often promise to facilitate this experimentation are based on racialised, gendered, and sexed subjectivities (Held, 2015) that provide freedom for some through the exclusion of others. Drawing on theories of belonging and periphery, I pay particular attention to dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, the ‘border spaces’ of the party and the creation/disappointment of hope in these spaces.

Mujung Tsai, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Public Spaces and Intimate Feelings: Mapping and Blurring Gendered Spatial Dichotomy through Exploring Queer Everyday Life, Tactics, and Attachments in Berlin, Wedding

This paper discusses queer citizens' relationship with public spaces by exploring and discussing quotidian uses of public infrastructures in everyday life. Contrary to the earlier scholarship of geographies of sex and sexualities, where queer activities and belongings were observed in semi public spaces of nocturnal entertainment, this paper takes the stage in public spaces in the inner city area of Berlin, Wedding, where it has been simultaneously described as crime ridden and up and coming. The harsh outlook of Wedding maintains a cheaper rental market and enables alternative ways of queer resistance in the minutiae of the everyday. The paper scrutinises the way queer citizens interact, manoeuvre, and attach in public spaces and examines their spatial production. The seemingly invisible act of everyday living brings out intricate and often creative modes and ways of queer placemaking. The paper draws analyses from data collected through methods of mental mapping, semiconstructed interviews, and walking interviews over a year of ethnographic research from my ongoing PhD project. These methods not only helped bring out queer citizens' spatial memories and embodied emotions but also realtime enactment of active negotiations with public spaces. Following Lefebvre's idea of everyday life as defiance of the reproductive power of institutions, I consider queer bodies' insistent intrusions in the normative social realm a radical intimacy with the city and its cemented systemisation. A study of everyday queer geographies challenges ideas of the normative everyday; moreover, it blurs the gendered public/private dichotomy and evokes the co becoming of public spaces and their queer dwellers.



Veronika Valkovičová, Comenius University Bratislava, and Katarina Minarovicova, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Picking a side in the culture wars: LGBTQI+ employee/business resource groups in Slovakia

According to the 2017 United Nations Standards for Conduct of Businesses regarding LGBTQI+ populations, businesses are encouraged to act in the public sphere to use their leverage to stop human rights abuses in the countries in which they operate. Many companies taking this statement to heart (or rather to the management) do so via employee/business resource groups consisting of volunteering employees. While the activities of these groups experience widespread criticism of being window-dressing initiatives or displaying homonormativity in the market (Duggan 2004, Drucker 2015), there is very little research about everyday experiences of managing these activities, especially in non-Western contexts. The Slovak case is notable, as we have seen an unprecedented increase in advocacy activities and financial support for the civil society sector, coming from businesses in the past decade but propelled specifically after the 2022 terrorist attack on a gay bar in Bratislava. The objective of this study is to understand the conduct of ER/BG members working in Slovakia-based branches of international companies. As these employees organize within the company and engage with the civil society sector outside of it, they create a specific rationale for their corporate enclaves. Based on interviews with four representatives of the civil society sector and 18 employees working for seven companies, the present case study discloses tensions between corporate needs and expectations vis-à-vis seeping-in culture wars (BarÅa et al., 2021). The study focuses specifically on the discursive construction of a company as a safe space, or rather a safety valve (MacIntosh, 2007), but also as a space that should be nonpolitical.

David Popelka, University of Manchester

Queering Space in Cinema

Old Hollywood films made under the Motion Picture Production Code act as time capsules, preserving gendered and sexualised notions of space for audiences to observe and internalise. However, the introduction of homosexuality on screen marked a significant departure, allowing non-heterosexual characters to be included in predominantly 'straight' spaces and storylines. When we analyse queer films through Henri Lefebvre's spatial framework, we come to understand films as dynamic reproductions of ideas. These films are social practices that shape our perceptions of the world around us. In this context, the depiction of queer men on screen represents a reconfiguration of spatial norms. From the early 1990s to the 2000s, the examination of space in films created by openly gay filmmakers



or featuring gay characters illustrates a journey to understand the concept of homosexual space. The question becomes: how can we integrate homosexual men, who once had to hide, into a predominantly heterosexual world that structurally and socially hid them? Films such as Tom Kalin's *Swoon* (1992), Derek Jarman's *Edward II* (1991), Todd Haynes's *Far From Heaven* (2003), and Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) serve as examples of this thinking process. The inclusion of homosexual characters in these films prompts a reevaluation of spatial dynamics. Their techniques, such as pastiche, irony, and a reinterpretation of history through a social constructionist lens, fundamentally reshape and disrupt traditional perceptions of space within cinematic contexts. Spaces like homes, streets, courts, and nature, once portrayed as exclusively heteronormative and often masculine, are now being challenged and called upon for inclusion. The real-world efforts to integrate queer characters into everyday spaces are reflected in cinema, which emphasizes the fluidity of geographic spaces. This highlights the ongoing evolution of societal perspectives on space. In essence, films embody Lefebvre's concept of the social construction of space.

Contemporary perspectives on Pride events #2

Shanshan Ouyang, Ritsumeikan University

Safe Space=Comfortable? : experience of disabled queer activists in Japan and Taiwan's Pride Parades

The LGBT movement placed a strong emphasis on creating a safe space. Previous research has revealed that the sense of safety in these spaces can impact the emotions of those who participate in them. However, the participation of LGBTQ people with disabilities is still under-discussed, in fact, some disabled queer activists claim that "LGBTQ members with disabilities are often overlooked during Pride Month". They also have noted that "the disabled community is excluded from queer spaces in various ways." For disabled queer, the question of what a safe space is and whether such spaces make them feel sufficiently comfortable has not been clarified.

This study examines the experiences of disabled queer activists participating in the LGBT movement. This research observed parades in Japan and Taiwan's Pride from 2021-2023 and interviewed disabled queer activists. As a result, in Japan, activists pointed out inadequate and lack of accessibility at Pride events, calling for improvement to create safe space. In Taiwan, on the other hand, a group of disabled queer members have continued to participate in the parade over the past decade, and the Taiwan LGBT Pride has changed



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accordingly. However, it was found that the facilities to ensure the safety of wheelchair users have also created some uncomfortable situations for participants. Thus, while spaces may be deemed physically safe, emotional impacts warrant consideration. This research suggested that it is important for organizers to actively listen to the voices of the parties involved and engage in equal dialogue when building safe spaces.

David Dooling, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Ideal Sexual Citizen: Securing the Assets of Pride Parade Organizers

Over the past decade, pride parades ("Pride") have become increasingly popular, attracting more sponsorship and tourism. However, this trend has also raised concerns about the commercialization of LGBTQ+ equality, prioritizing economic gain over the alternative, sensorial, and communicative potential of queer ontology. Pride facilitates contradictory cultural politics about sexuality and gender in the public sphere, necessitating a communicative investigation of what factors drive queer social movements. Therefore, this paper borrows from an ethnographic project in the United States focusing on the communicative strategies of Pride organizers—individuals who create, coordinate, and conceptualize the display of queer identity in public settings. I draw from theory on feminist dilemmatic theorizing, queer theory, and sexual citizenship to answer the research question, “How do Pride organizers communicatively navigate systems of sexual normativity?” Based on my own experiences as a lead volunteer of a pride parade organization—and 14 semi-structured interviews with Pride organizers—I argue that Pride events construct a prototype of sexual citizenship among queer people, resulting in entangled economic relationships between nonprofit organizations, community stakeholders, fascist police states, and private businesses. I coin the term homoventriloquism to articulate the (in)ability of Pride organizers to resist hetero- and homo-normative depictions of sexuality and gender in the public sphere, instead relying on other actors to speak for them in situations of ambiguous power relations, identity politics, and organizational maneuvering.

Tzeni Melachroinou and Alexandra Halkias, Panteion University

Normalization and Resistance at Athens Pride 2023: A Killjoy perspective



The proposed paper draws from postgraduate research on Athens Pride 2023 to examine how various dynamics of normalization and resistance unfold at this site. The de-radicalization found at Pride events in Europe and elsewhere (Hébert, 2014, McCartan, 2022) characterizes Athens Pride 2023 and other LGBT(Q)IA+ spaces in Athens as well. In this paper, we focus on aspects of homonormativity and homonationalism, as they occurred in the field. Additionally, the paper identifies moments of resistance that were encountered. The above are elaborated through analysis of the material gathered in Athens on gendered performances, relationalities and national ideologies. The research includes 11 fieldwork visits, 21 images collected through research of online material related to Athens Pride, and three semi-structured interviews with feminist/queer subjects. Attention is honed on how dynamics of normalization and resistance coexist, with reference to particular examples. One such is the call issued by Athens Pride for a march against homophobic public discourse just a few weeks after it had publicly declared itself a politically neutral organization. Also, the interviews add detail to how normalization linked to capitalism unfolds at the Athens Pride through consumerism, pinkwashing, homonormativity and homonationalism. The research suggests that there might be no purely LGBT(Q)IA+ spaces of resistance and/or normalization, but these forces seem to be intertwined. Thus, this analysis of Athens Pride 2023 and related events indicates that aspects of normalization and resistances to them do not follow a linear path, but instead change, meet and occasionally unfold surprisingly.

18:30-20:00 Central Brighton queer history walking tour

Rachel Aldred, University of Westminster and August Read, The Clare Project

We will lead participants (up to 20 conference attendees) on a short local queer history walking tour of Central Brighton, allowing reflection and discussion of experiences and dis/comfort in various spaces across the past hundred years of LGBTQ+ history. The tour itself lasts up to ninety minutes and participants will be given handouts to take away with further resources both related to the city now and the places, people, and events covered. These include several protests and campaigns from the struggle for employment protection to the city's annual Trans Pride march, key moments in cultural history in the city, and the city's queer heroes (and villains). You can book a place on the Monday or Tuesday tour at registration on Monday.



Tuesday 3rd September

9:30 – 11:00 Parallel Sessions

Queer Temporalities in the city: personal and theoretical aspects #1

Dotan Brom, Tel Aviv University

Queering Memorials: Subversive Temporalities in Haifa's Urban Landscape from the British Mandate to the 1970s

While much writing on queer temporality examines how queer life stories violate heteronormative timelines, this paper employs a queer temporality approach to analyze the complex historicity of an urban space - the area between Haifa's Memorial Park and the city's downtown. Modern Haifa was founded in 1761 as a walled coastal city, with a fortress built on the mountainside above. This inaugurated efforts to regulate and nationalize the space, including British Mandate urban planning placing government buildings near the fortress remnants, the 1948 Operation Shikmona destroying the Ottoman city, displacement of Palestinian Wadi Salib residents, establishment of Memorial Park in 1953 commemorating Jewish "Martyrs of Haifa", and later evacuation of Mizrahi Jews from Wadi Salib. However, this space defies assimilation into the linear hegemonic narrative of the Jewish state. Paradoxically, the space - or parts thereof - is repeatedly reclaimed by marginalized groups and activities. Ironically, state actions like Operation Shikmona, the evacuation of Wadi Salib, and even the establishment of the park, inadvertently created conditions enabling these appropriations. Nevertheless, it was the "series of turns and detours" (De Certeau, "Walking in the City") enacted by marginalized groups operating within its boundaries that ultimately forged the space's subversive character, rerouting it from the hegemonic trajectory. Based on interviews, journalism and literature as primary sources, this paper shows how non-conforming sexual uses of the space - from interethnic straight couples meeting clandestinely to gay and trans* cruising and sex work done by Jews and Arabs - repeatedly challenge attempts to nationalize the space, shaping it through the dialectic between hegemonic history and subversive queer temporalities.



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Salomé Honório, University of Lisbon

Within, Through, and Despite: Rethinking the Hermeneutics of the Closet, across Space and Time

As in Sedgwick's seminal "Epistemology of the Closet" (1990), the concept of the closet has proved to be a crucial element of queer theoretical discourse, and of its reassessment of the spatial disposition of different aspects of affective and psychic experience - and even of those precepts and normative principles governing certain disciplines (Binnie, 1997). As an attempt to produce alternate cartographies of sexual and social life, the closet has proved as important as a descriptor as it has a mechanism of continued survival and co-habitation, in urban space and otherwise. It has likewise been recuperated as a site of political agency and resistance, in a seeming rejection of dominant modes of hermeneutic capture (Villiers, 2012). Yet the spatial overdetermination of the closet, as a conceptual metaphor, undercuts its contextual contingency and performative intricacy, as well as the various intervals that perturb its presumed internal consistency. Concurrently, recent discussions around the politics of visibility- and vividly so, of trans visibility - have reemphasized the contradictions embedded into any call for visibility as an amenable goal, or equitable political standard (Gosset et al, 2022).

By reemphasizing a seeming incongruence between "closetedness" and "outness" as intransient, permanent states, and the concept of transition in trans lives and politics - which pointedly evinces the durational constitution of a body's conditions of possibility over time - this paper attempts to produce a more nuanced account of the conditions of (un)intelligibility of trans and queer bodies alike. In this context, the closet figures as a limited (and limiting) metaphor, which reasserts a spatial modality of hierarchical thinking, while undervaluing the continuous interaction and constitutive interrelation between bodies, times, and spaces (Grosz, 1995). Recognizing the dominant regimes of visibility that constitute a body's meanings in the modern episteme (Weheliye, 2014), we hope to suggest other conceptual and critical approaches to the problem (in)visibility presents - and ark to an ethics of opacity which resists hegemonic economies of visual signification.

Matt C. Smith, University of Brighton

We're From the Future: Planning Trans Care in the City



Planning as a discipline of urban governance shapes the present form and function of cities, bringing inhabitants closer to certain futures and placing others out of reach. Previous planning research has argued for a greater consideration of transgender and LGBTQI people and communities for the creation of a more equitable future (Doan, 2011, 2015). A transfeminist approach to planning, however, requires orientating planning praxis around trans lives (Doan, 2023), as opposed to processes of inclusion that orient lives to praxis – the pre-established ways of thinking and doing within the discipline.

I draw on creative mapping interviews with trans inhabitants of Brighton & Hove and the work of Malatino (2019) on trans care in the interregnum, to consider how futures in the city are imagined in relation to, and stifled by, the unaffordability of housing. I argue that an infrastructural approach (Brochu-Ingram, 2015; Campkin, 2020; Power & Mee, 2020) that centres the flows of care that sustain trans life in the city can reorient planning in the present. And by taking more care in the present we can bring ourselves closer to more desirable futures.

(Un)Comfortable Homemaking: Exploring the Geographies of LGBTIQ+ Migrants and Refugees in Europe #1

Rachel Larkin, University of Sussex

Changing Places: LGBTQ+ Young Migrants in the UK

This presentation will consider the significance of space and place for young migrants in the UK, geographically separated from adult family members, who may identify as LGBTQ+. Drawing on research data, it will consider the role of place in how unaccompanied young migrants (16-24) may express and explore their sexuality after migration, and how they may navigate the different meanings attached to sexuality in different places. Social workers can play a significant role in the lives of young migrants, and this presentation will also consider how place affects the ways social workers respond to young migrants' LGBTQ+ identities. The challenges of communicating about sensitive issues, such as sexuality, are recognised, particularly in the context of forced migration when there may be no shared language between a young person and their social worker. This presentation will argue social workers may need to create more 'uncomfortable, containing spaces' with young migrants, where the complex meanings attached to sexualities can begin to be explored.



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Aadarsh Gangwar, Geneva Graduate Institute

(Dis)comfort in the field site

The encounters researchers have within venues for (especially qualitative) data collection are frequently overrun with unease and discomfort in various ways. This rings truer when it comes to research that implicates sexualities. In this presentation, I will draw on reflections from fieldwork for my ongoing doctoral project, which looks at how LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees in Switzerland perceive credibility assessment practices within the asylum system. Despite prolonged attempts at building rapport and explaining the objectives of my project, I am confronted with reluctance and discomfort among potential interlocutors, who are uncomfortable speaking freely, or speaking at all, about such a sensitive topic. Recounting their experiences with the asylum bureaucracy can itself be discomfoting for them, but they are often also uncomfortable with the sticky misconception that my project seeks to evaluate the credibility of their asylum claim.

Consequently, the anxiety around causing these forms of discomfort to people makes me uncomfortable while approaching potential interlocutors. The researcher is therefore not immune to “the momentary dislocation of an essentialist narrative” discussed in Holliday’s (1999) examination of comfort and identity, the narrative here being that the researcher is articulate about their project, well-intentioned, trustworthy, and can rather omnisciently foresee and safeguard research participants from harm. If researchers’ presence imbues the spaces they traverse and inhabit with multiple forms of discomfort in these ways, this presentation will invite attendees to discuss responses to this discomfort, perhaps in order to create more comfortable and ‘safer’ spaces for research.

Sophia Zisakou, Lund University

Feeling queer, feeling real: Affective economies of truth in queer asylum politics

This presentation aims to analyse the role of affect in the credibility assessment process in queer asylum claims. Drawing on decolonial feminist, queer and affect theory, through 27 semi-structured interviews with caseworkers, it explores how sexual truth, in the Greek asylum apparatus, is not only discursively but simultaneously affectively produced: On the one hand, the assessment focuses on applicants’ ‘emotional journey’, which, according to authorities’ normative expectations, needs to comply with a rather linear, from-oppression-to-liberation, affective trajectory. On the other hand, not only applicants’ emotions constitute the main field of inquiry but,



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simultaneously, as caseworkers accounts portray, decision-makers tend to base their assessments on what they describe as ‘intuition’, ‘instinct’ and ‘atmosphere of the interview’. By examining the interplay of affective and sexual citizenship, this research seeks to analyse how access to asylum and rights is mediated by affective control of who is considered the ‘good’ sexual citizen. Last, apart from the exclusionary politics of emotions in homonationalist, assimilative border regimes, this study discusses affect’s transformative possibilities in legal decision-making: Reflecting on queerness as affect, through those failed, unspeakable queer performances, that have been rendered non-credible by the affective rules of spoken sexual truth, this presentation aims to call into question epistemically violent, white-centred definitions of ‘genuine’ queerness and challenge the binarities of compliance and resistance in slow death apparatuses.

Rose Nelson, Geneva Graduate Institute

Embodied Experiences of Forcibly Displaced Persons: Examining the Complex Relationships between Transactional Sex, Discomfort, and Comfort

For people who have lived through forced displacement, strategies of facing discomforts on the migration journey and in the host country are varied and complex. This contribution focuses on the strategy of transactional sex (TS) and is based on findings from an ongoing research project on survival strategies and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in people affected by forced displacement. Over 200 refugees of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities participated in interviews structured around their experiences and aspirations in different localities across Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Switzerland, and Turkey. The research defines TS as adults engaging in sexual activities with the implicit or explicit understanding to access material or non-material benefits. While TS implies agency on the part of those participating in these practices, survivors may effectively find themselves in a “complex matrix of coercion, agency, and survival” where they are marked as both victims and active agents (Chynoweth 2019; Masterson et al 2014; Samari 2017). Highlighting the subjectivities and embodied experiences of refugees enables us to underline their agency and analyze the complex relationships between sources of discomfort which function as drivers of TS, as well as possible consequences and aspirations. People engaging in TS may choose to put themselves in situations fraught with discomfort with the aspiration of gaining access to certain comforts. Possible outcomes of engaging in TS may include further discomfort and vulnerability in terms of mental health and SRH concerns, though people might at times find comfort in certain benefits of transactional relationships which enable access to housing, basic services, or fulfill a



desire for intimacy. Analyzing TS as an embodied experience which is deeply entangled with the comfort and discomfort of refugees allows for a deeper understanding of the subjectivities and needs of those who have experienced and survived forced migration.

Risk, Danger & Sex

Alfarel Ridwan Syaifullah, Bandung Institute of Technology

Gender-Based Segregation Policy and Sexual Harassment Interventions in Public Transport: A Study on Transjakarta Using Public Perception Approach

As the backbone of the metropolitan citizen's mobility activities, public transport should have been a safe space from sexual harassment. Various efforts have been taken by the government and service providers such as gender-based area segregation in the form of "Women-Only Passenger Cars". Yet, sexual harassment still haunts public transportation users to this second, indicating that the current initiative has not been fully effective. With the evolving understanding of gender and the various acts of sexual harassment, an examination of the implementation of "Women-Only Passenger Cars" policy to reduce sexual harassment incidents in public transportation becomes crucial. Using Transjakarta as a case study, this research aims to explore public perceptions of "Women-Only Passenger Cars" as an attempt to conquer sexual harassment in public transportation. The study uses Q-Methodology and social media content analysis to capture and interpret the diverse perceptions of the citizens regarding the issue. The analyses results is arrange into a problem tree to provide a more structure view of the issue, and then aligned into an objective tree as a vision to address the identified problem branches. Furthermore, the research findings are validated through interviews with experts in the field of sexual harassment and public transportation. The results of this study shows the imperfect implementation of "Women-Only Passenger Cars" is caused by three factors: ambiguity in defining sexual harassment behaviors, institutional failure to enhance collective awareness of sexual harassment, and the limited scope of "Women-Only Passenger Cars" in protecting its riders. In the final part of the research, strategic steps are outlined to improve the "Women-Only Passenger Cars" policy as an initiative to prevail over sexual harassment in public transportation.



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Klara Arnberg, Stockholm University, and Riikka Taavetti, University of Turku

Discomfort and Danger at Sea: Media Representations of Sexual Violence and Harassment on Passenger Ferries between Finland and Sweden

The regular ferry traffic between Finland, the Åland islands, and Sweden is an important element in the day to day connection between these countries and a popular means for affordable leisure travel. With ferries, many of which during the 1980s and 1990s were the largest passenger ferries in the world, the overnight cruises across the sea have developed into versatile means of entertainment and consumption. As a site for partying, the ferries enable sexual encounters and in addition, there have been several public scandals concerning sexual harassment and violence.

In this presentation, we analyze how the public discussion about sexual violence and harassment on the ferries has developed, placing it within the wider frame of how understandings of sexual violence and harassment have changed. The presentation analyzes newspaper, digital media and audiovisual media sources from both Finland and Sweden, covering the decades from the 1980s onwards when the discussion first surfaced. With the concept of epistemic injustice we address how the previously silenced experiences have surfaced. We ask how sexual violence has been addressed in the media, how the discussion has changed and what these changes reveal of the wider discussion on sexual violence and harassment. By comparing the discussions in these two countries, we are able to demonstrate how even the same events may have differing interpretations depending on the broader debate. To address this aspect, we utilize the perspectives of transborder movement and border transgression - both the crossing of national borders at sea but also the crossing of the perceived moral and integrity borders.

Krishna Gogoi, University of Delhi

Navigating comfort and discomfort: Spaces of belonging for women in Indian university campuses

University campuses though intended as spaces of learning and intellectual growth, can paradoxically also emerge as sites of comfort and discomfort, influenced by experiences rooted in gendered expectations and subsequent behavior. A dominant discourse in campus ethnographies of India center around geographies of fear and safety within campuses, which influence the daily lives of students across a spectrum of genders and sexualities through restrictive measures such as heightened surveillance, thereby perpetuating an



environment of fear. Students deploy resilient strategies to navigate such discomfort and create safe spaces for themselves. What remains relatively unexplored is a discourse that also identifies spaces of comfort “leisure spaces”, in facilitating knowledge production, formation of communities and solidarity to instigate change. A central expansion of this research includes an analysis of how normative heterosexual expectations shape interactions within these campus spaces, examining the resultant environment where non-heteronormative students might feel marginalized or unsafe. This focus seeks to uncover the layers of influence that sexual orientation and gender identity exert on students’ experiences of safety and inclusion. Additionally, expanding the discourse to include these leisure perspectives could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of students with diverse sexualities and gender identities on Indian university campuses.

This research utilizes digital storytelling to document the experiences of students of Delhi University campus emphasizing their navigations through spaces of comfort, discomfort and leisure. Utilizing a participatory framework, students of various sexualities and gender identities share their stories through semi-structured interviews and participant-generated photography. These narratives and images are curated into digital stories combining textual and visual elements to foster understanding. By highlighting the interplay between gender, sexuality, and space within university settings, this study advocates for a reimagining of campus environments and aims to contribute significantly to the discourse on inclusivity in educational spaces.

Vishavjeet Dhanda and Kiran Bhairannavar, University of Delhi

Uncomfortable Alliances, (extra)Normative Geographies: unpacking rural sexualities in India

Caste and kinship structure shape the social behavior of the people in India. They play an important role in marriages and guide sexual relations. Rural Haryana has strong caste-based kinship patterns, aimed at creating a heteronormative narrative grounded in gender normativity and heterosexual marriages, arranged within specific territorial norms. Such marriages are viewed as the only space for people to represent their sexual desires. The adherence to these rules is warranted by censorship enforced through social devices which ensure that sexual identities of the people, particularly in rural areas, are kept strictly heterosexual leading to the proliferation of a heteronormative narrative. Despite stringent censorship and control mechanisms, individuals navigate between conformity and resistance, engaging in diverse sexual practices. The paper aims to unpack the space and sexuality relationship in the heteronormative context of rural Haryana. The article uses an ethnographic approach and takes casual talks/conversation as data to understand how a



territory based social structure influences the sexual practices and lives of individuals leading to various practices and arrangements which run counter to the established normativity (of gender and sexual practices). It argues how these socio-sexual practices, while appear to be liberating and subversive to the prevailing structure, are rather used to preserve the heteronormativity through careful negotiations and alliances by moral entrepreneurs (family, clan, kin, and rural society). It attempts to make a contribution to rural sexualities, geographies of heterosexualities and Indian sexuality studies literature.

11:30 – 13:00 Parallel Sessions

Queer Temporalities in the city: personal and theoretical aspects #2

Tilen Kolar, University of Leeds

Waiting as filling up space: (dis)comforts of queer friendships and public space in Slovenia

Waiting in urban areas is usually associated with queuing, for example, uncomfortable encounters with strangers when waiting, strategies to smooth the anxiety, and power relations that govern queuing. This paper challenges the correlation between waiting and the queue – it presents some findings from a yearlong ethnographic work in Slovenia, where waiting to enter queer events has mainly been associated with queer bodies filling up space before the event starts and puts an end to the act of queuing. The paper asks: i) what the strategies of arriving to queer events with ambiguous beginnings are and to what extent they are specific to Slovenian temporalities, ii) with whom people arrive and why, iii) whether strategies of arriving to queer events exclude those arriving alone. These questions are informed by multimethod ethnographic fieldwork (observations, interviews, creative writing) where a PhD researcher explores Slovenian queer public space through acts of homemaking. Some of the up-to-date findings suggest that arriving as filling up space is a crucial element of public space-making – Slovenia is uniquely polycentrally designed, and places, even the capital city, are relatively small. Events hence often start ambiguously – not as officially stated but when spaces are filled up. The discomforts of waiting are often managed by arriving together in pre-formed friendship groups, often dating back to high school. This paper will hence suggest another perspective of waiting: in small places, it can be a source of close kinship, which have, in the queer context, various levels of (dis)comfort.



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Priyam Ghosh, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies

Kaun jaaye Dilli ki Galiyaan Chodd ke: A Case of Shrinking Gay (Male) cruising spaces in Delhi*

The cityscape is constantly touted as a much-used scenographic background with enormous deployment of technological apparatus to stage everything from street theatres to Queer pride parades etc. These spaces are also burning cauldrons of desires, where men and women across ages loiter in search for love or at times soliciting sex. Delhi's Palika Bazaar parking lot, Nehru Park, New Delhi Railway Station toilets are one of few spaces known as the breeding grounds for gay male cruising.

This paper attempts to understand the sexual geographies of desire through the practice of urban gay (male) cruising, which was one of the popular ways of soliciting sex amongst urban gay men as well as men who have sex with men (popularly known as MSM). The coming of GPS based mobile device-based dating and hook up apps such as Grindr and Planet Romeo as well as changing contours of urban planning are one of the few factors which has led to shrinking spaces for cruising as an urban practice. This paper through ethnographic methods like informed consentbased interviews would emphasize on varied representations of gender and sexuality in public spaces, where practices such as urban cruising is meted with violence with use of draconian laws Section 377 (now read down). This along with coming of neoliberal consumer driven “safe spaces” like discotheques has led to decline of such practices.

Leehee Rothschild, Manchester Metropolitan University

From Capsulation to Comfort: Israeli Queer and Polyamorous Experiences in Lockdown

The global crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to a proliferation of discourses and regulations concerning separation, capsulation and isolation that reinforced traditional conceptions concerning the centrality of the couple and the mononormative family. In Israel Covid-19 regulations situated the couple and the couple-centred family and home as the main social unit and space around which lockdowns had been organised, ignoring non-cohabiting intimacies. This presentation considers how couple-centered state-policies on the one hand and non-couplecentered intimate and spatial choices on the other shaped and affected the lived-in realities of queer and polyamorous Israelis, during the Covid-19 lockdowns. It is based on a multi-method qualitative research including textual analysis of state-regulations, relationship maps and semi-structured interviews with 24 individuals and intimate groups. I review the Israeli covid-19 regulations and their reinforcement of couple-centrism and mononormativity. I argue that Israeli polyamorous and queer individuals



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responded to those regulations, either by employing an ‘alternative politics’ approach, in which they modified the Stay-at-Home regulations to fit their individual situations, or by engaging in ethical-civil-disobedience, proactively opposing state policies by violating the regulations. I explore the spatial arrangements resulting from these approaches like capsulation, binge meetings, moving in together and meeting outdoors. I then claim that at a time of global discomfort, the fluidity afforded by non-couple-centrist polyamorous and queer intimacies, from co-parenting arrangements and living apart together, to multiple adults sharing a household, allowed the research participants to create spaces and moments of comfort, by navigating between separateness and togetherness.

Heini Salminen, University of Helsinki

Queer Worldmaking Practices and Temporary Selves in Autonomous Queer Spaces

This paper explores the interplay between spatial transience and the construction of the self in autonomous queer spaces. Previous research has shown the various creative practices and strategies of creating a queer space. It has elaborated on how these spaces are occupied and ‘queered,’ the balancing acts between inclusion and exclusion, and the shared responsibilities of fostering safety and care. This presentation focuses on the ways in which these spaces, produced through collective spatial and social practices, are then inhabited. What kind of re- and deconstructing of the self do they invite and allow? Drawing on ongoing ethnographic research in autonomous queer spaces and collectives in Finland, this paper shows how the radical trust created in these spaces allows for the liberation of the self to unfold in manifold ways. Resisting the constraints and fixity of identities, the temporary queer spaces enable the self to be experienced as fluid and fleeting, encouraging to explore outside the safety of normativity but supported by the safety and care of the collective. These spaces and the worldmaking practices through which they are created, then, invite for a temporary deconstruction of the self: radical liberation of not having to identify, to fit into a box. Therefore, these autonomous queer spaces, ephemeral in their existence yet enduring in their impact, imagine alternative ways of being and making space for what we have not yet been able to imagine while simultaneously practicing those futures here and now – embracing rather than shying away from the impossibility of our ways of living and being.



(Un)Comfortable Homemaking: Exploring the Geographies of LGBTIQ+ Migrants and Refugees in Europe #2

Rieke Schröder and Marlene Spanger, Aalborg University Copenhagen

Negotiating Intimacy, Sex and Money: The Complex Infrastructure of LGBTIQ+ Refugees' Support in Urban Spaces

This presentation delves into the complex intimate infrastructures shaping the lives of LGBTIQ+ refugees in urban settings, particularly in Berlin and Copenhagen. These cities, known to be LGBTIQ+ friendly havens, host a network of support initiatives for people seeking asylum because of their queerness. Grassroot initiatives, state agencies and individual volunteers form an infrastructure that aims to provide guidance to LGBTIQ+ refugees. In drawing on in-depth interviews with 38 individuals engaged in LGBTIQ+ asylum support, as asylum claimants, refugees, volunteers and/or employees, as well as ethnographic fieldwork, this presentation explores the power dynamics and tensions that are part of establishing this infrastructure.

In particular, this presentation focuses on how sex for accommodation, money and/or drugs are negotiated between volunteers and LGBTIQ+ refugees by analysing the intersection of sex, intimacy, and money. In addition, we argue that the intersection of racial and sexual hierarchies is a central dynamic in such relationships, where refugees are often racialized and sexualized in particular ways. Doing so, we show how the boundaries between dating, help, exploitation, sexual exploitation and assault blur. Several interviewees exposed instances of volunteers exploiting their positions for sexual gratification, emphasizing the need for safeguards within support networks. Simultaneously, the presentation highlights empowering aspects of intimate relationships with volunteers evolving into chosen families, essential for the survival of LGBTIQ+ refugees. Thus, we explore the complexities of desire and power, focusing on how LGBTIQ+ refugees navigate these tensions while engaging with different intimacies, providing support, or encountering potential danger.

Diego Garcia Rodriguez, University of Nottingham

Queering Faith: Challenging Homosecular Narratives in UK Asylum Processes

"This presentation critically explores the intersection of religion, sexuality, and asylum processes, challenging prevailing 'homosecular' narratives. 'Homosecularism' presumes that LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) individuals must actively reject faith to be



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deemed authentic and deserving of rights. This study seeks to deconstruct this narrative by exploring the lived experiences of LGBT religious refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. Through a participatory approach, involving refugees and asylum seekers as active co-creators, the study employs a multi-method design, including creative workshops, ‘A Day in the Life’ sessions, interviews, participant observations, and focus group discussions. A key aim is to understand how LGBT religious refugees and asylum seekers negotiate their gender, sexuality, and religion within secular LGBT liberationist discourses. The project also examines the impact of religious, spiritual, and faith-related aspects on the UK Home Office’s management of asylum claims. By questioning the presumptions of ‘authentic’ LGBT identities perpetuated by Home Office’s practices, the study aims to reveal the complexities and variations in the role of religion across the lives of LGBT refugees and asylum seekers. Ultimately, the analysis aims to advance our understanding of queer religious agency, offering an alternative framework for conceptualising LGBT identities and rights.

Calogero Giametta, University of Leicester

Between Silence and Media Discourse: Mobile Queerness in Italy from the 1960s

National and cross-border mobilities and migrations’ narratives of ageing queer people yield important insights into how societal changes have influenced their life courses. These insights encompass the history of moral panics launched against marginalised groups, like the historical hysteria directed at gay and lesbian people and the current panic around trans lives. In this presentation I will focus on interview data with elderly queer migrants, both domestic and international, who experienced their queerness in Italy in their youth during the late 60s and 70s. At this time, scathing media portrayals of homosexuality were contrasted by the church’s silence on the subject—placing homosexuality in a liminal space between silence and discourse. But, the media moral reproach inadvertently became a crucial source of information for the marginalised Italian queer community, by reporting on social and cruising venues, habits and lifestyles, particularly in the capital and other larger cities across the country. The narratives of the ageing queer respondents on which I elaborate here highlight their resistance and resilience in searching for a sense of belonging, using creative strategies of coping and thriving as queer subjects under a criminalising environment.



Dis/comfort and Sexual Practices

Katy Pilcher, Aston University

Creating a desire-led space? Exploring the embodied experiences of Orgasmic Meditation practitioners

Drawing upon in-depth interviews with 33 practitioners of ‘orgasmic meditation’ in London, UK and New York, USA, this paper examines what it means to try to create a desire-led community - to ‘follow your desire’, and live a life ‘led’ by desire. The paper begins with an exploration of what people valued about the practice of orgasmic meditation itself – teasing out the embodied and sensory dimensions of the practice. I then move to explore the power dynamics within the community itself – who is seen as ‘in’ or ‘out’ of place at any one moment; tensions with notions of ‘sisterhood’; and participants’ experiences of ‘Coming out’ as an OMer, including experiences of leaving the community and subsequently returning. Theorised through a queer feminist perspective, I argue that OM as a practice and the OM community, broadly defined, has a resistant potential in questioning heteronormative conceptions of orgasm itself, gender and intimate roles, and the fixity of space. At the same time, however, I trouble the limits of OM’s resistant potential in light of participants’ experiences of the breaking of bodily boundaries; questions around whose bodies hold most value within conceptions of ‘community’; as well as individualist conceptions of the ‘work’ of desire itself.

Madhusree Dasgupta, University of Essex

*“Get out of your head and just f*ck”: Comfort and discomfort in embodied fat sexualities*

Fatphobia, the hatred, fear and loathing of fat bodies, is pervasive worldwide and impacts the interpersonal relationships of higher-weight individuals. Despite the well-documented impacts of fatphobia, little is known about how dating and sex are experienced by fat people. The studies that do exist mostly pathologize fatness and position ‘successful’ dating and sexual relationships as inherently inaccessible to fat people; further, they situate the ‘problem’ in the ‘deviant’ bodies of their participants. The present study focuses on the ‘fatness’ of bodies and the space they take up in the world in the context of intimate relationships, where the sex encounter magnifies the ‘hyper(in)visibility’ of fat bodies. This study builds on the work done by Butler (1990) on performativity, Ahmed’s (2006) work on the implications of queer phenomenology for fat bodies situated in time and space, and Brown’s (2000) concept of ‘coming out’ as fat.



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Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 self-identified cis and trans fat individuals diverse in race, age and body size, and equally divided between males, females, and non-binary participants. They were selected for high/low embodiment scores in a previous large quantitative study on experienced weight stigma, fat embodiment, and sexual satisfaction. Data analysis is currently ongoing. The present study contributes to the geographical understandings of fat embodiment and the embodied experience of intimate spaces. It also addresses the research lacuna caused by lack of intersectional queer/trans representation in fat feminist scholarship in this area.

Ozan Félix Sousbois and Hande Eslen-Ziya, University of Stavanger

The Boundaries of a “True-cel” in “Sexo-Society”: Disengagement, Moral Panic, and Incel Counterpublics

On April 24th, 2023, the incel community witnessed Komesarj, a former admin of incel.is, announce his departure due to engaging in sexual activities. In this presentation we show that Komesarj’s disengagement from the manospheric space that brings together the incel communities across different nations and geographies beyond borders creates a global moral panic. Here by focusing on the moral panic created in this counterpublic sphere serving to promote masculinist ideologies and male sexual fantasy against a pseudo-reality called as “post-feminist” public space, our aim is to demonstrate the contrast between the incel way of life and gender-inclusive ideals of public sphere. For this we will study this event that sparked debates on community belongingness, core values, “trucel” identity, and perceptions of sexuality and explore how Komesarj's exit led to intertwined factors: resistance to his disengagement and the objectification of women to justify male entitlement. We aim to reveal how these elements reinforce the incel identity and fuel anxiety. This panic disrupts the boundaries of the incelosphere, seeking a larger digital presence to establish a counterpublic against pro-feminist interpretations. Our analysis is rooted in discussions from the incel.is blog and responses to Komesarj's announcement on Twitter.

Nathalie Lugand, UTRPP Paris 13

Navigating Uncomfortable Territories: An Immersive Exploration of Sexuality for a Researcher

This presentation delves into the immersive journey undertaken during doctoral research on female dominance within heterosexual BDSM sexuality (Lugand, 2017). Drawing from personal experiences in Berlin and Brandenburg's dominatrix salons, I discuss the



empirical groundwork for my thesis and the challenges of engaging with marginalized communities in academic research. By breaking the taboo surrounding sex work, I confront the stigma of being labeled a sex worker (Pheterson), exposing myself to discomfort and societal judgment. This immersive engagement not only provided firsthand insights into the world of professional dominatrices but also served as experiential knowledge foundational to my research. Through integrating social psychology, psychoanalysis, and gender studies, this presentation initiates a discourse on the risks faced by researchers immersing themselves in sex work environments within a system built on societal compartmentalization.

14:00 – 15:30 Parallel Sessions

Building Narratives of Older LGBTQ+ Lives in Southern Europe

Pedro Fidalgo, University of Coimbra

Reaching for a Queer Past: Queer critical postcolonial insights for the production of research on queer pasts, history and memories in Portugal

Memory is a cornerstone of the social production of reality, as “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” (Santayana, 1905). This paper stems from the recognition of the importance of researching queer pasts, history and memories as an avenue to interrupt the (re)production of violence(s) against queer people. To do so, contemporary societies must accommodate the memories of this community into collective imaginaries of history – in a comprehensive and restorative fashion. This paper critically examines, through a critical and post-colonial perspective, the research on queer/LGBTQIA+ pasts, history and memories research in Portugal – through a literature and documental review.

The paper argues that queer pasts, history and memories research must take into account: 1) the intersectionality of queer people’s history with other forms of oppression rather than heterocisnormativity; 2) the queer and trans migration patterns from and to Portugal and 3) the Portuguese colonial past and the complex intertwining of history (and queer history) between Portugal and its former colonies – especially those that gained independence in the XX century. The paper suggests that a Portuguese queer archive must dialogue with



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Portugal's past of colonialism, migration and the recognition of the diversity within queer people's experiences with discrimination and violence.

Ana Lúcia Santos, University of Coimbra

Remembering the Invisible: Ageing as an LGBTQ+ Person in Contemporary Portugal

Ageing as an LGBTQ+ person in contemporary Portugal occurs over an era marked by the accomplishment of numerous legal rights, juxtaposed with a historical backdrop of prolonged dictatorial and social oppression. This historical context may have a profound influence on how older individuals perceive their later years concerning non-normative sexual orientation or gender identity. The dual stigma faced by this population, as both older citizens and members of a sexual minority, underscores the imperative of disclosing their unique experiences. This presentation centres on biographical interviews with LGBTQ+ people who have experienced significant life transitions, focusing on ageing in contemporary Portugal after experiencing youth and adulthood during a dictatorship. The presentation aims to highlight the life narratives of both transgender and cisgender individuals, evidencing the need for inclusive approaches, including creating inclusive social spaces and ensuring access to health services. By sharing life stories, this study seeks to unveil narratives of resilience, resistance, authenticity, and the ongoing advocacy for rights within the LGBTQ+ community.

Víctor Mora Gaspar and Konstantinos Argyriou, December 26 Foundation

Discomfort and queer aging: Exclusions and politics of ignorance in Spanish identity politics

According to a 2022 Senate Report on Aging in Spain, nearly one million older people in the country belong to the LGBTQI+ community. The aging process among this extremely heterogeneous population group is accompanied by specific needs that are likely to get suspended. Added to the discomfort that aging overall causes for the State, which is concurrently responsible for caring and dislodging dependency (at least in the sense of providing maintenance resources, while also ousting it from the regime of visibility), there is the additional discomfort of queer aging. Since the decriminalisation of "homosexuality" on December 26, 1978, Spain has been the stage of substantial changes regarding rights and identity politics, often translated into laws. The generation whose childhood or youth coincided



with the first years of the democratic transition is currently elderly, and faces specific frames of vulnerability, related, among other types of discrimination to exile, family and work exclusion. However, the dominant contemporary LGBTQI+ imaginary installs productivity and consumption logics associated with youthfulness and functionality in bodily canons that exclude older people, and produce ignorance regarding their life trajectories and needs. In this paper, we present some of the axes with which we work at the December 26 Foundation, a State entity with headquarters in Madrid and A Coruña dedicated to the care and attention of LGBTQI+ elderly in Spain, which brings into dialogue different realities of the rural and the urban, state and regional contexts, the center and the peripheries of southern Europe.

Comfort and the city: towards a multiscale and mobile approach of safe spaces and discomfort #1

Ráhel Csizmadia, University of Pécs

An unfinished circle, a line and infinity: What shape does the gender journey take for three nonbinary, immigrant artists in Portugal?

The following study aims to understand the connection between the lived experience of gender and the process of knowledge production in space, using a phenomenological approach. Between October 2023 and January 2024, I was conducting semi-structured walking interviews with three nonbinary, immigrant artists in Lisbon, being a visitor in the city myself. On our first walk, each of them was asked to guide me on their „gender journey”. The second time, we were using „derivé”, a method invented by scholars and artists doing psychogeography: a way of getting lost together. For the third time, they took me to a space where art and home are present together. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, I identified spaces of various gendered experience within their narrative. Places of connectivity and acceptance and those of rejection and harassment have all emerged, occasionally many at once, in different layers of the interviews. The lived experience of places we have visited and other locations in the narrative (e.g. the country of origin) have appeared relative to one another. Additionally, the reactions to these experiences that have actively changed the material space and/or its personal interpretation, the (lack of) structure of the particular walk, and our joint meaning construction together result in a matrix of dis/comfort. One might need to take various positions at once and change them repeatedly: the struggle to navigate in the binary social world becomes nonbinary itself, full of ambivalence and ambiguity. What shape does the journey take and what nature does a home



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have for these people at the intersection of nonbinary and immigrant experiences? Looking at the maps we have created, I explore how the matrix of dis/comfort manifests in them.

Jerònia Cubells, Oriol Marquet, both Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and Ersilia Verlinghieri, Rachel Aldred, both University of Westminster.

Queering mobilities: Strategies of (in)visibility and care in Barcelona streets

Despite the right to feel comfort in the city is nowhere guaranteed, queer people may performatively exercise it to create places of care that allow for queer visibility. This presentation investigates queer mobilities, studying how LGBTIQ+ community members negotiate (in)visibility while walking and cycling through Barcelona's streets. It is based on 22 interviews with non-binary people and women (including cisgender, transgender, and intersex) identifying as lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual. We also asked participants to draw a Relief Map, inviting them to consider how their intersectional identities shape the dis/comfort they feel using the public space. Results map the emotional journey of walking and biking as queer, imprinted by interlocking experiences of oppression, such as misogyny, lesbophobia, transphobia, and racism. The findings delve into how participants use a diverse pursuit of tactics to alleviate discomfort, which span from spatially rendering invisible dissident identities to making themselves visible in spaces of perceived tolerance by publicly showing affection, for instance. While we, like others on this topic, uncover experiences of queer fear, we also highlight associations of queer visibility with joyful and comfortable experiences. Strategies of queer resistance, rooted in performing gender and sexuality, are usually accompanied by practices of (self-)care and togetherness. They function to assert queer visibility and insist upon the right to feel comfort. The analysis identifies ways in which spaces and identities mutually transform and signify each other when norms are challenged. Further, it elaborates on paths towards queering cities to ensure the well-being of the LGBTIQ+ community.

Erin Sanders-McDonagh, University of Kent, and Magali Peyrefitte, Brunel University

Navigating public toilet access in London's Soho: mapping variations in public toilet availability for marginalized groups



This paper provides further insight into the policy and policing of public urination in Soho, and provides a number of ‘urine maps’ that use both visual mapping and smell mapping to better understand how feelings of discomfort and fear map onto public toilet provision. Focusing specifically on access to temporary toilets erected at weekends and evenings to prevent public urination (as a consequence of the vibrant night-time economy in this area), we consider the consequences for certain groups who don’t have access to safe toilet spaces in this central area of London, particularly women, certain trans folk. Our maps also recognize the barriers faced by disabled people and homeless populations in and around this area of London. Access to public toilets is fundamentally important for geographers interested in understanding the safety and comfort in public spaces (Lewkowitz and Gilliland 2024). The design, location, and accessibility of public toilets can reveal a great deal about our sense of belonging in certain spaces and places and makes clear the politics of inclusion (and exclusion). The ability for some groups to access public toilets safely, easily, and without fear sits in contrast to the experiences of certain Others who have to navigate the city with far more discomfort when it comes to toileting needs. A 2019 report on public toilets from the Royal Society for Public Health, for example, argues that there is an increasing decline in public toilets which poses a meaningful threat to health, mobility, and equality, and disproportionately affects people with ill health or disability, the elderly, women, outdoor workers and the homeless. There are meaningful health impacts for those who struggle to access public toilets easily, including urinary tract infections and other painful health conditions. For many people, including women and trans folk, safety concerns when accessing toilets are a particular barrier (Greed 2016), while disabled populations face particular physical barriers, and homeless populations sometimes face criminal sanctions for using public toilets (Herman 2013). By using visual and olfactory approaches to mapping public urination and toilet access in Soho, we explore issues of comfort and safety for a number of different groups.

Charlotte Briend, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

From the scale of the city to the scale of the body. Gaining access of Paris through the practice of women’s self-defense

Gender and sexuality studies in geography have fruitfully been focused on minorities’ access of the city, the neighborhood, safe places. However, in geography, few of them have been articulating the body as a scale in and of itself, letting sociologist, anthropologist, philosophers and others focus on human behavior, physical experiences and the different ways of occupying space. While focusing on women’s ways of inhabiting the city using a finer scale of study through a geographical lens, I propose a focus on women practicing self-defense in Paris as a way to unveil different forms of mobilities and corporeal habitus. This specific example allows us to better



understand the body-space nexus (Landzelius, 2004) as these women actively reclaim their body autonomy and strength, as well as the streets and the city, through the use of self-defense techniques, usually understood as a masculine characteristic. This communication questions the different embodiments of violence, bravery and comfort, as well as the different ways they allow women to experience the city and their own bodies. This perspective allows us to rethink geography's perception of the body as an active agent in the production and perception of space and urban contexts as a whole. This communication is based on a qualitative study made in 2022 in Paris, where I distributed a survey to 30 women practicing self-defense in different martial arts clubs in order to better understand the different ways self-defense impacts their perception of the city, the neighborhood, the street as well as their own bodies.

Queer Refugees in "Queer Utopias": Inclusion & Exclusion in Northern Europe

Árdís K. Ingvars, University of Iceland

Event(ual) queer crafting in buckled up temporalities of Dublin regulated SOGIE refugees

The Dublin III regulation requires refugee applicants to state their case and submit asylum application in first European country they enter. Yet SOGIESC refugees often fear disclosing intimate lives or sexual curiosities in early immigration encounters. In times of nationalistic upheavals and contested refugee laws, queer applications can further be met with distrust. Thus, in fear of repatriation, some move onwards to countries where LGBTQI+ rights are nationally celebrated, only to be sent back. This paper builds on in-depth interviews and go-along discussions with nine Dublin regulated SOGIE refugees, as well as documented conversations with eighteen local stakeholders, conducted in Italy and Greece between 2021-2023. By tracing the affective residue of events in interlocutors' accounts, this article illuminates how SOGIE experiences were repeatedly invaded by violent bordering, as carried through the memory of sounds. This caused them to submerge their life rhythm as irregular subjects, fitting neither here nor there. When denied protection due to the Dublin agreement, they became homeless, dependent on precarious jobs and transactional sex work. When deported, their accounts echo emotional abandonment and lack of recourse to claim queer times, as they discover their cases expelled from the system. When re-application was possible, they were put under the stigma of feigning their queer identities and criminalized in prolonged uncertainty. In response, they crafted event(ual) queer beings or as subjects between temporal events, through naming practices and asserting autonomy over sex time, while also envisioning transactions based on emotional dignity and altruism.



Guðbjörg Ottósdóttir, University of Iceland

Working with queer refugees in queer utopia: Narratives of professionals in systems of social support

People who flee persecution because of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression (SOGIE) constitute a vulnerable group of refugees. Research highlights that migration and sexuality intersect to create multiple intersecting relations of power, including social status regarding 'race,' class, gender, geopolitical location, and citizenship (Luibhéid, 2014; Ehrkamp, 2017; Wright, 2018; Llewellyn, 2020). Research has focused on the legal experiences of SOGIE refugees but much less on their social experiences, including those pertaining to social support services. The presentation discusses preliminary findings on professionals' experiences in statutory social services working with SOGIE refugees, based on 15 semi-structured interviews. Professionals view SOGIE refugees as queer subjects in making, thus fitting into the state's idea of sexuality as an ever-present identity with clear boundaries. The state's meaning of queerness shows itself in social support practices, as professionals tend to perceive queer refugees as subjects to be freed and assisted to become themselves. The idea of a queer is someone who is out and proud, liberated from oppression and free, once migrated to Iceland. The findings shed light on the complex role professionals have within tight legal frameworks and nationalist ideas of the genuine queer refugee. They navigate professional ethics and approaches in tight legal and cultural frameworks surrounding sexuality and gender identity and expressions. In the presentation, the implications findings may have for social support practice with queer refugees of diverse socio-cultural and legal backgrounds are discussed.

Linda Sólveigar- og Guðmunds, University of Iceland

SOGIE refugees' transitional existence: Belonging and exclusion in Iceland

Sexual migration (Cantu, 1999) refers to transnational movements of migrants who seek to distance themselves from oppression in the countries of origin. It queries into what kind of transitions occur in sexual self-definitions and practices, when people cross borders, regarding issues of sexual normativity and the histories of these new destinations (Carillo, 2004). In theory, SOGIE refugees are 'welcome' once they withstand intensive asylum procedures set up by Western states, to test if a person is 'genuinely' and 'properly' gay/queer (Hertoghs & Schinkel, 2018). But, when SOGIE refugees have formally/legally become part of the nation-state, they often do not feel welcomed or a sense of belonging within that context. In the past decade Iceland, and more specifically Reykjavik, has



increasingly been branded as a ‘gay paradise’ (Ellenberger, 2017), which is a recreation of older images of Icelandic ‘exceptionalism’. This has led to the country being portrayed as a commercialized ‘pink destination’ for tourists and citizens alike. Selected quota SOGIE refugees are, for example, invited to take up residence in Iceland and ceremonially welcomed by the prime minister. Accompanying homonationalist notions in the queer community and the wider Icelandic society, it the fact that, Iceland’s connection to racism is in many ways characterized by demonstrations of innocence, as the country did not participate directly in the colonial projects. Nonetheless, Icelandic national identity has been constructed in close dialogue with both colonialism and racism and is embedded in whiteness and masculine characteristics (Loftsdóttir, 2011; 2014). Examining experiences of affective belonging and the politics of belonging regarding SOGIE refugees and asylum seekers allows for a critical understanding of the contradictory modes of ‘exclusionary moments’ vis-à-vis the image of Iceland as the perfect destination for queers around the globe.

Maja Hertoghs, University of Amsterdam

The state’s sexual desires. The performance of sexuality in the Dutch asylum procedure

The facticity of sexuality is a key driver of the asylum procedure in LGBTQIA cases, where non-heterosexual identities can be grounds for gaining a ‘status’ as refugee. Underlying the process, is a conception of sexuality as a fixed, invisible but ever-present identity. Sexuality is operationalized in the asylum procedure in ways very much akin to what is commonly called an infrastructure; sexual identity becomes an infrastructure of personhood. The veracity and facticity of this infrastructure can only be ascertained in live encounters during the asylum procedure, i.e. through interviews in which the asylum seeker must present as non-heterosexual and, as such, as threatened. The procedure becomes a test of sexual veracity and facticity by means of a truthful performance. This performance is primarily discursive, but it is also bodily in terms of the way bodily comportment is considered indicative of a ‘true story’. The procedure operates with a conception of truth that is strictly procedural, referring to facts but these are fundamentally beyond the reach of the asylum administrators. Facticity is rather one of trustworthiness and narrative and performative believability. Believability hinges on the presence of ‘details’ (which stand in for facts) and on the existence of a linear sexual storyline (of awareness, coming out, and persecution). The procedure offers a prime case in which states and governmental apparatuses sort and sanction sexual identities by means of a procedural kind of ‘truth game’ (Foucault). This paper highlights the specific kinds of gender and sexual performance



legitimized and sanctioned. We show that ‘giving an account of oneself (Butler) in the context of the asylum procedure is very much informed by the state’s desires in the realm of sexuality.

Universities amidst culture wars – safe spaces or battlefields?

Veronika Valkovičová, Comenius University Bratislava and Shaban Darakchi, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Precarious Work or Exploitable Niche? Experiences of Researchers Working on LGBTQ+ Topics in Europe

The emergence and development of LGBTQI+ studies within the past few decades have faced many challenges. Although there is a growing body of scientific knowledge and courses dedicated to studying LGBTQ+ populations, scholars still face obstacles or opposition to their work. In order to look deeper into the different experiences at the individual, organisational, or institutional level, this study is based on 49 self-reported online questionnaires collected in 2022 and 2023. The data suggests that many of the surveyed scholars engage in LGBTQ+ studies as a result of a personal reflection or as a project of their social justice values, meaning their own activist project. Nevertheless, many scholars still experience opposition, be it in the form of interpersonal microaggressions from colleagues or as major setbacks coming from their organisation’s management. Lastly, regardless of their country of residence, they experience significant levels of harassment from the public, which is usually prompted by their presence in the media. An integrated response and policy implementation are crucial for the development of the field. This can include: collective professional solidarity; coordinated institutional support and framework on an institutional level; a common strategic plan by the major professional associations; and a reconsideration of national policies regarding the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Ezgi Pehlivanli and Hande Eslen-Ziya, University of Stavanger

Navigating Academic Turbulence: The Intersection of Anti-Gender Mobilization, Neoliberal Measures, and Illiberal Governance in Turkish Gender Studies



Against the backdrop of global transformations in science policy and higher education, this study examines the profound shifts induced by anti-gender mobilization and the precarious nature of academic labour. Focusing on the interplay of illiberal governance and neoliberal measures, particularly within Turkish academia, we investigate the impact on gender studies. Through 15 in-depth interviews with Turkish academics specializing in gender studies, our findings reveal a challenging academic landscape marked by precarious conditions, fierce competition, and a dearth of long-term career prospects. This complex environment hinders the production of scientific knowledge and hampers scholars' ability to fully engage with and emotionally invest in their work. The study underscores structural pressures emanating from governmental, institutional, and societal barriers, alongside individual pressures within Turkish academia. As we navigate this intricate terrain, the sustainability of the university system is called into question, emphasizing the pressing need for a re-evaluation of current practices.

16:00 – 17:30 Parallel Sessions

The Invisibility of Bisexuality Research: looking for bisexual presences and absences in geographies of sexualities #2

Mafalda Esteves, University of Coimbra

“Beyond the Binary”: Navigating Bisexuality in LGBTQI+ Communities in Portugal through the lens of bisexual activists

In Southern Europe, LGBTQI+ communities have historically played a pivotal role in advocating for equality and the recognition of sexual and reproductive rights, providing safe spaces and supportive networks free from cisnormativity and heteronormativity. However, despite their unquestionable relevance to the LGBTQI+ population, studies reveal tensions and contradictions within these spaces, particularly concerning bisexuality. Bisexual individuals often face heightened levels of minority stress due to societal misconceptions prompting them to seek or create bi+ communities where they can express themselves fully and safely. In this way, they resist not only in individual terms but also in political terms (Monro, 2015; Hemmings, 1995; 2002). This presentation delves into the dynamics of exclusion within Pride politics in Portugal and examines the privileging of certain forms of (in)visibility over others. Drawing on qualitative research with bisexual activists, anchored in an ongoing PhD project, the study sheds light on perceptions surrounding bisexual communities in Portugal and identifies elements of tension within LGBTQI+ spaces. Furthermore, it explores discourses surrounding the



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creation of autonomous spaces for those who identify as bisexual. This presentation offers a relevant perspective to reflect on bisexual politics, providing insights into the challenges and strategies employed by bisexual individuals such as the emergence of informal care networks outside traditional LGBTIQ+ communities as a response to the need for acceptance and recognition. Moreover, it reveals attempts to resist normative gender and sexual principles both within society at large and within LGBTIQ+ spaces.

Surya Monro, University of Loughborough

Changing political landscapes and the erasure of bisexuality

In 2015 and 2016, I wrote about the erasure of bisexuality in academic and social spaces. The discussions were framed within a broader context in which, in many democratic countries, there was increasing support for LGBTQ people's rights. International and national infrastructures, such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission in the UK, together with international recommendations such as the Yogyakarta Principles +10, provided a landscape in which visibility could be foregrounded as a political imperative. Whilst it can be argued that this imperative still exists, our world is increasingly cross-cut and structured by factors such as the anti-gender/anti-trans movement, and broader patterns of right wing populist authoritarianism and xenophobia. Bisexual and pansexual people may be impacted in various ways, such as increasing pressure to closet. The victimisation and scapegoating of trans and non-binary people in many countries may impact on bisexual people, some of whom are also gender-diverse. Bisexuality, by definition, involves attraction to people of more than one gender, and these broad structuring forces can act as a form of necropolitics, impeding liveability as a gender-diverse person. Intersectionality, relating to factors such as nationality and spatiality, may also be important in understanding dynamics. Other forces, such as climate change and geopolitical instability, may also impact on bisexual and pansexual people's lives. The presentation explores the changing landscapes affecting bi and pansexual people, asking questions about how we consider structure and agency, as well as ways to support out bisexual and pansexual communities and scholarship going forwards.

Leon Freude, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Bisexual identification in youth surveys: Zooming into the Catalan case



Sexual identification is being incorporated recently into social surveys. In Catalonia the LGBT law from 2014 formulates that sexual identity should be present in official and non-official public statistics. The quinquennial Survey of Catalan Youth incorporated in 2022 for the first time a question on sexual identity. In this communication I want to trace what are the specificities of identification of bisexual Catalan youth, with a special emphasis on spatial dimensions. Descriptive bivariate analysis relate sexual identification with other sociodemographic variables such as: age, gender, country of origin, size of municipality, degree of urbanization of the place of residence, level of education and socioeconomic information about parents (place of birth, educational level, employment status and profession). Methodologically, this analysis is based on an exploratory approach, based on a bivariate analysis. Qualitative variables are related through contingency tables for bivariate analysis. First results indicate that in terms of age, younger age groups identify overproportionally as bisexual, contrary to monosexuals. In relation to the spatial variables the dataset disposes of indicators of the degree of urbanisation of the place of residence as well as well as the size of the municipality: similarly to homosexuals and contrary to heterosexuals, bisexuals live more frequently in densely urbanised zones. Compared to monosexuals, bisexuals live more often in medium sized cities and to a lesser extent than homosexuals in big cities (compared to homosexuals). Bisexuals are overproportionally born in Catalonia. These results indicate the need for further analysis of Catalan bisexual youth and their specific needs.

Comfort and the city: towards a multiscale and mobile approach of safe spaces and discomfort #2

Clément Nicolle, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Uncertain spatialities, from the screen to the city. A multiscale approach to risk and risk management in the use of the dating application Grindr.

This presentation focuses on risk and risk management in the use of Grindr, one of the main location-based dating applications for men who have sex with men (MSM). Grindr has considerably reconfigured the way in which men meet, particularly in large cities (Miles, 2021, Nicolle, 2022) where moving a few hundred metres completely changes the profiles available, but its use is accompanied by a series of risks which, from virtual space to urban space, generate many forms of hesitation and discomfort among its users. Based on a qualitative study and 61 interviews with Grindr users in Paris and other major French cities, I aim to show that these uncertainties influence the dating dynamics of Grindr users at different scales, from the smartphone to the city. Users of the application develop multiple strategies



for reducing the risks to which they are exposed, in particular the risk of meeting a person with malicious intent. These strategies concern both the management of the application's virtual space and the choice and use of places for encounters. These strategies also appear on an urban scale, in the form of avoidance dynamics in the mobility for meetings, avoidance dynamics whose social motives reveal spatialised and socially situated representations of comfort and discomfort in the city.

Gizem Güvensoy

Solidarity Opportunities of Queer Spaces in Turkey

Queer spaces in Turkey began to face demolitions and unjust evacuations by the state during the intense period of the country's coup times in the 1980s. Also known as a period of martial law and restrictions, the 80s saw marginalized groups, including queer individuals, facing suppression and ostracization, with attempts made to erase both their presence and imagery from various domains such as art and civil life. These efforts of erasure extended not only to bodies but also to the spaces they inhabited.

Understanding the historical trajectories of these queer spaces established in the 80s, which have continued with various evacuations and reclaiming efforts to this day, requires acknowledging their past. This is because the processes of reclaiming, censorship, and violence exhibit a continuity within themselves. This continuity can be observed through contemporary events like the unjust evacuations of the homes of trans individuals in Bayram Street, Istanbul.

Despite continuous attempts by the state to eliminate these spaces, which have been labeled as 'dangerous' and 'morally corrupt,' these places – homes, streets, shops – have developed solidarity mechanisms against the divisive, exclusionary, and violent elements coming from the outside. These spaces have facilitated various forms of solidarity, such as individuals trying to escape police and state violence, migrants, and minority populations. They have served as inclusive spaces capable of harboring solidarity, which is crucial for future processes. This presentation will touch upon these spaces, their brief histories, forms of solidarity, and the potential solidarity mechanisms they could foster in the future.



Noémie Gailhac Calixte, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Mobile violence: understanding heterosexual intimate partner violence on a spatial network scale

Too often is intimate partner violence (IPV) understood as a range of acts happening behind the closed doors of domestic spaces, however it has been at the very least 35 years since research has shown how IPV is based on an asymmetrical power relationship, rather than just be about physical violence. That power balance isn't dissolved when one passes the front door to go about on their daily occupations. On the contrary, not only the psychological dimension of IPV keeps being active, but new technologies (smart phones, positioning apps and devices, monitoring cameras, etc.) provides new opportunities to keep interacting (and performing violence) even while not in the same space.

This research focuses on the daily lives of women experiencing IPV and tries to understand how violence interacts with all places and spaces, therefore trying to find out how discomfort originating from IPV is brought into diverse spaces, as well as how women manage to find a bit of time and space where they can regain some control and comfort. This work is based on the analysis of 100 online chats between young Parisian women experiencing IPV and professionals of a feminist organisation, as well as 15 interviews with women supported by a women's shelter during which Lego maps of their daily places and feelings associated are built.

Feeling for Queer Methods

Kerryn Drysdale, UNSW Sydney, and Jan Filmer, Universität zu Köln

Sensing scenes in queer space and time

Though ubiquitous in our everyday language to describe forms of fleeting or enduring social connection, the investigation of queer scenes has proved somewhat elusive. We propose an approach that requires researchers to consider how queerness manifests and materializes beyond the spectacle, antinormativity, or transgression often demanded of it. And much like scenes themselves, sensing queer space and time requires us to attune ourselves to their affective potential in ways that may discomfort researchers. In this paper, we employ anecdotal exchange to identify the everyday lived realities that variously constitute a form of ordinary queerness. We start



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with three spatial anecdotes - of the home, of the bridal shop, and of the lesbian bar – and embark on a process of collective reflection to demonstrate where queerness might be made manifest when there is nothing overtly visible to indicate its presence. Looking for sensory resonances in anecdotal exchange, in other words, invited a process of reflection on the taken-for-granted meanings we attach to everyday associations. In doing so, we highlight the importance of sitting with queer space and time for those sensory resonances that, in turn, are made to matter for those who are invested in their emergence, maintenance, and decline. Here, the conceptual and the methodological are necessarily entwined in the investigation and representation of everyday queer scenes. A sensory ethnographic approach to queer time and space, we argue, challenges assumptions that we know queerness when we see it.

Dale Moodley, University of Stellenbosch

Classroom pedagogy as an uncomfortably comforting space: psychology students' reflections about their gendered and sexual socialization

At Stellenbosch University in South Africa, teaching undergraduate psychology students about gender and sexuality was formally introduced to the curriculum in 2021 since the inception of the department during 1907. The staggering century-long omission is startling yet unsurprising considering Shefer's (2004) observation that psychology, as a science, routinely reproduces a gender-as-difference discourse, which constructs gender and sexuality as a site of immutable, essential, and natural differences, inevitably reproducing a binary logic that underpins a compulsory order of heterosexuality. Using a critical reflexive learner-centered classroom pedagogy, students were invited to participate in a class discussion by reflecting on the first or most memorable time when they were made aware of their gender and/or sexuality. Collectively, their remembering, rather spontaneously, produced narratives about the subtle violence and trauma accompanying mundane socio-discursive contexts that functioned to discipline and correct their gendered and sexual socialisation based on heteronormative ideals. The classroom afforded what McMillan (2013) terms a transformative pedagogical space, momentarily disrupting institutional and student investments in taken for granted assumptions about gender and sexuality.

Amy Prescott, Michael Thomas and Christina Victor, Brunel University

Pride and Prejudice: Confronting challenges in researching LGBTQ+ older adults



In this paper we discuss the multifaceted challenges faced by qualitative researchers investigating the life histories of hidden and marginalised communities of older adults as part of the ‘Socially Inclusive Ageing across the Life Course’ project. Our exploration encompasses recruitment challenges via community groups and charitable organisations, the endeavour to reach isolated individuals through print/online media, and the emotional impact on researchers when confronted with recounted trauma.

In attempting to recruit participants from marginalised groups (LGBTQ+, ethnic minorities, disabled older adults) we tried to engage with 75 community/charitable organisations. This yielded varying results: 53 provided no response, 11 were unable to contribute, and 11 expressed interest (15% response rate overall). Simultaneously, collaboration attempts with 40 newspapers to reach unaffiliated individuals resulted in just two replies, of which believed it to be paid-for marketing. These figures underscore methodological intricacies and potential biases inherent in engaging with stakeholders within hidden marginalised populations, particularly when relying on gatekeepers.

Finally, we address researcher unease and participant emotional distress during interviews due to sensitive subject matter. Navigating ethical considerations, researchers must balance the quest for rich data with ensuring participant wellbeing. This underscores the emotional toll on researchers and participants, emphasising the importance of reflexive methodologies and ethical frameworks. This presentation contributes to the ongoing discourse on methodological challenges in qualitative research, not only highlighting engagement intricacies but also the ethical considerations vital for responsible research practices.

18:30-20:00 Central Brighton queer history walking tour

Rachel Aldred, University of Westminster and August Read, The Clare Project

We will lead participants (up to 20 conference attendees) on a short local queer history walking tour of Central Brighton, allowing reflection and discussion of experiences and dis/comfort in various spaces across the past hundred years of LGBTQ+ history. The tour itself lasts up to ninety minutes and participants will be given handouts to take away with further resources both related to the city now and the places, people, and events covered. These include several protests and campaigns from the struggle for employment protection to the city's annual Trans Pride march, key moments in cultural history in the city, and the city's queer heroes (and villains).