



Queer@Queen's 2021
New Scholarship in Queer & Gender Studies
17th November 2021
3-5pm
20 University Square/0G/009

A showcase of new and emergent postgraduate research in queer, gender, and feminist studies at QUB, in connection with Drama at QUB and Outburst Queer Arts Festival (<https://outburstarts.com/festival/>).

Please note that this is an in-person event that will be held simultaneously on Teams.

To attend this event please book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/199788902987>

For a link to the online Teams meeting, please contact Trish McTighe, t.mctighe@qub.ac.uk.

Please ensure that you wear a mask and observe social distancing when attending. More information on QUB Covid safety measures can be found here: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/home/coronavirus-faqs/information-for-students/>

Panellists

Christopher Cavanagh, 'LGBT In Antiquity: The Galli of the Great Mother'

This talk will discuss the emergence of the cult of Cybele in antiquity and her priests who were infamous at the time for being considered effeminate; they would reportedly self-castrate and wear women's clothing and makeup. In introducing the cult and priesthood (as well as some literary attestations) I will talk about my research thus far, and how the literary sources shame them continuously, yet oddly, archaeologically speaking we can see some tell-tale signs indicating that they "wore it proudly", openly displaying their deviance from Greco-Roman sexual norms on their tombstones. Some may even have engaged in domestic partnerships with other men (as indicated by a tombstone of a Gallus named Soterides in Turkey, and another of a Chief Gallus in Rome called Bassus), contrary to laws at the time.

Chris Cavanagh is a third year PhD student at Queens and who works as a teaching assistant and an archaeologist.

Sharon Dempsey, 'The Body as Text: The Female Outsider in a Crime Fiction Narrative'

This talk will be drawn from my PhD research about crime fiction, gender, and class. I will give an overview of female representation and the body in crime fiction and then move on to discuss the creative aspects of my work.

Sharon Dempsey is a Belfast based crime writer. The first in her new crime series, *Who Took Eden Mulligan?* was published in 2021 by Avon Harper Collins. Her PhD research combines creative writing practice and critical analysis to examine how Northern Irish crime fiction can be used to understand the intersection between gender and class. Her creative work, a crime fiction novel in the domestic noir genre, will provide an exploration of class, privilege and toxic masculinity while also addressing the role of social media in rape cases, and how the victim can be demonized and blamed, forced into the public arena with profound repercussions.

Elspeth Vischer, 'Let Us Be Seen: Documenting Grassroots Feminism and Queer Identity in Belfast Today'

How do feminist and queer identities operate in contemporary Belfast? *Let Us Be Seen* is a documentary film that presents the work and ideas of individuals on the ground in Belfast, who have campaigned tirelessly for change and continue to do so. On 21st October 2019, abortion was decriminalised and same-sex marriage legalised in Northern Ireland. This important law change however has shed light on more nuanced barriers facing people locally. As many collaborators on this project have asserted 'the fight is far from over'. This paper presents findings, in the form of film clips and discussion, from a creative-practice PhD project that aims to document and analyse grassroots feminism in Belfast through showcasing those working as activists, educators and artists on screen.

Elspeth Vischer is a filmmaker from Belfast and director of Vish Films Ltd. Elspeth has been working over the past few years directing short films, music videos and writing. Elspeth has volunteered as a member of the LGBT History NI group for 18 months, where she has undertaken research into Women's News publications and has helped archive and create video content. Elspeth is currently making a feature-length documentary about grassroots feminism as part of a Creative-Practice PhD at Queen's University, where she also works as a teaching assistant.

Thomas Ward, 'Queen's in Love'

In 1990 Queen's university student union held its first benefit for the Belfast AIDS Helpline. The event was a roaring success, but was a long-time coming. Less than ten years earlier the Lesbian and Gay conference of the National Union of Students in Ireland and the UK, to be held at Queen's, was called off after a backlash from the Save Ulster from Sodomy campaign and political pressure from the NUS national executive. With this backdrop, this talk explores Queen's in Love, what happened on the night, the motivations of those who organised it, and the reaction to the event. Its aim is to add to the growing body of work seeking to counter long-held narratives that AIDS 'didn't happen' in Belfast or to people from, or who had moved to, the city.

Thomas Ward is a PhD student in history at Queen's; his work focuses on the state and the counterhegemonic queer forms of co-optation and resistance to the heteronormative, nuclear-familial politics of the state in housing and healthcare provision in the late twentieth-century. He is also an activist in the tenant union CATU.

Mohaddeseh Ziyachi, ‘Motherhood in Iran’

This talk, drawn from my thesis, will examine the conception of motherhood in Iran. Its primary purpose is to show the problematic status of motherhood in current Iranian society—in particular, among middle-class Iranian women. My research demonstrates that middle-class Iranian women find childbearing and childrearing a controversial subject for thought, which is also reflected in academic studies, public discourses, and individual conversations about motherhood.

Mohaddeseh Ziyachi is a PhD student in Cognition and Culture at the school of HAPP. In their PhD thesis, they study motherhood with a focus on Iranian society (their home country). Their research also includes cross-cultural comparisons.