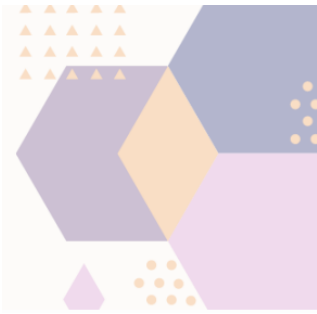


# The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual SA Gender, Sex & Sexualities Postgraduate + ECR Conference 2020





# Program Contents

<b><i>Acknowledgement of Country</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Welcome Message</i></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Artwork: 'Feel'</i></b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Dr Michael Noble Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the Conference</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Keynote</i></b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b><i>Panel</i></b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b><i>Abstracts and Bios</i></b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Tuesday 22 September</i></b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Session One</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Institutional Inequalities</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Session Two</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Beyond Gender and Sex Binaries</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Session Three</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Pregnancy and Parenthood</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Session Four</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Bodies and Barriers</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b><i>Wednesday 23 September</i></b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Session One</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Media Representation and Fandoms</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Session Two</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Gender-Based Violence</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>Session Three</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>Queering Methodologies</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>Session Four</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Storytelling</b> .....	<b>25</b>



# Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise this conference will be held on the lands of the Kurna people and pay respect to Elders Past, Present and Emerging. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, and acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to Kurna people today. We also acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the lands of the continent known as Australia our wider audience is joining from. Sovereignty was never ceded. This always was, always be Aboriginal land.

## **Conference Information**

Please follow instructions to join Zoom via Eventbrite email communications.

Website: <https://sagenderandsexualitiesconf.wordpress.com/>

Tweet #SAGSS2020 [@GSSconference](https://twitter.com/GSSconference)

[Facebook.com/gsspostgradconference](https://www.facebook.com/gsspostgradconference)

Program designed by Morgan Archinal and Chloe Cannell



# Welcome Message

Welcome to the 2020 Gender, Sex, and Sexualities Postgrad and ECR Conference. To say this year is different is an understatement. 2020 has brought many challenges and we are so glad to have you join us for this conference. Even though we may not be able to be together in person, we are excited for these two days of presenting, learning and discussion.

Every year since 2014, postgrads and ECRs from South Australia's three Universities have come together to plan this conference. This solidarity and eagerness to provide a space for newer academics to explore ideas in relation to how we view and research gender, sex and sexualities is at the forefront of the conferences goals. This conference is interdisciplinary and diverse but grounded by a strong intersectional feminist perspective. A fundamental aspect of feminist ethic is inclusivity, and so we recognise that feminist perspectives and spaces have been historically White. This conference aims to stimulate necessary and socially aware scholarship. To this end, we seek to challenge scholars to think critically and differently about current social issues, current research efforts and their own research activities.

This year's theme has been kept purposefully open in order to attract presentations on a variety of issues, both theoretical and practical, which relate to gender, sex and sexualities. We understand the work of many of our presenters has been disrupted or delayed by the pandemic, thus this conference is a safe space to explore disruptions, and, in general, discuss and in some ways address the precariousness of academia.

We thank you for supporting the conference and hope you have a wonderful enriching time.

Your 2020 conference committee:

Morgan Archinal, Jade Hastings, Chloe Cannell, Menghao Jia, Lizzie Maughan and Clara Santilli

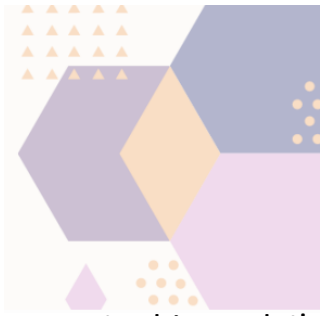
*Supported by Flinders University*

## TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

9:00-9:20am	<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b> <i>Housekeeping</i>
9:20-9:30am	<b>Welcome from Associate Professor Kris Natalier</b>
9:30-10:30am	<b>Keynote: Dr Laura Roberts</b>
10:30-10:50am	<i>Morning Tea</i>
10:50-12:00pm	<b><u>Session 1: Institutional Inequalities</u></b>
10:50-11:10am	Speaker 1: Kristi Urry, "Sexuality and Sexual Health in Mental Health Settings: Clinicians' Disparate Understandings, and Implications for Care"
11:10-11:30am	Speaker 2: Marianne Clausen, "Gender-Blind Sexism in the Workplace"
11:30-11:50am	Speaker 3: Melanie Clark, "White Wives and Little Lies: Aboriginal Soldiers, 'Taboo' Relationships and the First World War"
11:50-12:00pm	Question Time
12:00-1:00pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:00-2:10pm	<b><u>Session 2: Beyond Gender and Sex Binaries</u></b>
1:00-1:20pm	Speaker 1: Anh-Nguyen Hoang, "A Vietnamese Man, His Body and (Life) Writing"
1:20-1:40pm	Speaker 2: Sav Zwickl, "Non-Binary Narratives: Making Sense of Ourselves in a Binary Gendered Australia"
1:40-2:00pm	Speaker 3: Dylan Martin, "Sexes and Simplification: An Overview of Human Sexual Development Beyond the XX/XY Dichotomy"
2:00-2:10pm	Question Time
2:10-2:30pm	<i>Afternoon Break</i>
2:30-3:45pm	<b><u>Session 3: Pregnancy and Parenthood</u></b>
2:30-2:50pm	Speaker 1: Siti Rohmanatin Fitriani, "Communal Parenting of Papuans: A Gender Sensitive Analysis"
2:50-3:10pm	Speaker 2: Elizabeth Yemorkor Odoi, "Pregnancy and Mothering as a Performance: The Cases of Mothers in Accra Ghana (A Proposed Study)"
3:10-3:30pm	Speaker 3: Zoe Keys, "'My Body, My Choice': Abortion Activism, Anti-Vaccination Protests and the Covid-19 Pandemic—What Kind of 'Choice' are we Rallying for?"
3:30-3:35pm	Snap 1: Alice Rose, "'Like Dropping from a Huge Height': LGBTQ+ Experiences of Pregnancy Loss and Support"
3:35-3:45pm	Question Time
3:45-5:05pm	<b><u>Session 4: Bodies and Barriers</u></b>
3:45-4:05pm	Speaker 1: Heather Briony McGinn, "Little Girls Have it Too: Unpacking ADHD and the Grief of Unbecoming"
4:05-4:25pm	Speaker 2: Gipsy Hosking, "What's Gender Got to do with It? Exploring the Gendering of ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia"
4:25-4:45pm	Speaker 3: Victoria Knight, "Queering Fatness in Research Practices"
4:45-4:50pm	Snap 1: Sophie Dahlenburg, "Personal Experiences with Body Image: Interviews with Lesbian Women"
4:50-5:00pm	Question Time
5:00-5:10pm	<b>Close</b>

## WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

9:00-9:20am	<b>Acknowledgment of Country</b> <i>Housekeeping</i>
9:20-10:30am	<b><a href="#">Session 1: Media Representation and Fandoms</a></b>
9:20-9:40am	Speaker 1: Xiaofei Yang, "Women's Engagement with Gay Male Discourse in Chinese New Media"
9:40-10:00am	Speaker 2: Elisa Armstrong, "Women's Experiences Playing Dungeons & Dragons"
10:00-10:20am	Speaker 3: April Mitchell, "Freddie Mercury's On-Stage Performances of Gender, Sex and Sexuality: Grappling with Negative Stigma Surrounding HIV/AIDS"
10:20-10:30am	Question Time
10:30-10:50am	<i>Morning Tea</i>
10:50-11:20am	<b>Writing From Below launch</b>
11:20-12:30pm	<b><a href="#">Session 2: Gender-Based Violence</a></b>
11:20-11:40am	Speaker 1: Chloe Drewett, "Breaking the Silence on Sexual Assault and Harassment: An Analysis of #MeToo Tweets"
11:40-12:00pm	Speaker 2: Ena Tripura: "Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and the Humanitarian Response: The Case of Rohingya Refugee Women in Bangladesh"
12:00-12:20pm	Speaker 3: Huong Nguyen, "Gender Vulnerability to Trafficking in Vietnam: A Critical Systemic Policy Review Informed by a Rights-Based Approach"
12:20-12:30pm	Question Time
12:30-1:30pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:30-2:30pm	<b>Panel</b>
2:30-2:50pm	<i>Afternoon Break</i>
2:50-4:00pm	<b><a href="#">Session 3: Queering Methodologies</a></b>
2:50-3:10pm	Speaker 1: Katherine Giunta, "Undoing Methodology: Ethics of Practicing and Producing Queer Ethnography 'At Home'"
3:10-3:30pm	Speaker 2: Morgan Archinal, "A Queer Oral 'Herstory' of South Australia"
3:30-3:50pm	Speaker 3: Tanja Dittfeld, "Speaking Through Photos: Creating Counter-Narratives of LGBTIQ+ Activism in Uganda with Photovoice"
3:50-4:00pm	Question Time
4:00-4:50pm	<b><a href="#">Session 4: Storytelling</a></b>
4:00-4:05pm	Snap 1: Heather Briony McGinn, "In the Shadow of Ginsberg: Elise Cowen and Queer Erasure"
4:05-4:25pm	Speaker 1: Nicole Lenoir-Jourdan, "The Spell to Break the Glass Ceiling: The Power Structures that Bond the Post-Modern Witch in Literature"
4:25-4:45pm	Speaker 2: Roz Bellamy, "Meaning-Making and Subjectivity in Young LGBT+ People's Life Writing"
4:45-5:05pm	Speaker 4: Mara Curechian, "Re-Writing History: Lesbian Fictions of the Past in Négar Djavadi's Disoriental and Chinelo Okparanta's Under the Udala Trees"
5:05-5:15pm	Question Time
5:15-5:30pm	<b>Close: Call for Volunteers, Feedback and Thanks</b>



## Artwork: 'Feel'

### Words and Art by Angie Bon

In this work I'm inspired by the rigid and problematic expectations which dictate what it means to be a man, particularly in Australian culture. These ideals of masculinity hurt not only individuals, including men themselves, but entire families, communities and societies. While we see the repercussions of the externalisation of these pressures too often, I aim to capture the inner turmoil and vulnerability that lies beneath. To feel does not make you less of a man, to feel is a part of the human experience.

I am a psychology honours graduate, and aspiring psychologist in Adelaide, SA. I am fascinated by the human psyche, the human body, the human condition, the broader socio-cultural environment and the ways in which these all intertwine. Art is a form of self-expression for me, and allows me to explore these themes, through the use of watercolour painting, charcoal and graphite. Currently art is a hobby, but I aspire to share more of my work. My work can be viewed at [www.instagram.com/angiebonart](http://www.instagram.com/angiebonart).





# Dr Michael Noble Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the Conference

The 2018's conference saw the introduction of the Dr Michael Noble Prize. The late Dr Noble was a writer, researcher, activist and advocate who through his life's work make a significant contribution to his communities, to knowledge and to the lives of those around him. This year *Writing From Below* publishes the Dr Michael Noble Special Edition in memorial to his legacy to innovative research.

Dr Michael Lawrence Noble was born in 1959 and lived with obvious differences all his life. His 'differences' were diagnosed as Klinefelter's XXY Syndrome in his 30's, and a diagnosis of Asperger's syndrome followed soon after. Dr Noble loved cross-stitching and restoring antique writing boxes. He brought balance into his life through a love of bushwalking and gardening. He always enjoyed making time to help other university students with assignments and research.

Dr Noble's ground-breaking PhD 'Nicholas Culpeper and the mystery of the philosopher's stone: recovering and enhancing subjugated knowledges through historical fiction' was completed in 2017. Dr Noble fought for years to bring the intersex community to the forefront of community awareness. The Organisation Intersex International (OII) Australia recognises Dr Noble for his crucial contributions to intersex activism from the early 1990s to the mid-2000s.

Dr Noble was the Intersex Consultant and Communications Officer for the 2017 Gender, Sex and Sexualities Art(i)culations of Violence Committee, where he instigated crucial reforms in the way that the conference approaches notions of gender, sex and sexualities. This is one culmination of what will undoubtedly be many of his lifetime of pushing through barriers, both personal and societal. The Dr Michael Noble Prize for Outstanding Contribution to the Conference is a fitting memorial to an unforgettable academic who was always ready to help others.

*Many thanks to Louise Niva, a dear friend of Dr Noble's, for her contribution to writing this biography.*

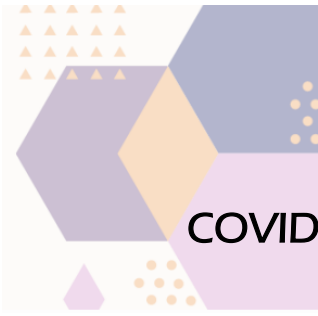




## Keynote

Dr Laura Roberts is a Lecturer in Women's and Gender Studies at Flinders University. Prior to this position she taught Gender Studies and Philosophy at The University of Queensland (2016-2019). Although she now resides in Australia, on Kurna land, she is from South Africa and began her undergraduate studies in Drama and Philosophy at The University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa during the early years of the post-apartheid transition to democracy. Her research interests include gender studies, feminist philosophy and politics, post/decolonial theory, contemporary social movements and, more recently, feminist philosophies of technology. Her monograph *Irigaray and Politics: A Critical Introduction* (published by Edinburgh University Press) was published in June 2019.





## Panel

### COVID-19 and Academia: The Gendered Impact of the Pandemic in Australian Universities

This panel invites us to consider the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on the productivity of women and minoritised individuals in the neoliberal academy. It seeks to further the conversations about the added burdens and responsibilities of working from home and teaching, learning and/or conducting fieldwork while being COVID-19 safe. The burden will be even heavier for women who face intersecting systems of oppression, such as ethnicity, race, sexualities, gender, age, economic class, dependent status, and/or disability. This increased pressure further highlights the gender inequalities, and other intersecting marginalisations, already often felt throughout the university system. We want to discuss the challenges we experience and foresee in universities and, if any, the most effective ways to engage with them.



**Chair: Marianne Clausen** is a PhD student in the School of Psychology. She is supervised by Associate Professor Amanda Le Couteur, Dr Shona Crabb and Dr Niki Vincent (Commissioner for Equal Opportunity SA). Her research is focussed on flexible work arrangements for men would allow for sharing of paid work and unpaid domestic and caring tasks in Australian families. My research investigates the personal, cultural and organisational issues relating to men in flexible work.

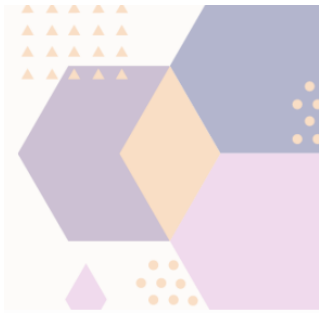
**Tracy Kakyo** is a PhD Nursing student at Flinders University (2020-2023). Her topic focuses on advancing the nursing profession through mentorship. She is Ugandan (a small country in East of Africa) and a mother of two.



**Dr Elena Spasovska** is a researcher and educator with a strong interest in conflict transformation, sustainable peace and gender justice; feminist and women's activism against nationalism, populism, militarism and patriarchy; and the political participation of women from diverse backgrounds.

**Dr Corinna Di Niro** is a sessional academic on teaching only contracts at the University of South Australia. She is a performing artist, director, teacher, TEDx speaker and creative-researcher. Corinna completed her PhD in Commedia dell'Arte in 2016, runs her own theatre company, Stage Secrets, and continues to publish in her areas of interest: theatre and women / casuals in academia. Corinna is currently co-editing a special issue for the peer-reviewed journal *Writing From Below* about the life and work of the late Dr Noble (due to be published Sept 2020) and working on a monograph about Commedia in the Asia-Pacific. Corinna is a returning guest lecturer in Commedia dell'Arte at NIDA, NSW.





# Abstracts and Bios

## Tuesday 22 September

### Session One

#### Institutional Inequalities

**Kristi Urry**

#### **“Sexuality and Sexual Health in Mental Health Settings: Clinicians’ Disparate Understandings, and Implications for Care”**

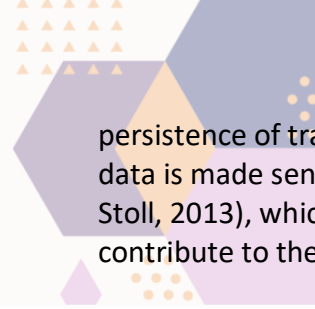
Sexuality and sexual health are important aspects of comprehensive mental health care. Despite this, mental health clinicians do not receive adequate sexuality-related professional education and it is not well understood how they understand these concepts. This is important, because their conceptualisations of sexuality and sexual health will shape how they address sexual concerns by delimiting or restricting what is perceived as a concern, what has caused the concern, and what (re-)actions or interventions will be most appropriate. This paper explores how Australian mental health clinicians conceptualised sexuality and sexual health within in-depth interviews. The data were analysed thematically within a social constructionist framework. Clinicians’ conceptualisations were varied and not bound by profession but could be loosely organised into two major themes that were nested: Sexual health is all about sex and more than just having sex. Most participants’ conceptualisations of sexual health were grounded in the former, a reductionist approach where there was a focus on sex and the body. This conceptualisation was also largely heterocentric, illustrated through a focus on sex as coitus (i.e., penile-vaginal sex). Participants’ also conceptualised sexual health as more than just having sex, expanding beyond biology and bodies, but they had difficulty articulating this broader conceptualisation. The term ‘sexuality’ was mostly understood as sexual identity and rarely discussed beyond reference to non-heterosexual identities, reflecting the broader heterocentricity of participants’ talk. I discuss the implications of these findings for (improving) sexuality-related care in mental health settings and for conducting sexuality research in health settings.

**Kristi** recently submitted her PhD and is currently teaching in the School of Psychology at Adelaide Uni. Her research interests lie broadly in sexuality and sexual health (care & rights), LGBT-QIA health, disability, and health care experiences (both receiving and providing care). She wishes everybody would go a little slower.

**Marianne Clausen**

#### **“Gender-Blind Sexism in the Workplace”**

In a supposedly ‘post-gender’ world, the work and care practices of current day Australians follow gendered norms. Care work is most often performed by women and paid employment is dominated by men. How do organizational leaders account for the



persistence of traditional gender norms in apparently egalitarian workplaces? Interview data is made sense of within the framework of ‘gender-blind sexism’ (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Stoll, 2013), which provides a nuanced explanation for the subtle forms of sexism that contribute to the reproduction of gender inequality.

**Marianne:** I am a PhD student in the School of Psychology. I am supervised by Associate Professor Amanda Le Couteur, Dr Shona Crabb and Dr Niki Vincent (Commissioner for Equal Opportunity SA). My research is focussed on men and flexible work arrangements.

**Melanie Clark**

**“White Wives and Little Lies: Aboriginal Soldiers, ‘Taboo’ Relationships and the First World War”**

World War I offered a number of perceived freedoms for volunteers, and accounts of venereal disease indicate sexual liberty was eagerly embraced. However, not all affairs of the heart were illicit. Flouting the so-called ‘norms’ prevalent in ‘white Australia’, a number of Aboriginal veterans returned to Australia with hopes of a new future, supported by their English war brides. During the early 20th century, every aspect of Aboriginal lives was not only policed by the Aborigines Protection Board, but also by a prejudiced society. Everyday decisions, including on movement, employment and relationships, as well as the prospect of volunteering for the Australian Imperial Force, were controlled. Outlining military protocol, the Defence Act 1909 stipulated only those of ‘substantial European origin’ as able to enlist, ensuring Australia was seen as a white nation. ‘Taboo’ military marriages and clandestine dalliances between Aboriginal Anzacs and white women have seldom been examined, and have the potential to disrupt the perceived status quo. Aboriginal involvement in WWI is increasingly gaining the recognition it deserves, but despite understanding the general conditions of living in Australia as an Aboriginal person, more attention is needed to understand the nuances of Aboriginal war service. Beginning with an outline of the policies that framed the conditions of Aboriginal enlistment, this paper will explore family histories, official reports, and newspaper archives, drawing attention to the women for whom Aboriginal men broke the ‘rules’. The paper will also discuss the broader significance of such unions and their place in the Anzac ‘legend’.

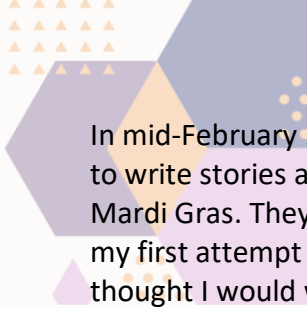
**Melanie Clark** is a Flinders University PhD candidate and casual academic. Her doctoral research *Fair Dinkum Anzacs?* explores Aboriginal inclusion/exclusion from Anzac commemoration and Australian national memory. If not found with her nose in a book, then you’ll find her behind a camera observing the world through a different lens.

## **Session Two**

### **Beyond Gender and Sex Binaries**

**Anh-Nguyen Hoang**

**“A Vietnamese Man, His Body and (Life) Writing”**



In mid-February 2017, The Australian Embassy in Hanoi placed a call for LGBTIQ individuals to write stories about themselves for an online-story telling contest to coincide with Hanoi Mardi Gras. They wished to promote LGBTIQ rights in Vietnam. I entered the competition, my first attempt at long-form writing and mine was one of two winning stories. I had never thought I would write about my life. A Vietnamese man, his *Body and (Life)* writing is a thesis built from a collection of stories based in memories from my childhood until the present. Life writing, including memory work and autoethnography, is the primary method applied in this thesis (Kadar, 1992; Ellis, 2018; Haug, 2008; Adams et al, 2015). The author's body writes the thesis, a female body belonging to a Vietnamese man. The thesis is situated in both Western, English language (eg. Eades, 2015; Ayres, 2017; Nelson, 2018) and Vietnamese trans life writing (e.g. Nguyen, G.H. 2014; Nguyen M.J, 2014, 2017; Cach Lai, 2015). My bodily practices were influenced initially by childhood observations of the gender-based division of labour in agriculture. Desiring to be a man, my bodily practices express what it means to be a male person among Tay - an ethnic minority community, and in mainstream Vietnamese society. These practices conflict with my body's appearance and sound. Text and language are ways for transgender persons and people like me to write about themselves, even though these text and words cannot fully convey the emotions, wounds and thoughts of a human being. I have transformed my body by undertaking hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to avoid discrimination from society. The events told are about interactions between me and other persons – Tay, Vietnamese, Australian and other people of colour. I describe an image of an Australian nation in which racism and racist behaviour exists. In the end, I call myself “a man”, but my meaning of this word excludes all gendered factors. The word is close to the words “tree” and “plant”. This thesis calls for other transgender individuals writing about their own selves to realise and escape the social constructions of gender, especially in Vietnam.


**Sav Zwickl**

**“Non-Binary Narratives: Making Sense of Ourselves in a Binary Gendered Australia”**

Historically non-binary people have been pathologised and systematically denied voice and validity. Based on one of the first in-depth non-binary studies in Australia, this presentation will contribute to a growing movement toward empowerment, inclusion, and visibility of non-binary people in Australian society.

Drawing on interviews with non-binary Australians, previous literature and mainstream, queer, and social media, we will examine how gender-policing is enacted and gender expectations upheld, to preserve the gender binary and render non-binary identities unintelligible.

Focusing on key social and institutional spaces, this presentation will explore the ways in which non-binary people make sense of themselves and experience their disidentification with and ongoing navigation of the gender binary. This includes discussion of schooling, media, the role of LGBTIQA+ spaces as liberating and limiting, gender expression and issues of safety, and navigating healthcare, bureaucracy, and public spaces.



**Sav Zwickl** (they/them) is a PhD Candidate at La Trobe University, where their research focuses on non-binary gender identities and experiences. They are also part of the Trans Health Research Group at the University of Melbourne, where they are involved in transgender research and educating healthcare professionals on transgender healthcare.

**Dylan Martin**

**“Sexes and Simplification: An Overview of Human Sexual Development Beyond the XX/XY Dichotomy”**

Defining a woman as someone who has a pair of X chromosomes and a man as someone who has an X and a Y is a gross oversimplification not only at the sociological level, but biologically as well. A more accurate model describes a hierarchical chain of events leading to a person having genetic, gonadal and phenotypic sexes - that is, a person's genetic sex drives the gonads to develop as ovaries or testes (gonadal sex), and the gonads produce hormones which drive the external body shape that develops in the womb and at puberty (phenotypic sex). Though these three aspects of sex are typically concordant, natural exceptions occur, and none of the three are straightforward in their own right. This talk will describe the biology underlying sex determination, briefly explaining ‘typical’ development and demonstrating why the simple XX/XY dichotomy model falls apart when examined in detail. Examples will be used to explain how and why people can be intersex or have intersex characteristics. The role of hormones in directing body shape will be explored to show how various female and male developmental pathways remain accessible post-puberty regardless of what came before, illustrating how the natural independence of genetic, gonadal and phenotypic sexes can be utilised in modern medicine to grant a person a body shape achieved through their own agency.

**Dylan Martin** is a second year PhD student at Flinders University studying the metabolism of androgens in breast and prostate cancer. As a nonbinary person with a scientific background, Dylan has a natural interest in the biology underlying sex determination and hormonal action that complements said cancer research.

## **Session Three**

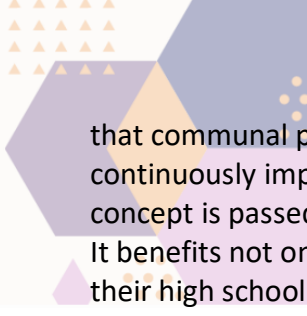
### **Pregnancy and Parenthood**

**Siti Rohmanatin Fitriani**

**“Communal Parenting of Papuans: A Gender Sensitive Analysis”**

Parenting might be considered as a hard and challenging activity. Some parents may feel role overloaded or burdensome (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard 2009), and experienced stress and depressive symptoms (Perry-Jenkins et. Al 2007). Communal parenting as a phenomenon of shared responsibilities of nurturing children starts to be occupied as an alternative strategy of parenting support approach (Sihvonen 2018). In fact, this parenting approach has been used by some communities such as Africans society (Campbell 2010) and Papuans community. The initial findings of my current research on Papuan Parenting shows,





that communal parenting has been implemented for generations and seems to be continuously implemented by the next generation of Papuan parents. Communal parenting concept is passed from generation to generation through practice and verbal reinforcement. It benefits not only parents but also children. For example, many Papuan children spend their high school ages in their extended family or non-biological parents house to be able to access education because of the absence of schools in their villages. Unfortunately, this promising parenting approach covert imbalance power relation such as role division and gender discrimination such as the priority of boys over daughters for educational access.

**Fitriani** is a PhD student at The University of Australia. She has worked as a trainer in The Ministry of Social Affairs of Indonesia. Her expertise is family-related subject including parenting and violence against women and children. She was one of AMIRCI Mothering Conference presenters in 2019.

**Elizabeth Yemorkor Odoi**

**“Pregnancy and Mothering as a Performance: The Cases of Mothers in Accra Ghana (A Proposed Study)”**

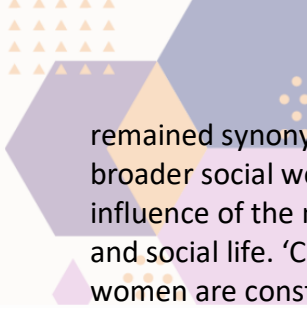
Pregnancy and mothering are regulated by social norms, religion, family, medicine, media etc. In addition to local Ghanaian traditional norms pertaining to pregnancy, feminist scholarship has identified a number of global discourses that regulate pregnancy and mothering; namely the medicalization discourse, the responsibility discourse, the fitness and diet discourse and the consumerism discourse. Hinged on Goffman’s Dramaturgy, Foucault’s concepts of Discourse, Power and Resistance and Neoliberal Governmentality, this research will generally explore how both local and global discourses influence the performance of pregnancy and mothering both online and offline/ public spaces. The study will investigate the maternal experiences, patterns and practices of women before, during and after pregnancy and how different categories of women in terms of class, marital status, age etc. respond to both global and local discourses surrounding pregnancy and mothering. In addition, the study will explore why mothers respond the way they do and the consequences of their actions. Using in-depth interviews, the study will focus on women who had children during the last five years in Accra, Ghana.

**Elizabeth:** I am currently a first year PhD student at the Hong Kong Baptist University in Hong Kong. My research interest lies in Pregnancy and Mothering as a Performance. I am specifically interested in how mothers negotiate and navigate the discourses pertaining to pregnancy and mothering

**Zoe Keys**

**“My Body, My Choice’: Abortion Activism, Anti-Vaccination Protests and the Covid-19 Pandemic—What Kind of ‘Choice’ are we Rallying for?”**

The political slogan ‘My Body, My Choice’ has long been associated with the feminist movement, and particularly with abortion rights activism. While the notion of ‘a woman’s right to choose’ grew from the predominately white feminism of the 1970’s, ‘choice’ has



remained synonymous with both abortion rights, and how we talk about abortion in the broader social world. However, how we understand ‘choice’ has changed under the influence of the neoliberal political ideology that permeates many aspects of both political and social life. ‘Choice’ is commonly framed as a feminist goal that has been ‘achieved’, and women are constructed as having gained access to unobstructed choices in life. This framing obfuscates the complex social and structural impediments that many face when accessing both abortion services and reproductive services in general. Recently, the rhetoric of ‘My Body, My Choice’ was employed by members of the anti-vaccination community in protests associated with the proposed Covid-19 vaccination, as well as by protesters opposed to lockdown laws implemented during the pandemic. What kind of ‘choice’ do these movements believe belongs to them – the neoliberal understanding of ‘choice’, or the more political, feminist activist version? This paper will examine what effect the adoption of the ‘choice’ rhetoric by these two groups may have on the way we construct and imagine the idea of ‘choice’ in the social world, and how political activity around ‘choice’ is shifting.

**Zoe:** I am a first year PhD candidate studying at Flinders University, having completed both my undergraduate and honours degrees at the University of Adelaide. My work is located within the discipline of Women’s Studies, and my PhD focuses on the neoliberalisation of ‘choice’ in regard to media representation of abortion decriminalisation.


**Alice Rose**

**“‘Like Dropping from a Huge Height’: LGBTQ+ Experiences of Pregnancy Loss and Support”**

In Australia, one in four pregnancies end in loss. Bereaved parents often experience high levels of emotional distress. Psychological research has primarily focused on heterosexual, cisgender women, and more recently begun to investigate heterosexual men. A paucity of research into gender and sexually diverse experiences of pregnancy loss is reflected in their omission from current clinical guidelines and a recent parliamentary enquiry into pregnancy loss. This qualitative study explored the experiences of pregnancy loss among Australian individuals who identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, non-binary and queer, focusing on their perceptions of support and its impact on their wellbeing. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and data were analysed using thematic analysis. Initial findings from preliminary data are presented. Across LGBTQ+ identities heteronormativity shaped experiences of loss and support, with five main themes identified: Grief is surprising and often accompanied by fear; invisibility and cartesian dualism in health care set the tone for disenfranchisement from grief; expectations of discrimination and needing to educate others create barriers to formal support seeking; multiple losses and years in heteronormative systems compound grief; internalised norms, the idea of choice and the right to grieve create barriers to informal support offers and self-care. Cultural norms of kinship and gender strongly influenced the levels of acknowledgement and support offered to bereaved parents. The results highlight how inclusive, empathetic/whole-person medical care, as well as the availability and salience of LGBTQ+ specific support services, could reduce distress following pregnancy loss.

**Ms Rose** holds a Bachelor of Psychological Science, majoring in Gender Studies, from the University of Adelaide. Ms Rose won The Zonta Club Academic Prize for Gender Studies in





2019 and has presented several Gender Studies research projects at the 2019 Undergraduate Research Conference at The University of Adelaide.

## Session Four

### Bodies and Barriers

**Heather Briony McGinn**

#### **“Little Girls Have it Too: Unpacking ADHD and the Grief of Unbecoming”**

Facing an uncertain future and viewing the world through a kaleidoscopic lens, creative writing is both research practice and survival technique for Heather Briony McGinn. Reflecting on the rhizomatic tendencies inherent in the process of poetry composition, this paper will discuss the researcher’s own experience with being diagnosed with ADHD in September 2019. Negotiating the nexus between a gendered neurotypical performativity and a neurodivergent authenticity elicits and embraces delirium, madness, sensation, and dreams, which leads to omni-directional shifts in the researcher’s writing style. Genres are bent, rebelled against, mashed-up in bricolage and pressganged into Beat poetry cut-ups with the researcher’s emergent methodology: *l’écriture kinesthésique*. Examples of the researcher’s creative writing will be shared alongside this discussion to demonstrate how coming to terms with her recently recognised neurodiversity and queerness has informed and continues to shape her feminist creative writing and research practice.

**Heather Briony McGinn** is a second-year PhD candidate with a research focus on Beat Studies and feminist literary criticism. In the first year of her postgraduate research she developed *l’écriture kinesthésique*, a corporeal-based creative writing methodology.

**Gipsy Hosking**

#### **“What’s Gender Got to do with It? Exploring the Gendering of ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia”**

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) and Fibromyalgia are two poorly understood chronic illnesses that primarily affect women. Lacking clear diagnostic markers these conditions remain profoundly contested in the medical sphere and heavily stigmatised in society. This paper explores the historical construction of these illnesses, in the context of hysteria, and how the fact that most sufferers are female has contributed the dismissal of the symptoms and the ongoing stigmatisation of those living with these conditions today. Drawing on my own participant action research with young women living with ME/CFS and/or Fibromyalgia, I discuss the gendering of these conditions. Through stories of lived experience, I explore how being a woman influences interactions with the medical profession and the ongoing legacy of hysteria and psychosomatic labelling. This presentation will also include short video extracts from a video that I helped create, as part of my research process, with a group of young women living with these conditions.

**Gipsy:** I am a PhD candidate with UniSA Justice & Society. My research focuses on young women’s lived experience of ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia.



**Victoria Knight**

**“Queering Fatness in Research Practices”**

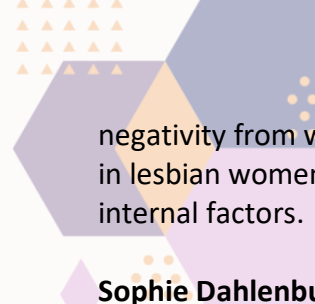
Based on an autoethnographic exploration of the fat subject, agency and mental health, this paper explores how queerness emerged as a recurring theme in the analysis of fat subjectivity. This happened in two ways – firstly, through the queer sexuality of the researcher, and secondly, through the idea of “queering” fatness by positioning it as non-normative and subversive. The queer nature of fatness manifested in different ways throughout the research process. The researcher’s personal queerness inherently informed the work as a conscious part of her identity. This was explored through the method of autoethnography (a method which shares queer theory’s affinity for intersubjectivity and reflexivity) and the consideration that, as a bisexual fat woman, the researcher’s agency was rendered unintelligible because of her embodiment. The idea of queering fatness, however, emerged from ideas of fat bodies being unruly, of not adhering to normative ideals of success and discipline. Such a view coincided primarily with ideas of the docile body, management of the body and the pathologisation of fatness. In this sense, the exercise of agency required the fat subject to accept the rejection of the disciplined, docile body and to embrace the unruliness and intractability of their bodies – that is, to queer themselves. Thus, the paper, argues for the value of the ways queerness can inform research practices such as autoethnography, and the mechanisms through which we can consider fatness to be queer in and of itself.

**Victoria Knight** is a PhD candidate at the University of South Australia. Her primary research interest is fat studies, with a particular interest in the intersections of fatness and fat identity. Her current research looks to examine the intersection of fatness and queerness.

**Sophie Dahlenburg**

**“Personal Experiences with Body Image: Interviews with Lesbian Women”**

There is debate in the literature as to whether lesbian women experience body image in similar or different ways compared to heterosexual women. One theory in particular, the protective hypothesis, posits that lesbian women are protected from experiencing negative body image because they are a part of a community that emphasizes body acceptance and positivity. Little is known about the personal experiences of body image in lesbian women as they navigate coming out and being a part of the wider lesbian community. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 lesbian women to hear their personal experiences and if they believed coming out and their involvement in the lesbian community affected on their body image. The interviews were analysed using an inductive semantic thematic analysis approach, and four main themes were generated from the data. The women all suggested that coming out had a positive influence on their body image. Coming out reportedly had more of an effect on their body image, but the women’s involvement in the community was still a source of positivity and support for them. The women also spoke about different standards in the lesbian community which were sometimes more negative than positive, and some of the participants still expressed



negativity from within themselves towards their bodies. The results suggest that body image in lesbian women is a layered experience that is influenced by a myriad of external and internal factors.

**Sophie Dahlenburg** is a PhD candidate at the University of South Australia. Her PhD is exploring body image in lesbian women and the potential factors that influence it. She currently has four publications; two about eating disorders, one about disordered eating/sexual orientation, and one about diet/cognition in cancer survivors.

### **Michelle Caruso**

#### **“Devi Mangiare! [You have to eat!]: Food, Culture and Italian Women’s Experiences of Disordered Eating”**

Disordered eating is disproportionately experienced by women and is a significant problem in Australia and worldwide. Understandings of disordered eating, research into its causes and presentation, and the approaches to intervention, remain predominantly informed by a positivist psycho- medical perspective. One of the greatest weaknesses of the psycho- medical approach is its failure to contextualise the disordered eating experiences of women from diverse cultural backgrounds, with research examining the disordered eating experiences of women from ethnic minorities remaining sparse. In recognition of this gap in knowledge, I sought to examine how food meanings, culture and gender intersect in the disordered eating experiences of Italian-Australian women. In-depth narrative interviews were thematically analysed using a feminist social constructionist framework that was also informed by anthropological theories about ‘foodways’ and culture. Three core themes were identified in the women’s narratives: ‘il cibo e’ tutto, il cibo e amore’ [food is everything, food is love]; ‘fare la bella figura’ [to make a good impression]; and ‘il mio piatto’ [it’s my plate]. The findings demonstrated how gendered expectations of women in Italian-Australian culture intersect with food meanings, cultural ideals and practices, including how cultural foodways and commensalities compete with cultural ideals that venerate female thinness and the psycho- medical systems that pathologise disordered eating. The findings also show how cultural factors can restrict access to formal support. The implications for intervention with women from Italian and other migrant backgrounds that might experience similar cultural tensions around foodways and female thinness ideals are explored.

**Michelle:** I am a PhD candidate at the University of South Australia. I have worked as a social worker in community services, registered training and clinical mental health settings. My current research is a Foucauldian discourse analysis- examining the effects of discourses within the area of involuntary mental health treatment.



# Wednesday 23 September

## Session One

### Media Representation and Fandoms

**Xiaofei Yang**

#### **“Women’s Engagement with Gay Male Discourse in Chinese New Media”**

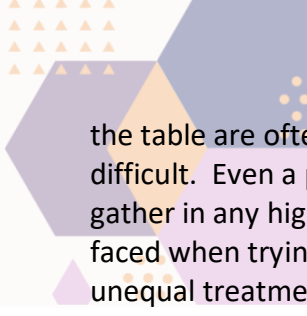
Youths and women, with rising buying power and access to the internet, are believed to have contributed to the diversification of gender traits and representations in contemporary China. In this context slash fandom, whose members are mostly young, urban women, constitutes a crucial locus for proliferated and diversified gay male representations. Meanwhile, gay male discourse could also be seen in media content outside slash fandom, and even in real life, indicating fans’ potentiality in transforming China’s patriarchy. Despite their entwined relationships, there remains a pressing lack of scholarly discussions on the interactions between female slash fans’ initiatives and proliferation of gay male discourse. In this study I focus particularly on women’s engagement with gay male discourse in slash fan videos and movie narrations on the platform Bilibili. Departing from a constructivist epistemology, I adopt a combined theoretical framework of post-modernist feminism and queer theory. Empirically, semiotics and individual, semi-structured interviews facilitate my interpretations of representations of gay male discourse on the one hand, and female slash audience’s lived experience in relation to these representations on the other. Hence this study builds up connections between the formerly disconnected, yet highly relevant fields, namely female audience’s activities in slash fandom and the circulation of gay male discourse both in and outside fan culture, and explores the positions of female slash fans within Chinese gender culture, in the hope for a future transformation, if not subversion, of the discursive system towards gender equity.

**Xiaofei Yang** is a research student at RMIT University, School of Media and Communication. Her research interests are Chinese new media, cultural studies, fandom studies, gender studies, post-modernist feminism and queer theory. She got her master’s degree in Global Media Communication at the University of Melbourne in 2017.

**Elisa Armstrong**

#### **“Women’s Experiences Playing Dungeons & Dragons”**

This research draws from over forty-four thousand survey results to explore the experiences of women playing the tabletop roleplaying game Dungeons & Dragons (D&D). Popular culture has embraced D&D in recent years, leading to a massive explosion in awareness and the number of players. Women have been playing D&D since its’ creation and have acted as pioneers in the community, but the stereotype remains that D&D is a game dominated by men. In 2017, a survey found that nearly 40% of D&D players are women. Due to popular podcasts such as Critical Role, the visibility of women playing D&D has increased and is beginning to be normalised. However, women’s experiences around



the table are often remarkably negative and finding a safe place to play can be very difficult. Even a precursory exploration into the D&D fandom (especially where women gather in any high concentration), will uncover nightmarish situations that women have faced when trying to play. These stories commonly include issues such as sexist comments, unequal treatment, sexual harassment, and the rape of their characters. To shed light on these experiences the answers to three questions are explored: “Have you felt unwelcome when trying to play D&D? Please describe your experience”, “How do you feel when playing D&D in public settings?”, and “Does where you play D&D do anything to make women feel more comfortable?”. Preliminary findings are emerging themes are explored, leading to a discussion of the consequences for D&D, its’ fandom, and the women who play.

**Elisa:** I am a second-year PhD candidate at Flinders University. My thesis is focused on women’s experiences around the roleplaying game Dungeons and Dragons, and is rooted in cultural studies. I am an avid tabletop roleplaying game player, a self-confessed nerd, and obsessed with all things post-apocalyptic.


**April Mitchell**

**“Freddie Mercury’s On-Stage Performances of Gender, Sex and Sexuality: Grappling with Negative Stigma Surrounding HIV/AIDS”**

Freddie Mercury was one of the greatest rock musicians of the twentieth century, penning hits like ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ and ‘Somebody To Love’. He also became the public face of HIV/AIDS research funding in the early 1990s, announcing he had the disease only to succumb to it due to complications the next day (24th November 1991). As the world mourned his death, his private struggle with the disease came to light in biographies and memoirs. Scholars analysed the impact this had on his life, and particularly on his sexuality and sexual practices. However, this was not the only facet of his identity that the disease impacted. What this paper aims to highlight is the musical links Mercury made between his gender, sex and sexuality, and how those facets of his identity were effected by the negative stigma surrounding homosexual men contracting HIV/AIDS. Mercury’s staged gender performances will be explained through the theme of mortality, adapting ideas from queer theory and intersectionality to cater for musical performance. Special attention will be paid to his performance of ‘Who Wants to Live Forever’ and his last appearance with Queen in the music video for ‘These are the Days of Our Lives’. Ultimately, this paper will prove the importance of linking gender, sex and sexuality in artistic expression, and how inquiry into musical performances during the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s can highlight ties between identity facets.

**April Mitchell** is from the Elder Conservatorium at the University of Adelaide. Her research explores new ways to investigate how gender can be expressed through music. Her methods link Freddie Mercury’s performances with fantasy, humour, mortality and legacy to advocate for the use of the gender spectrum in the arts.

**Session Two**



## Gender-Based Violence

Chloe Drewett

### “Breaking the Silence on Sexual Assault and Harassment: An Analysis of #MeToo Tweets”

Using conventional content analysis, this study analysed a corpus of #MeToo tweets from the first day the hashtag went viral, October 16th 2017. Of the 10,546 #MeToo tweets collected, three major categories were identified: these included #MeToo Facilitated Self-Disclosure, Messages of Support, and Calling Out Poor Behaviour with 5,243, 1,556, and 1,207 tweets, respectively. The majority of disclosure tweets detailed experiences of sexual assault (44%) and experiences that occurred during childhood (29.4%). The results of this study offer valuable insights regarding the information posters wanted to share during the first day of the #MeToo movement and the nature of sexual harassment and assault experienced by women, which may be used by policymakers to identify and implement means to reduce the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault within society.

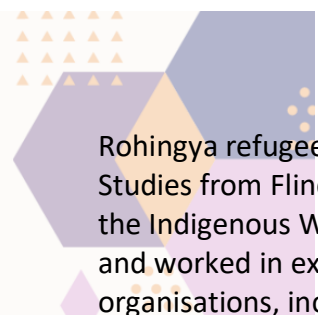
**Chloe:** I am currently in my final year of my PhD candidature at the University of Adelaide. My research has focused on the #MeToo movement, looking at the messages shared on Twitter, what factors predict support for the movement, and the experience of those who participated in the #MeToo movement.

Ena Tripura

### “Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and the Humanitarian Response: The Case of Rohingya Refugee Women in Bangladesh”

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) grows acute in a context of displacement, and eminently experienced by displaced and refugee women throughout their journey, even in a refugee camp where they should be safe and protected with the support from humanitarian actors. In recent decades, SGBV against refugee women becomes prominence in the international humanitarian legal instruments to an unprecedented degree as it presents threat to the protection of human rights, and women’s human rights. These legal instruments are to be integrated in humanitarian responses provided by the frontline humanitarian actors such as the UN Agencies, NGOs (non-government organisations), and the countries where the refugees have taken shelter. However, in recent years, increasing and evolving crisis, particularly SGBV experienced by Rohingya refugee women, has raised many questions regarding the role of humanitarian actors in terms of their gender policies and practices. Rohingyas are the most rapidly increasing refugee population in the world; a large number of whom live in Bangladesh, one of the resource scarce and densely populated countries in the world. This paper explores how the issues of SGBV against refugee women are addressed in refugee related legal instruments, including policies, and in practices by the frontline major humanitarian actors with a focus on Rohingya refugee context of Bangladesh.

**Ena Tripura** is second year PhD student under the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Science (CHASS) of Flinders University, South Australia. Her doctoral research investigates the role of humanitarian actors in addressing sexual and gender-based violence against



Rohingya refugee women in Bangladesh. Ena holds a Master of Arts Degree in Women's Studies from Flinders University. Her Master's thesis studied the socio-economic status of the Indigenous Women of Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh who have migrated to cities and worked in export processing zones. Previously, Ena worked with multiple development organisations, including United Nations, in Bangladesh providing strategic guidelines for promoting gender equality and women's participation in development projects.

### **Huong Nguyen**

#### **“Gender Vulnerability to Trafficking in Vietnam: A Critical Systemic Policy Review Informed by a Rights-Based Approach”**

Human trafficking is widely regarded to be a modern day form of slavery ([UNODC 2009](#)) and increasing its magnitude and global reach. Women and children are the majority of those trafficked for the purpose of exploitation which through their rights is being violated. Violations of women and girls' human rights are both a cause and a consequence of trafficking in women and girls. There have been many questions toward the issue of human trafficking. Why are women and girls the majority of trafficking and at high risk of being trafficked? What are gender aspects of human trafficking and how to define gender sensitive of human trafficking? Why reintegration is important to address human trafficking prevention? How reintegration shelter response to women's human rights, and how it contributes to empower vulnerable women. Indeed, women's human rights must lie at the core of any credible anti-trafficking analysis and strategy. This research attempts to examine the gender concerns in relation to human trafficking from the lance of human right and gender sensitive rights-based approach. It then explores the case study about reintegration shelter in Vietnam in order to see how relevant and effective the shelter model are in addressing gender concern and in meeting the needs of victims' recovery and reintegration.

**Huong Nguyen** is a Ph.D. in Women and Gender's Studies at Flinders University. Her research examines sexual harassment of working women in a specific socio-cultural context of an Asian country, Vietnam. She got an MA degree in International Development and Social Change in America, and an MA of Law in Vietnam. Huong has 18 years of experience working with government, UN agencies, INGOs, and academic institutions targeting social development and gender equality. Huong worked as a gender practitioner in government agencies and later a country director for an American NGO, and program director for CARE International in Vietnam.

### **Session Three**


#### **Queering Methodologies**

##### **Katherine Giunta**

#### **“Undoing Methodology: Ethics of Practicing and Producing Queer Ethnography ‘At Home’”**

The process of practicing and producing ethnography requires the ethnographer's willingness to become undone by their relationships with their interlocuters, their time in





the field and the act of writing. In this paper I consider the ethnographic research methods that I use in my PhD research with queer femmes in Sydney to argue that the work of conducting queer ethnography at home is, like the labour of remaking queer forms of femininity, ethical work. 'Femme' is an identity term historically associated with feminine lesbian women who partner with masculine butch women. Today the term is also used to refer to almost anyone who self-identifies as enacting non-heteronormative forms of femininity. Based on twelve months of participant observation fieldwork (2017-2018) with Sydneysiders who identify as queer, femme and genders other than male, I describe and discuss the particular experiences and problematics of researching with and writing about people whom I continue to care about, socialise with and share core values with in queer Sydney. I question what it means to be a good femme and a good femme researcher and if the two are incommensurable and argue that all qualitative research demands ethical work on one's self and one's relationships.

**Katherine Giunta** is a queer femme ethnographer living and working on Gadigal land. Her work draws on analytical approaches in queer anthropology, critical femininity studies and the anthropology of ethics and morality, to consider the everyday practices through which femininities are reproduced as ethical practices.

**Morgan Archinal**  
**"A Queer Oral 'Herstory' of South Australia"**

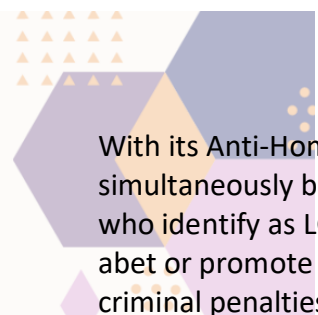
Oral History is a popular method of research, especially with the queer community as it captures stories the written historical record often neglects. In the case of Australia there have been many LGBTIQ+ Oral history projects but they have yet to focus on South Australia. This paper will demonstrate why South Australia has a distinct story from the other states by looking at lesbians involved in the 1970s Women's Liberation Movement. It will also look into my current PhD project to collect oral histories from queer women who came out between the years of 1980-2020 and compare their lives and experiences.

**Morgan:** After completing my honours degree in History I started my PhD in 2019 at Flinders University. I am interested in Oral History, Queer History, and Australian History. I also like looking at the intersections of class, race, and gender and how these play a part in whose history is told.

**Tanja Dittfeld**  
**"Speaking Through Photos: Creating Counter-Narratives of LGBTIQ+ Activism in Uganda with Photovoice"**

Creative expressions of LGBTIQ+ activism can be understood as 'arts of resistance', meaning informal modes of civic agency that produce counter-narratives through artistic expressions. Drawing on a collaborative photovoice project involving two LGBTIQ+ civil society organisations in Uganda from March to August 2020, this paper will outline how LGBTIQ+ activists, organizations and their allies in Uganda negotiate, navigate and disrupt the monolithic stories of Africa as homophobic and homosexuality as unAfrican in their activism.





With its Anti-Homosexuality Bill in 2009, Uganda became the first country in Africa to simultaneously broaden criminal penalties for those who engage in same-sex acts, those who identify as LGBTIQ+, and those in civil society who, in any way, aid, abet or promote LGBTIQ+ peoples. The bill hereby introduced new and intensified old criminal penalties not only for LGBTIQ+ people but also their allies, but more importantly immunized society against LGBTIQ+ rights by creating legal barriers to LGBTIQ+ rights advocacy. Uganda subsequently quickly became the centrepiece for two distinct, yet interlinked, stories of Africa and homosexuality – the first of Africa as homophobic is strongly embedded in Euro-American geopolitics of LGBTIQ+ rights whereas the second of homosexuality as ‘unAfrican’ is deeply rooted in the African postcolonial nationalist political project. Both stories create a fictive understanding of LGBTIQ+ people that obscures “the diversity and contextual specificity of queer African formations past, present and future” (Ekine, 2013, p. 85). These monolithic stories of African sexualities and genders need to be disrupted to support rather than undermine LGBTIQ+ activism.

**Tanja Dittfeld** is a Danish PhD candidate, teacher and research assistant with the University of Sydney. Her PhD explores how Ugandan LGBTIQ+ activists, organisations and their allies navigate and negotiate LGBTIQ+ imperialism, politicised homophobia and localised genders and sexualities norms through a collaborative photovoice project from March to August 2020.

## Session Four

### Storytelling

**Heather Briony McGinn**

**“In the Shadow of Ginsberg: Elise Cowen and Queer Erasure”**

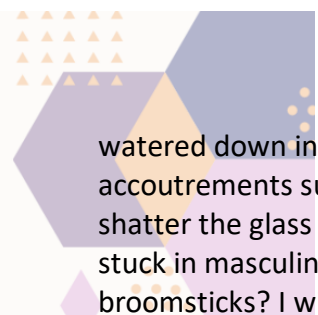
Lost for decades, the poetic work of Elise Cowen has recently been brought to light thanks to the tireless efforts of poet and author Tony Trigilio. In this snapshot paper, Beat Studies scholar Heather Briony McGinn will provide an introduction to the creative writing of Elise Cowen, and discuss the implications of queer erasure in literature.

**Heather Briony McGinn** is a second-year PhD candidate with a research focus on Beat Studies and feminist literary criticism. In the first year of her postgraduate research she developed *l’écriture kinesthésique*, a corporeal-based creative writing methodology.

**Nicole Lenoir-Jourdan**

**“The Spell to Break the Glass Ceiling: The Power Structures that Bond the Post-Modern Witch in Literature”**

Witches have winged their way to the heart of fiction with their enchantment popularised since Shakespeare’s weird sisters appeared on stage. Yet from this time witches in fantasy literature have been represented as a threat to the patriarchy whether depicted as temptress or crone. The portrayal of witches as powerful creatures to be feared has been



watered down in literature through the dependence they have on familiars and accoutrements such as wands or cauldrons to work their magic. Has a spell been found to shatter the glass ceiling for witches in twenty-first century fantasy literature or are they stuck in masculine ancient power structures wearing pointy hats and riding on broomsticks? I will discuss my creative work which looks at the ‘witch as a superhero’ through a Foucauldian feminist lens. I will analyse the power structures that surround the post-modern witch. I will argue that the Western World witch is struggling to break the bonds of ancient power structures whilst in Latin American literature the chattels are breaking and the emergence of a respected female representation has begun.

**Nicole Lenoir-Jourdan**, BA (Communications), MA (Creative Writing), doctoral student in Creative Writing at Deakin University is studying twenty-first century fantasy witches from Western to Latin American literature. She has been a columnist in Australian newspapers and is a prize-winning short story writer. She is working on an urban-fantasy novel.

### **Roz Bellamy**

#### **“Meaning-making and subjectivity in young LGBTQ+ people’s life writing”**


Interventions for LGBTQ+ youth are often framed around adversity, trauma and risk prevention, and life writing may be an innovative way to address wellbeing disparities. A life writing intervention was run with a group of LGBTQ+ people aged 16 to 20 years old from varied cultural contexts as well as diverse locations ranging from urban to regional and rural areas in Australia. This paper explores how young LGBTQ+ people make meaning and find subjectivity through narrative writing. The intervention was designed based on literature and theories from narrative therapy, expressive writing and creative writing as a discipline. Each participant submitted up to seven narratives. Thematic analysis was used to examine the participants’ narratives, and two themes were identified inductively that related to meaning-making and subjectivity, which were ‘(re)gaining agency’ and ‘finding “I/Me” in narrative writing’. The implications for inclusive and affirming healthcare and educational initiatives, and the benefits and challenges of implementing creative studies with LGBTQ+ communities, are considered.

**Roz Bellamy** is a writer, editor and researcher whose work has appeared in *Growing Up Queer in Australia* (Black Inc.), *The Big Issue*, *Going Down Swinging*, *the Guardian*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Meanjin*, *SBS*, *Seizure* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Roz is writing a memoir about gender diversity, Judaism and mental illness.

### **Mara Curechian**

#### **“Re-Writing History: Lesbian Fictions of the Past in Négar Djavadi’s *Disoriental* and Chinelo Okparanta’s *Under the Udala Trees*”**

In his seminal monograph, *Queer Fictions of the Past*, Scott Bravmann explores the complexity of lesbian and gay engagement with history as both a means of codifying distinct social, political and cultural identities of historical belonging as well as identifying the ways through which the queer past and the queer present are in constant rapport. Bravmann’s



text makes salient the historiographic limitations of advocating for a globally unified ‘queer heritage’, precisely because such attempts obscure gender, political, cultural, racial and social differences in both the past and present. Most crucially, the historiography of same-sex desire is diacritically marked by gender and as a result, there is a significantly smaller body of available archival evidence on the history of female same-sex desire. This particular gap in scholarship is exacerbated in predominantly homophobic countries still actively experiencing political and religious efforts to erase any such records from cultural history. Thus, whereas Bravmann’s cautioning against historiographic attempts to narrate a unified ‘queer heritage’ is valid, there is little available scholarship on how different, yet highly prejudiced, national contexts, may engender authors to use an overlapping set of narrative techniques as a means of depicting a culturally specific account of a queer past. This paper explores some of the ways in which Chinelo Okparanta and Négar Djavadi attempt to re-write a lesbian subject into their respective national histories through the medium of narrative fiction in their novels *Under the Udala Trees* and *Disoriental*. It is argued that through an appropriation of the Bildungsroman genre, both authors depict their protagonist’s development as inherently linked to that of the nation state, and therefore challenge the oppressive political rhetoric of their respective countries. Furthermore, the didactic aspect of the Bildungsroman genre enables both Okparanta and Djavadi to challenge their respective audiences and promote a process of self-reflection, particularly focused on subverting Western and Colonial influences modulating present understandings of Nigeria and Iran’s LGBTQ+ community. Lastly, the homonormative endings of both novels- in their deliberate embrace of motherhood- is briefly discussed in reference to queer temporality and authorial intention.

**Mara Curechian** completed her MA Joint Honours in Psychology and English at the University of St Andrews in 2018 and is currently working towards her MSc in US Literature at the University of Edinburgh. Her research interests revolve around the ways through which queerness interacts with the domestic space, family unit and national identity.