



(Inter)Disciplinary Bodies Conference
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Book of Abstracts

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(Inter)Disciplinary Bodies



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A Critical Phenomenology of Voice: Intervocality and Possibilities for Vocal Justice

ANN CAHILL ¹, CHRISTINE HAMEL ²

Elon University, North Carolina, USA ¹
Boston University School of Theatre, USA ²

Abstract ID: 10

The ideas developed in this paper emanate from a multi-year, cross-disciplinary project that brings together insights from two usually distant fields of inquiry: philosophy and voice/speech training and performance.

We introduce a critical phenomenology of voice that emphasizes vocal identity as both a deep feature of the self and as always emanating from and embedded in human relationality. As we reject conceptualizations of voice centering the human subject as autonomous and individuated, we argue that human vocalizations are always marked by the other. The intersubjectivity of vocalizations, which we term “intervocality,” raises questions concerning vocal (in)justice: how the soundedness of human vocality is implicated in, and can be used to counter, systemic inequalities.

Previous philosophical treatments of the voice have insufficiently recognized its intersubjectivity, and thus its social, political, and ethical import. Our commitments, alternatively, frame human vocality as irreducibly intersubjective. We argue that to be a voiced human being is to be intervocal, a term referring to the fact that the material phenomenon of human vocality always emanates from, takes place in the context of, and is sonorously marked by human relations. Human voices - their timbres, prosodies and dynamics – bear the sonic marks not only of the material environment in which they occur, but of previous vocal interactions, dense social and political networks, and the human embodied subjects who receive them. We do not reject the close relationship between the voice and the individual self; instead, we seek to emphasize the existential relevance of the voice to the self as embedded and enmeshed in relationality, and to highlight the sonorous aspects of specific social spaces.

To attend to the social conditions out of which voices emerge, an ethics of voice that counters vocal injustice and its effects is necessary. We argue that dominant Western culture is marked by distinctly unjust soundscapes characterized by unjust distributions of vocal social goods and listening and vocal practices that shore up systemic inequalities. We seek to intervene by introducing new concepts that push back against the ways in which vocal capacities are marshalled to reify and perpetuate various forms of injustice. In so doing we offer the concept of respiratory responsibility, which highlights the phenomenon of breath as essential to voice and as relational material that carries with it the effects of social practices, policies, and norms. Additionally, we argue that vocal generosity - grounded in Rosalyn Diprose’s notion of corporeal generosity - can be a starting point for the development of such an approach.

Bios

Ann J. Cahill, is Professor of Philosophy at Elon University and is the co-author of *Sounding Bodies: Identity, Injustice, and the Voice*. Her research interests lie at the intersection of feminist theory and philosophy of the body, and she has published on topics such as miscarriage, beautification, and sexual assault.

Christine Hamel, Assistant Professor of Voice and Acting at Boston University School of Theatre, and co-author, with Cahill, of *Sounding Bodies: Identity, Injustice, and the Voice*.

A Literal or A Non-Literal Futurology? The Bringing Back of Cosmism, Our Loved Ones and Our Heroes

LAWRENCE G W REILLY

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 126

A presentation describing the ideology of Cosmism that discusses the dilemmas involved in the potential phenomena of resurrecting dead bodies and minds when looking forward towards the advent of a hypothetical Kardeshevian Type II civilization.

Bio

I am a 63 year old 2nd year part-time PGR studying Comparative Literature focusing on early 20th century European utopian literature.

“Because the Stomach is Offended”: Ingestion, Expulsion and Vertigo as Embodied Crisis

ANINDYA RAYCHAUDHURI

University of St Andrews, Scotland

Abstract ID: 22

Described as the sensation that ‘you or everything around you is spinning’, vertigo is a very common symptom that may affect up to 40% of adults at some point in their lives. The wider project of which this talk is a part is attempting to produce the first cultural history of vertigo. Incorporating voices of people who live with vertigo as well as medical accounts from the antiquity to the present, I explore the connections between vertigo-as-metaphor and vertigo-as-lived experience. As defined by the NHS, vertigo is the feeling that ‘you or everything around you is spinning’; it disrupts our ability to locate our and define our bodies in the world. In forcing a shift in perspective, however, it also encourages us to look at our bodies and the world in different ways. In this talk, then, I use the idea of ingestion and expulsion to explore how vertigo effects an embodied crisis – both literally for the body that has to live with material vertigo, and metaphorically for a culture that is obsessed with vertigo-as-metaphor. Borrowing from Julia Kristeva’s writings on the abject, I explore how physicians like John Jones (1701) conceptualise vertigo as an index for a disordered relationship between the head and the stomach. I connect these ideas to contemporary medical understandings of food and drink triggers such as salt, caffeine and alcohol. I explore how vertigo is evoked in cultural representations of various forms of ingestion such as alcohol and drug consumption – such as the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson and the art of Nicole Eisenman, James Ensor and Vincent Van Gogh. I argue that ingestion can be metaphorised as leading to a deeply vertiginous, existential, and embodied crisis.

Bio

Anindya Raychaudhuri is Senior Lecturer at the University of St Andrews. He is the author of *Homemaking: Radical Nostalgia and the Construction of a South Asian Diaspora* and *Narrating South Asian Partition: Oral History, Literature, Cinema*. He was a 2016 BBC/AHRC New Generation Thinker and is writing a cultural history of vertigo.

Better Close Than Never

DENISE BURGE

University of Cincinnati, USA

Abstract ID: 52A

Our proposal includes a paper, film clips and presentation of related props created by Denise Burge, Lisa Siders and Jenny Ustick, under the moniker The Maidens of the Cosmic Body Running. Our work addresses the complexities of nostalgia and how it manifests in our bodily behaviors. The Maidens are fictional characters that act out our cultural romance with the natural world, embodying longing and sensual attachment. 'Nature' is often the object onto which our deepest desires and fears are projected. Taking instruction from the adage that 'absence makes the heart grow fonder'; it serves the Maidens' naive purpose to distance themselves as far as possible from the object of their adoration. Filming natural spaces, then re-processing that imagery multiple times, accomplishes the effect of 'relaxion' [sic] on the viewer- a synthetic experience that involves the narcotic effects of gazing at a screen. As the artists behind the Maidens, we critique this romantic delusion, while simultaneously creating a seductive environment into which viewers are drawn. Our work is often shown in gallery exhibitions; in these environments, we put the viewers into physical positions that make them part of a tableau - both viewing and being viewed by other visitors, as "cooperating" bodies. Our installations often have a spa-like ambience, with comfortable furniture, soft handmade rugs, handwoven surfaces, ambient sound, and perfumed air. Our films fuse heavily distorted video with animation, often abstracting the source imagery into a sort of 'video poultice' projected onto and surrounding the viewers' bodies. One's intuitive physiological knowledge of the language of comfort is exploited by our work, as we aim to balance seduction with interrogation. Our most recent project is a 'soft rock opera' sung by the Maidens, set in a hotel room that becomes a theater of irrational devotion. Inspired by the trope of the 'moon over the river', the work foregrounds bodies distorted by video and animation, as well as augmented and extended by 'relaxion tools' such as handmade and printed kaftan costumes, ceramic jewelry, perfume, sculptural props, and even a custom cocktail. All elements were created in the spirit of imagining and fantasizing about moon-and river-type forms, feelings, sounds, and images and their effect on our "inner waters". The hotel was also a site for an interactive exhibition that included performances by viewers. The relaxion tools were presented and sold in an adjacent tongue-in-cheek 'boutique'. Our ultimate intention is to infuse pleasure and even humour with a self-awareness of participation in our melodrama. In the past, we have presented at three International Society for Utopian Studies conferences, discussing our projects in terms of utopian problematics. Our work is well suited for this conference because of our method of foregrounding the bodily experience, as we demonstrate the physiological complex attached to nature- nature best experienced at a distance, so that we are not reminded of our abject place within it.

Bio

Denise Burge received her MFA in Painting from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1991, and since has taught at the New York State College of Ceramics and the University of Cincinnati, where she is a Professor of Art. She teaches courses that range from seminars on film theory to fiber art and animation. She has received multiple Ohio Arts Council Awards for Individual Artists and has been awarded competitive, funded residencies at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts, at the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito California, and the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. Recently Burge combines solo work in the quilt and paint media with collaborative work in video and installation. In 2022, her collaborative group Maidens of the Cosmic Body Running conducted a funded year-long residency at Cincinnati's Summit Hotel as a part of the FotoFocus Biennial. A short film from that residency entitled Better Close Than Never will have its world premiere at the Fotogenia Festival of FilmPoetry in Mexico City in November of 2023. Burge has an upcoming residency at The Studios of Key West in May of 2024, as well as continuing solo and group exhibitions. She is also currently working on a collaborative graphic novel about the 19th century journalist Lafcadio Hearn, and completed a funded research trip to Japan to collect materials about the subject.

Bewitching Bodies In The Dionysiaca

MAX HALLAM

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 02

I would like to contribute a short paper analysing the Dionysiaca (the Ancient Greek epic poem) and its portrayal of the body of the satyr Ampelos, first as an object of desire for the eponymous deity and then as an object of worship through his divine transformation.

This paper (approx 2000-3000 words) would focus on Books 10-12, comparing the language used to describe the body before and after Ampelos's death and resurrection. It would explore the question of how bodies are valued by juxtaposing Dionysus's fear that the beautiful young satyr will be stolen from him by another jealous god against the jubilation that in death, transformed, Ampelos's blood and body have become a thing of delight for all people to share in and enjoy. It would also touch on how Ampelos is portrayed in contrast to the usual far more grotesque depictions of satyrs (including within the text itself), and comment on the wider implications of that choice (e.g. with regards to queer love).

Bio

Max Hallam's writing sets myth and history against contemporary social issues. He is a script reader for the International Screenwriters' Association, and is currently studying for a PhD at Brunel University London.

Biologically Determined Immateriality: Trans Bodies in Mainstream Video Games

ROBIN LONGOBARDI ZINGARELLI

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 48C

Video games, as a pervasive medium, offer a significant potential for self-exploration through character customisation practices (Waggoner, 2009; Klevjer, 2022), and for the representation of marginalised identities (Malkowski & Russworm, 2017). In recent years, mainstream role-playing video games have begun to include the option to customise characters' secondary sex characteristics regardless of their phenotype (male/female). While such design features have been occasionally discussed as trans-inclusive (Ross, 2021; Quinn, 2023; Williams, 2023; Smit, 2024), I argue that the current state of customisation options is rooted in biologically deterministic notions of sex and gender (Raymond, 1994; Greene 2020), thereby reinforcing a binary framework within body type, genitalia, and gender identity.

This appears in open contradiction not only with trans theory (Butler, 2011; Halberstam, 2018; Stryker, 2017) but also with the possibilities offered by digital customisation, which often feature a much broader depth to customise and express aspects other than gender (e.g., fighting skills, magic, conceptualisation of race). Furthermore, in these games, secondary sex characteristics have little to no impact on the gameplay, leading to question the reasons behind the inclusion of trans-related features. Aside from the disservice this causes to trans individuals, fostering a limited and inauthentic representation of their experience (Ruberg, 2019), game designers are also limiting their creative potential and the consistency within their world building.

In this presentation, I examine the games *Cyberpunk 2077*, *The Sims 4*, *Hogwarts Legacy*, and *Baldur's Gate 3* focusing on the character customisation options in relation to sex and gender, the paratextual elements surrounding transgender inclusion, the reception among transgender players, and the relation between the game's gender system and worldbuilding. I propose that transgender customisation options in these cases are contradictory. While the video game medium has the potential to include a greater range of customisation options for gender identity, game designers mainly choose to default to a biologically determined binary system. In so doing, mainstream video games carry the risk of exploiting transgender experiences for audience engagement – given the widespread diffusion of the transgender debate in the media (Halberstam, 2018; Faye, 2021), instead of promoting more authentic representation. I suggest that including character creation system that go beyond the gender binary could provide new creative design strategies, alongside more authentic spaces for political representation.

Bio

Robin Longobardi Zingarelli is a PhD student in Games Design. In his research, he focuses on transgender and gender-diverse subjectivities in video games both in a mainstream and independent context. Alongside academia, he has been working as an independent game designer, combining game design to cultural heritage studies and history.

Bio-Slavery and Neo-Cannibalism of the Human Body Shop: The Politics of Organ Transplantation in Manjula Padmanabhan's Harvest

ADITI BARMAN ROY

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India

Abstract ID: 66

This paper examines the commodification of Third-World bodies for organ trade and transplantation in Manjula Padmanabhan's dystopian play, *Harvest* (1998). Padmanabhan's futuristic play, set in 2010 Bombay, speculates a world in which a US-based multinational corporation called InterPlanta Services offers sophisticated medical services like organ transplants, including whole body transplants, to its wealthy, ageing and sick clients. These bodies and organs are purchased and commodified from impoverished racial subjects in different parts of the world who are compelled to participate in such cannibalistic economic transactions for the sake of a comfortable lifestyle. In this context, by examining the narrative through Nancy Scheper-Hughes' concept of 'neo-cannibalism', this paper will argue that in millennial capitalism, human organs from Third-World countries are considered not to be produced from labour but can be negotiated for capital. Therefore, the Third-World individual is seduced into selling his spare organs- like a kidney or cornea- to secure a comfortable lifestyle, producing a new kind of labour centered around biocapital (Sundar Rajan 2006).

Tracing the total objectification of the third-world body as flesh within the context of neo-colonialism, this paper engages with Foucauldian biopolitics (1976) and Agamben's concept of the *Homo Sacer* (1998) to examine how such a global industry of organ trade is legally sanctioned, economically profitable and ethically justified under neocolonial markets of biopolitical governance. After discussing the biopolitical dynamics of organ harvesting in the given narrative, the paper argues how the impoverished subjects in the play (like Om, Ma, etc.) have internalized such mechanisms of violence for the sake of basic survival needs. By further engaging with Achille Mbembe's concept of necropolitics (2019), the paper highlights how new relations of power emerge under neoliberal global markets by exercising the power of deaths, deeming the racialized Third-World body as fetishized market commodities for desire and consumption. One way of achieving this is through constant medical surveillance and absolute ownership of the subject's bodies. Hence, by drawing references from the play, the paper highlights the ubiquity of such a medical gaze in the narrative that disciplines the characters into certain standards of normative behaviour to benefit the wealthy clients paying for their services. This relationship between constant medical surveillance and Third-World vulnerability will be studied through Foucault's (2003, 2010, 2012), Bauman's (2013) and Lyon's (2001, 2018) perspectives of surveillance. Furthermore, the play's critique of such forms of predatory capitalism bordering on bio-slavery will be studied from the perspectives of Sara Wasson's transplantation horror (2020) and global bioethics.

Finally, this study aims to situate the practice of Third-World organ trade within the framework of global capitalism and initiate a discussion on the legal, moral and bioethical debates concerning the Third-World commodification of bodies for organ trade.

Keywords: Neo-cannibalism, commodification, Third-World organs, biocapital, global capitalism, biopolitics, *Homo Sacer*, surveillance.

Bio

Aditi Barman Roy is currently working as a doctoral student in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Roorkee, India. Her doctoral research primarily focuses on the intersections of medical humanities and posthumanism in speculative fiction. Her research interests include posthumanism, animal studies, medical humanities and science and technology studies. She has presented her work on posthumanism, AI ethics and other related topics at national and international conferences.

“Black at Heart”:Asian Americans and Spectral Whiteness in Paul Beatty’s “The White Boy Shuffle” and “Tuff”

MEENA VENKATARAMANAN

Brown University, USA

Abstract ID: 60

The question of Asian Americans’ relationship to whiteness — and relatedly, to Blackness — has generated a spectrum of responses: some that theorize Asian Americans as “honorary white people” and others that affirm the proximity of the group to other people of color, including Black Americans. Jay Caspian Kang contends that self-identifying Asian Americans are part of the “multicultural elite,” primarily made up of white liberals who are “upwardly mobile and overeducated” and similarly class-privileged Asian Americans who aspire to “become as white as white will allow” by attaining “the spoils of full whiteness” while making a point to verbally express solidarity with Blackness. In doing so, he theorizes whiteness as an epistemology rooted not in race but in class. Some Afropessimist scholars, including Frank B. Wilderson III, go a step further than Kang in contending that even despite the multicultural elite bending over backwards to ally themselves with Blackness through both performative gestures and more substantial acts of solidarity, these non-Black people of color — including Asian Americans — are still ultimately what he calls racist “junior partners” to white people.

Prompted by Kang and Wilderson’s analyses, I theorize whiteness not as one half of a Black-white binary but rather as a spectrum along which Asian Americans may identify, placing Kang’s “full whiteness” at one end of the spectrum and Blackness at the other end. Considering Black American author Paul Beatty’s satirical novels *The White Boy Shuffle* (1996) and *Tuff* (2000), namely their depictions of Asian and Asian American characters, sports, and aesthetics, this paper argues that Asian Americans are racially constructed and positioned as closer to Blackness than to whiteness on the spectrum, revealing the potential of cross-racial connections through placing the two groups in proximity and hinting at the novel’s implications for real-world Afro-Asian American solidarity.

This paper intervenes in discussions of bodies and the “afterlife of slavery” by interrogating Asian American bodies’ positionality in relation to Black bodies and anti-Blackness, and Afro-Asian American solidarity’s futuristic potential to both Black and Asian American communities in the face of an ongoing “afterlife of slavery.” In doing so, it complicates Afropessimist notions of Black social death by analyzing how Paul Beatty’s use of humor and satire creates an affirmative vision for both communities, and negotiates the relationality of Black and Asian American bodies and their generative convergence.

Bio

Meena Venkataramanan is a doctoral student in English at Brown University, where she focuses on the intersection of contemporary Asian American and Black American literature. She holds an MPhil from the University of Cambridge and an AB from Harvard University.

Black Intersex, Transgender, and Gender Diverse Communities and Their Resistance

NEPANTLA CANIZZO

Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston USA

Abstract ID: 125

In this paper I highlight Black intersex, transgender, and gender diverse (ITGD) populations and their resistance strategies. ITGD communities experience stigmatization, marginalizations, and structural har in U.S. society. For Black ITGD communities, anti-Black racism adds and additional layer of oppression which has historically not been centered in mainstream or academic discussions of ITGD struggles. This paper demonstrates the anti-Black racism Black ITGD communities experience in the U.S., specifically through historical and current erasure and exclusion. First, I introduce the harm experienced by intersex and transgender communities more broadly, and then distinguish the additional oppression these communities face when they are Black. I will conclude with Black ITGD resistance methodologies and structural interventions as solutions. Black trans* studies, Black queer theory, Black feminist theory, anti-racist scholarship, quantitative data, queer theory, critical race theory, autobiographies, interviews, documentaries, and BIPOC queer culture are utilized to frame and analyze such oppression and solutions.

Bio

Nepantla Canizzo (they/elle/we) is an MPH student at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. Nepantla's research interests center 2SLGBTQAI+ communities with a focus on BIPOC, immigrant, and disabled health. Through their concentration in Women, Gender, and Health, they are interested in addressing structural/interpersonal racism and discrimination.

Black Women's Agency in Virtual Spaces: Using Parafiction, Refusal, and Experimental Ethnography in Gaming Experiences and Mechanics

CHANTAL EYONG

University of Southern California, USA

Abstract ID: 110

This abstract presents a series of mixed media works I am developing to examine the agency of Black women within the realm of video games. Drawing inspiration from Tina Campt's concept of refusal and Ruha Benjamin's work on racialized algorithms, the series explores experimental interventions within game mechanics, focusing particularly on the revive mechanic in many games. By interrogating notions of agency within gaming contexts, the project aims to envision and enact modes of refusal within virtual spaces.

Central to this exploration is the utilization of parafictional techniques, derived from ethnographic data collected from Black women gamers immersed in virtual worlds, particularly *The Sims*. Through a blend of documentary, experimental ethnography, and theoretical inquiry, the series proposes innovative gaming controls and algorithmic interventions. These interventions serve as both a critique of existing paradigms and a catalyst for envisioning alternative narratives and possibilities within gaming culture.

In one experiment, I take interviews I conduct with *Black Simmers* and use the words to create fixed textual data sets. Using these closed data sets, I create poetry accompanied with visuals. In this experiment, I seek ways to create affect using only the words from the interviewees.

In another interactive work, I examine what it would look like for a character to reject, acquiesce, or struggle to respond to player commands. I open up ways of considering the relationship between who has agency within the player/character relationship.

By foregrounding the experiences and perspectives of Black women, the project seeks to challenge dominant representations within video games while highlighting diverse identities and modes of agency. Through its multidisciplinary approach, this series endeavours to contribute to ongoing conversations surrounding race, gender, and representation in digital media, while also pushing the boundaries of what gaming can encompass.

Keywords: gaming controls, ethnography, Tina Campt, Intervention, Virtuality, Artificial Intelligence, Black women, documentary, refusal

Bio

Chantal Eyong is a writer and media producer in Los Angeles, CA. Her work examines memory, erasure, biopolitics, and identity in relation to African diasporas. Her interests are in how community stories and culture are preserved through/with migration and how abstractions can inform a way of knowing. Her work has been featured on PBS and national/international film festivals. The short documentary she co-produced, "Thailand Untapped," received a regional Emmy nomination in 2013. Her screenplays have received placements in screenwriting competitions, including ScreenCraft and the Atlanta Film Screenplay Competition. Chantal holds an MFA in Screenwriting from the University of California Riverside and is a Ph.D. student in the Media Arts + Practice program at the University of Southern California.

Bodies in a Medieval Church

Laura Agustin

Historian and Walking Tour Guide

Guided Tour

“Angels without knees, mermaids with two tails and Margaret of Antioch in the dragon’s belly: Bodies in a medieval church”

St. Margaret’s church in central Uxbridge displays a wealth of bodies from many periods in monuments, windows and statues. There are symbols now so mainstream we don’t think about where they came from, like the war memorial, and characters that have bodies but inhabit other worlds – or do they have bodies at all? Which kind of suffering death suited which crime? Was it wrong to outlive three husbands? These are questions you can think about in a walk around the church and down medieval Windsor Street.

Bio

Laura Agustin is a cultural historian and walking-tour guide in London, long known as The Naked Anthropologist. On her walking tours, she tells histories omitted from the canon by focusing on gender, sex and class. More at www.lauraagustin.com

Bodies in Anthropological Intentions of Colonial Photography: Portman's Archive of "Typical Heads of Andamanese"

RAMSHA RIZWAN

Abstract ID: 61

The paper looks at one of the volumes of an archive produced during 1890s by Maurice Vidal Portman when he was a British colonial officer stationed in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The attempt is known to be one of the most ambitious projects undertaken as part of the colonial administrations attempts to promote anthropological research in colonies. The archives contain eleven large volumes of anthropometric and 'anthropological studies: and four smaller volumes of physiological data and photographs. Portman was influenced by the notion of photography as a medium to capture the immediate truth and its importance to anthropological research. He used photography extensively in his research by engaging with the different sections of techniques in anthropological research in Notes and Queries. Portman argues to use photography in the study of physiognomy asking the subject to be photographed by different angles while they are naked with full face and profile view. The paper highlights the importance of the need to look at photography's "penetrating effect" in reference to the body as well as embodied practices that resulted in the production of these images.

Bio

I have a strong background in media and anthropology, with a keen interest in using digital and creative media to tell stories about social issues and people. I graduated with high merit from University of Oxford with an MSc in Visual, Material and Museum Anthropology, with my distinction graded thesis where I explored the postcolonial reflections in photography in Northern India. I also hold a first class honours degree in journalism and communications from Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi, India. My research interests include colonial photography, museums, gender, visual anthropology.

Bodies in Place? Reflections of ‘Grown Up Children’ from Armed Forces Families

ANNE CHAPPELL¹, ELLEN MCHUGH¹ CHRISTOPHER INCE²

Brunel University London, UK¹

King's College London, UK²

Abstract ID: 40

There is a growing interest in the experiences of armed forces families. The ongoing foci in research, policy and practice is on serving members of the armed forces, veterans, and their families, including school-aged children (Walker, Selous and Misca, 2020). The Office for Students noted that children from armed forces families face ‘equality gaps and support needs’ (OfS, 2020: p.36) and the government’s Service Pupil Premium funding has been given to schools since 2011 to support the specific challenges these children face (MoD, 2021). Their childhoods are often characterised in discourse as both homogenous and deficit. One key reason for the deficit view relates to the high levels of mobility experienced by these children as a result of their parent’s occupation. We know very little about these childhood experiences from the perspective of those now grown up: they are notable by their absence.

This paper will share research that explored the auto/biographical accounts of ‘grown-up’ children from armed forces families aged between eighteen and eighty collected through questionnaires and auto/biographical interviews. The paper examines their experiences of moving from place to place: bodies that are in place, displaced, misplaced and replaced, drawing on ideas about everyday life, belonging and nostalgia. Reflections on the impact of their experiences on their lives, and those around them, provide a challenge to the characterisations of homogeneity and deficit. The evident complexity highlights the vital importance of further research with these ‘grown-ups’ to develop more detailed and nuanced understandings, generating knowledge to inform policy-making and provide support for those children who are currently having similar experiences, their families, and the adults working with them.

- Ministry of Defence (2021) Service Pupil Premium: what you need to know [accessed 12th April 2023]
- Office for Students (2020) Transforming opportunity in higher education: An analysis of 2020-21 to 2024-25 access and participation plans. London: OfS.
- Walker, Sealous and Misca (2020) Living in our shoes: Understanding the needs of UK Armed Forces families. London: MoD.

Bios

Dr Anne Chappell has been in the Department of Education since 2004, having previously worked as a teacher in five secondary schools. Since her time in the Department, Anne has undertaken the role of programme leader on both an undergraduate and PGCE course leading to Qualified Teacher Status, Department Director of Teaching and Learning and Deputy Head of Department. Anne’s PhD critically explored teachers’ professional learning and her research interests are in auto/biography, education, policy, and the experience of children, young people and professionals.

Dr Ellen McHugh is Senior Lecturer in Education in the Department of Education, Brunel University London. Ellen’s research interests focus on education and student experience; higher education and widening participation; transnationalism and belonging.

Bodies: Transdisciplinarity as a Power

LEIGH W JEROME

Relational Space

Abstract ID: Keynote and Exhibitor

Persons, society and nature exist dynamically, inherently bound together to complement and cope with emergent situations. To explore the ways that bodies live, transform, relate and die presupposes a systemic exploration of this interrelatedness, that is both individual and collective.

We delve into the spaces between the *thingness* of individual bodies – bodies being seemingly monolithic things, but always vibrating with multiples, and as a collective entity itself in flux – and the dynamics of those relational spaces, between constituent parts of bodies as sites of ‘power’ in their potentiality and agitation.

Transdisciplinarity is inclusive and transcultural. It highlights our connectivity, democratizes knowledge processes and transforms power, where power is defined as the relational ability to effect change. Transdisciplinarity engages us in reflexive dialogue that challenges individual and disciplinary assumptions.

Transdisciplinarity creates relational spaces in which humans and other bodies (environments, materials etc.) are inter-reliant and creatively (re)shaping our future. The transformation of relational dynamics toward collaboration and collective power has the potential to impact real-world, complex problems and move us to a space for reciprocal healing, on multiple scales. Power runs through our complex interconnectedness.

(Inter)Disciplinary Bodies explores the dynamics of transdisciplinarity and power, alongside complexity, understanding that collaborations and knowledge are ever-evolving co-creations. We seek to develop actionable knowledge as a catalyst for collective power and social change. We ask how we might incentivize transdisciplinarity to break free from reductive frameworks. We seek to understand fear as it relates to power including both ‘power over’ and ‘power to’. Through these explorations, we aim to co-curate a participatory exhibition that inspires new ways of knowing and collective flourishing.

Bio

Leigh W. Jerome, Ph.D., Founder and Executive Director of a non-profit gallery and forum, Relational Space Gallery. Tackling the intractable challenges of our global society requires a language of transdisciplinarity, interconnectedness and intersectionality. Collaboration between science, policy, community and the arts present crosscutting opportunities for new artistic expression, critical thinking and innovation. The mission of Relational Space is to build a more just and sustainable world inspired through art and informed by truth <https://www.relational-space.org>. Leigh is an accomplished mixed-media & installation artist, whose work has been exhibited locally, nationally and internationally, creating narrative driven installation with sculptures that are additive, mixed media compositions straddling psychological inquiry and contemporary expression. Dr. Jerome also holds a doctorate in Clinical Psychology with expertise in cross-sector/multi-disciplinary collaboration; organizational culture and behavior change; (distributed) knowledge clusters; virtual environments, telehealth; pathology; psychophysiology; empathy; gender; and, long COVID.

Relational Space is a 501c3 gallery and forum that facilitates collaborative sessions between artists, scientists, policy makers and activists – to blend silos of knowledge and co-curate immersive installations, with evidence-based narratives – to promote transformational, social change

Body, Speech, and Personal Growth: Development in "Poor Things"

IULIANA BORBELY

Partium Christian University, Oradea, Romania

Abstract ID: 95

Bella Baxter's development is similar to how self-consciousness gains independence in G.W.F. Hegel's "Lordship and Bondage" dialect, which states that an entity must meet opposition to find oneself. Likewise, Bella must encounter several opposing entities to become independent; she must enter harmful relationships because these trigger growth. The dialect proposes that one finds oneself when facing opposition. Hegel describes the dynamic between two self-consciousnesses as necessitating a fight in which neither opposing part should be destroyed because destroying the "other" would amount to self-annihilation. Thus, hierarchy develops, and one entity becomes the master, while the other is the bondsman. The latter bends his will but also becomes aware of the world being distinct. Thus, the bondsman does not need the master—the other entity—to be aware of him. This way, the hierarchy is challenged, the roles change, and both can come to see themselves. Bella Baxter's becoming fully aware of herself shows the same pattern as that of the bondsman in the dialect. The relationships that do not fit the Hegelian pattern—the father-daughter/ creator-created relationship she has with Godwin Baxter, the romantic relationship with Max McCandles, the friendship she develops with Toinette, and the odd mother-daughter connection with Swiney in the Paris brothel—benefit her development due to the different role these characters fulfil, as in Hegel's dialect the two entities are equals even though they are in a hierarchical relationship for a while. She must meet opposition to learn who and what she is. Her growth shows through movement, speech, and sophistication of thoughts. The development of her personality is synchronous with her linguistic development; therefore, by the end, her speech shows that she has become the "Hegelian master," hence, a free, independent person. As her linguistic abilities sharpen, she becomes more articulate and can formulate sophisticated thoughts. This paper aims to illustrate that Bella Baxter's evolution into a self-made woman resembles the journey of the bondsman in the Hegelian dialectic; furthermore, the progress of her linguistic abilities—charted through the lexicon and the grammar she employs, and in synchrony with her personal growth at every stage of her development as a "Hegelian entity"—is mirrored in the growing dexterity of Bella's body. Therefore, we will analyse Bella's utterances from a morphological and a syntactical point of view and map the linguistic development of the character; in addition to this, we will present her personal development of terms of the Hegelian dialectic and how these two forms of development are reflected in the movement of the character's body.

Bio

Iuliana Borbely, Senior Lecturer of English Language and Literature for the Department for Teacher Training at Partium Christian University, Oradea, Romania, specializes in film adaptation theory, English Grammar and English Teaching Methodology.

Chronic-ills: Exploring Relationality and Meaning Making Among Young Adults of Color with Idiopathic Medical Conditions

SALMAN SAFIR

University of Illinois, USA

Abstract ID: 117

The following presentation will present the both theoretical and interpretive frames, as well as the early results, of a current stage study exploring young adults of color with idiopathic medical conditions. Using an interpretive phenomenological analysis method, the study will engage critical theory and critical psychological frames-- particularly critical developmental psychology-- as its main interpretive frames in the development of understanding emerging from interviews with young adults of color.

This study will bring forward critical engagement with terms such as idiopathic that take into consideration the diverse epistemological understandings of such a term that exist outside of the hegemony of the western medical model. The existence of what may be termed a medical explanation for a condition may not provide a satisfactory explanation of a higher order reason for the presence of this condition such as why such a change has occurred in their lives-- and answer that lies in belief and meaning making systems. Thus, as exemplified through the term idiopathic, the cosmological system of an individual extends the meaning of idiopathic beyond a western medical understandings of biology to larger beliefs systems about the world and reflect ontological understandings of being beyond the idea of body that define western medicine.

Through such an approach, understanding the experiences of individuals will be opened beyond what may be traditionally be available to those detailing their experiences which may not fit within the dominant metaphors of language. The study focuses on understand how young adults of color understand the nature of their condition as well as how it affects their relationship with salient entities within their lives. While the material that emerges will be defined by what ultimately emerges in the interviews, the often marginalized experiences of young adults of color presents a reasonable expectation that a distinct set of topics related to identity and experiences of difference may emerge. For instance, one could imagine an intersection of such medical conditions being understood within power-laden narratives thus crossing experiences of conditions with ideologies such as the model minority myth or the internalization of racism. Further, how those idiopathic conditions relate consequent life changes to their cultural communities past, present, and future alters the meaning making process and impact of such conditions on their relational world changing their ability to relate and engage sources of radical hope (Mosley et al., 2020).

How these crossings such as those mentioned here occur and may be resisted present a valuable addition to care systems across medical, educational, work, and community settings. Lastly, bibliotherapy will be proposed as model through which this relational understanding and meaning making can be developed providing a source through which unknown futures can be revitalized with respect to both the value systems that have been central to the individual's sense of being across time and the growth and understanding that will continually emerge across their (idio)paths ahead.

Mosley, D. V., Neville, H. A., Chavez-Dueñas, N. Y., Adames, H. Y., Lewis, J. A., & French, B. H. (2020). Radical hope in revolting times: Proposing a culturally relevant psychological framework. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12512>

Bio

Salman Safir is a counseling psychology PhD student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he studies, together with his cherished colleagues, under the direction of Dr Helen Neville in the Liberation Lab. Prior to counseling psychology, Salman attained an MA in Divinity Studies from the University of Chicago.

Clockwork Bodies

CATRINE VAL

International Artist

Abstract ID: Keynote 5

At the heart of the Brunel University campus are a number of brutalist buildings, one of which featured as the fictional *Ludovico Medical Facility* in Stanley Kubrick's famously ultraviolent 1971 movie "A Clockwork Orange". Catrine Val, photographer and installation artist, will run a workshop throughout the conference to explore sensual and artistic experiences related to this space: expeditions into the depths of our physical selves, in performance and photography. She will focus on the subtle complexities that the film evokes, and explore the mechanics of control and freedom inherent to the human body. Catrine will share preliminary findings and images of the work on the last day of the conference in a short presentation.

Bio

Catrine Val is an international conceptual artist specializing in photography, film, and performance. She focuses on the role of women within diverse cultural and political systems, as well as their contributions to the field of philosophy. More at <https://www.catrine-val.com>

Civic Automobility: Driving White, Driving Black

MICHAEL J. SHAPIRO
University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Abstract ID: 03

The presentation is a paper, which features a reading of Dwayne LeBlanc's documentary film, *Civic*

Heeding these two observations: John Urry's, "The socialities of civil society are sustained through technologies of movement which, both literally and imaginatively connect people together over significant, complexly structured, heterogeneous distances," and Christina Sharpe's, "So much of Black intramural life and social and political work is redacted made invisible to the present and future, subtended by plantation logics, detached optics, and brutal architectures," the paper treats the way bodies, which are treated as what David Lapoujade calls "lesser existences," negotiate civic life to overcome constraints. The textual explorations – all automobility-related - include E. L. Doctorow's novel *Ragtime*, Jim Jarmusch's film *Night on Earth*, Richard Ford's novel *Be Mine*, and an extended treatment of Dwayne LeBlanc's documentary film *Civic*, which follows his African American protagonist Booker, who has returned to his old LA neighborhood. The viewer never leaves the back seat of the car as Booker drives through formerly familiar streets picking up passengers (some old acquaintances) and is schooled about the civic responsibilities associated with being Black in Los Angeles.

Bio

Michael J. Shapiro is an Emeritus Professor at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, among his publications are *Aesthetics of Equality* (Oxford UP, 2023), and *Punctuations: How the Arts Think the Political* (Duke UP, 2019).

Colonialism, Memory and Justice: The Right to Reclaim Lost Bodies

MARCUS V. A. B. DE MATOS

Brunel University London

Abstract ID: 32

Colonialism has shaped the world we live in and has built up unequal and unjust societies. In this paper I want to examine the relation between colonialism and memory in building up identities, subjecting legal subjects and destroying bodies. This relation will be discussed in both literature and legal cases. Starting from the disappearance of native peoples in poetry and history, and arriving at the body of Juan de Moraes – an eleven-year old boy killed by police officers in 2011 in Rio de Janeiro, I want to reflect on the deliverance of bodies as a form of justice. Douzinas and Warrington have claimed that a just society presupposes our capacity to reject the world as it is and to develop hope – a hope that some agency might intervene and deliver justice to this society. They suggested that an emphasis on alterity is the only way to deliver justice beyond the limits of the law – and transgressing the borders of aesthetics and authority. To claim and deliver back lost bodies might be one of the oldest forms of justice deliverance in human history. Was justice done when the Trojan King Priam, approached Achilles to take back his son's body? It is possible to do justice to Juan? To find an answer, I propose to look into Douzina's and Warrington's work on the aesthetics and ethics of justice, and compare it with Luis Alberto Warat's scholarship on mediation and aesthetics.

Bio

Lecturer in Law, Brunel University London. PhD (Birkbeck), MRes and Bachelor in Law (UFRJ). Co-leader of the Human Rights, Society and Arts Research Group. Honorary member of Institute for Brazilian Lawyers (IAB).
Twitter: @mvdematos.

Cultivating Multispecies 'Arts of Noticing' Through Earth-Care and Dance: An Ethnography

VERONICA JIMENEZ BORJA ¹, ELISA SOFIA JIMENEZ BORJA ¹

Queen's University Belfast¹

Abstract ID: 102

This paper begins with dirt under our nails and humming tickling our feet: with the body in the midst of decomposition and flourishing, ingestion and excretion. It begins with bodies in motion, crouched in a quadrupedal position facing each other, foreheads slightly touching. Each imaginatively engaged in embodying a more-than-human of their choosing. They sway gently, jerk, or shift, while releasing howls, roars, chirps, snorts, and laughter. The invitation is to let loose and 'become-with' (Haraway, 2008a:3) more-than-humans, through embodied, intimate, and performative role-play. Instead of the removed and mechanical ways in which we tend to imagine and engage with more-than-humans, this contact dance improvisation begins with fleshy, imaginative, embodiment. Human and more-than-human bodies touching through the imagination and in the flesh.

This paper is based on a multispecies ethnography of Rhiannon: an ecovillage located in Malchingui-Ecuador. The ecovillage was founded as a means of offering an alternative, kinder, more inclusive, and communal way of living in the midst of the Anthropocene. We examine the ways in which embodied, mundane, recursive, and affective life sustaining rituals of earth-care, which are central to everyday communal life in Rhiannon, activate an expanded and relational multispecies community, and open space for a sense of contingency from which speculative and hopeful worlds arise. Likewise, we explore how communal activities such as Contact Dance Improvisation offer embodied, performative, affective, and intimate world-making practices. We explore how these practices call for a "turning towards" (Bird Rose, 2011:15) more-than-humans –what Bird Rose (2011: 15) defines as "a motion towards encounter" which begins by becoming available to the affective, embodied, and experiential world of others. This invites cultivating "arts of noticing" (Tsing, 2010a:192) which involve fleshy, tactile, and visceral engagement with the self, and of the self with human and more-than-human others.

We explore how practices such as composting, commensality, and contact dance, reconfigure and entangle human and more-than-human bodies through a sense of belonging to trans-corporeal (Alaimo, 2010) webs of multispecies kinship. These practices invite an awareness of often disregarded materialities and relationalities. We ask: what kinds of affective, relational and speculative epistemics arise from these practices as they invite questions about what it means to be an entangled body amongst bodies? How does this reconfigure ethical stances in the shadow of environmental collapse in ways that reshape relationships between place, bodies, and selves?

Bio

We are a transdisciplinary pair of academics (and sisters), interested in engaging the field of environmental humanities, arts, and sciences through conversations between our respective fields. Our current collaborations include multispecies care, speculative fiction, and performativity.

Digital Embodiment: Navigating the Identity of Non-Profit Teams in the Remote Work Era

PETRA BURESOVA

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 12

This submission presents an ongoing PhD research project that aligns with the conference theme of 'work and labour.' More specifically, it focuses on the context of the non-profit sector's adaptation to the remote work era. It investigates the transformation of team dynamics, in response to the shift from physical to digital workspaces. Through this investigation, it presents an insight into how work and labour are redefined in the digital environment, and therefore contributing to the question of the evolving nature of work bodies.

Following the Covid pandemic, the traditional workspace has undergone a transformation. This was particularly evident within the non-profit sector, where the abrupt move to virtual and hybrid work has redefined the physical and metaphorical 'body' of organisations. This study explores the transformation of non-profit teams from physical entities to digital 'embodiments.' It examines how leaders navigate an environment where the 'bodies' of work, team dynamics, and leadership are fluid and dispersed across the digital space.

The transition to remote work has not only changed the geographical placement of the non-profit workforce, but it has impacted the interactions, communication, and operations of non-profit teams. Over 60% of UK non-profit organisations now operate under hybrid arrangements. This, in the absence of a shared physical space, challenges the team leaders to redefine their approach to presence, engagement, and community. This shift raises important questions about the embodiment of work and leadership in virtual environments, namely: How do leaders foster a sense of unity, purpose, and belonging when team 'bodies' are scattered across the digital space?

Using Constructivist Grounded Theory, this study focuses on the experiences of non-profit leaders and teams that are navigating the virtual and hybrid work setting. Through in-depth interviews, it examines the renewed roles of remote non-profit leaders, as the leaders aim to maintain the unity and mission-driven focus of their teams. These roles highlight the leaders' focus on team identity, fostering digital community, and ensuring the 'bodies' of their organisations remain engaged even without a physical co-location.

This research contributes to the theme of '(Inter)Disciplinary Bodies,' as it highlights the fluidity of organisational bodies in the digital space and it also tries to challenge the traditional notions of work space, presence, and community in non-profit teams. It offers insights into the strategies of non-profit leaders, who must guide their teams through the changes brought by remote work, whilst making sure that the mission of their organisations continues to be fulfilled.

Through the examination of the non-profit sector's approach to remote work, this study highlights broader themes of body, belonging, and identity in the digital era, offering perspectives on how 'bodies' of work and leadership manifest and develop in remote spaces.

Bio

I am a third-year Doctoral Researcher at Brunel Business School, as well as a Development Officer at the Centre for Economic Policy Research. I am interested in exploring the intersection of academia and professional development. My research focuses on non-profit team leadership in the remote work era.

Discipline and Freedom: Thinking Decolonization Politics in Hong Kong Through Street Workout

MAGGIE LEUNG

The University of Hong Kong

Abstract ID: 62

Street workout (SW) communities first emerged in Hong Kong in the early 2010s. The post-protest and pandemic era witnessed a surge in this form of group outdoor exercise that uses one's own bodyweight with any available infrastructure to train for great physique and agile, spectacular movements. Nowadays classes and practices take place in public parks all over Hong Kong every evening. As a beginner of SW, I will examine the somaesthetic, cultural and conceptual aspects of my experience to suggest that SW's popularity represents some forming ideals and aspirations arising from ordinary people's everyday life, as the movement of the body is simultaneously personal and social. I will begin with the fascinating paradox inherent in SW and any kind of systematic training of the body: the submission of the body to a new external discipline brings a new sense of freedom through a renewed understanding of and relation to the body. Some of the new imaginations incited by the praxis of SW are: authenticity and possibilities of one's own being, beginning with the materiality of the body; meaningful and free association of individuals that together develop regularity of life in some forms; organic formation of participatory community that constitutes its structure, knowledge and value system etc. In these imaginations, pleasure plays an indispensable role for its connotations of "freedom" and "autonomy", which also make it a site of inspiration for radical politics. On top of this is the somatic nature of the pleasure of SW, which cannot be purchased and consumed, that gives it the immunity to monetary or symbolic capitalization. This paper will conclude by proposing that the creation of new norms in collective and public everyday life according to our ideals and desires is the most pressing political task today.

Bio

Currently Lecturer of Hong Kong Studies, HKU. Her recent research subjects include ballroom dance, popular culture, Hong Kong English poetry to social movements and all have their roots in her long-time concern for the politics and aesthetics of everyday life of the ordinary.

Disembodying Discourses and Embodied Practices: Cinemagoing Audiences in Colonial India and Post-Colonial Pakistan

SHEHRAM MOKHTAR

Northwestern University, Qatar

Abstract ID: 105

This paper examines the discourses on cinemagoing audiences in colonial India and post-colonial Pakistan, which lumped them into amorphous categories such as educated and illiterate, classes and masses, common man, and working class. These discourses disembodied flesh and blood audiences and disregarded their lived practices. The paper examines official documents and journalistic accounts to highlight the problem of categorization, which disregards the heterogeneity of people and their diverse lived practices of cinemagoing, often placing them in social hierarchies of acceptable and unacceptable groups, based on their class, race, or gender. Through oral history interviews and other published accounts of various individuals, the paper then traces the accounts of a diverse group of people's cinemagoing activities and their engagement with the film exhibition spaces, films, and other people within their socio-cultural contexts. As opposed to the discourses that constitute the audience through the image or the audience consumed by the image in the darkness of the film exhibition spaces, the paper highlights cinemagoing as an embodied practice, particularly in the South Asian context.

Bio

Shehram Mokhtar is an Assistant Professor in Residence at Northwestern University in Qatar. His research explores the intersection of gender and sexuality and film, media, and visual culture in South Asia and beyond. He has published his research articles in *Feminist Media Studies*, *Visual Communication*, *Sexualities*, and *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*.

Distorted Boundaries of the Body: A Critical Phenomenology of Fatphobia

HALIE ELIZABETH WHITE

University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Abstract ID: 67

Humans constitute the precarious position of being a bodily object in the world of others, and yet inhabit that body with a richly felt subjective experience. Being of this nature, our meaning-making of the bodily object is also lived out subjectively and takes on a phenomenal or felt quality. Using critical phenomenology, this paper tracks two boundaries of the body – that of the physical body and the felt body. These boundaries have cognitive parallels, respectively, in the body image and body schema, and are thus bound up in our meaning-making processes about our own bodies. Importantly, however, our lived body is embedded in intersubjective meaning-making structures which other bodily subjects contribute to; this makes up our social world. Further, that meaning-making is directed at, among other things, our own body and bodies like it. Our joint attention on objects in the shared world, seeing how others interact with them physically, linguistically, etc., teaches us something about how we should incorporate such objects into our own meaning structures. When joint attention is placed on our own body, it is incorporated into our body image as an understanding of the body as an object, which then goes on to inform our body schema (i.e. bodily subjectivity and the felt body). This paper will thus focus on the hijacking of our shared meaning-making through oppressive narratives that are enacted and mediated through the body. Body-based stereotypes and stigmas lead to distortions to one's own bodily subjectivity. Living in a body under scrutiny makes action, movement, and navigation of their socially hostile environment experientially disorienting. These issues will be explored specifically in the case of weight stigma and fatphobic stereotyping that encourage a somatic disassociation (disembodiment) from the fat parts of our body. The result is a dissonance between the physical boundary and the felt boundary of the body. The meanings that are intersubjectively attached to the very flesh of the body, and thus internalized, lead to a distorted view of how our body can interact with the world. Thus, fatphobic stereotyping of laziness, incompetence, and immorality translates phenomenally for fat folk into a view of their world as one of obstacles – their body being the main one. Instead of living through the body, the body becomes disowned due to its saturation with negative meaning. This leads to seeing their 'field of affordances' in the phenomenal form of 'I-cannot.' The world feels like an action space of negative potential. How we relate to the very parts of ourselves as objective bodies, which our shared meaning-making structures have caused us to be alienated from, is thus lived out in our subjective bodies in a world of action among other meaning-makers. In this way, social issues are not just abstract but are lived out in our physical bodies. Therefore, a genuine response to oppressive narratives requires corporeally attuned solutions. This critical phenomenology of fatphobia can give us some of the conceptual tools we need to inform such solutions.

Bio

I am a current PhD student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I study comparative approaches to embodiment in Indian philosophy, phenomenology, embodied cognition, and feminist philosophy. My current interest is in bodily subjectivity and is informed by lived experiences of social issues and cognitive pathologies.

Draw Your (Ideal) Body: An Interactive Experience and Discussion

ANNE-METTE HERMANS

Tilburg University, Netherlands

Abstract ID: 26

Workshop: Draw yourself. Regardless of your artistic abilities, draw how you see your body: what are your defining characteristics and what is important to feature in this drawing? After finishing this first picture, draw an 'ideal' body; what does this look like and how (dis)similar is this to your first drawing? Finally, consider how you felt and what you thought during this exercise – please write all of this down.

The results of the interactive experience will be linked to an ongoing collaborative project into social media literacy where we ask primary school children (aged 10-12) to draw both their own bodies and what they believe to be 'ideal' bodies, and to verbally elaborate on these pictures. This draw-and-write technique, particularly when coupled with elicitation interviews, has been established as an effective participatory method when engaging children in research (Bradding & Horstman, 1999; Horstman et al., 2008). Drawing may offer a way to express certain elements that can be hard to convey verbally and also focuses on the lived experience of the artists, thereby empowering them (Driessnack, 2006; Martin, 2019). For the collaborative project, we visit schools with a diverse population in terms of children's socio-economic status and ethnic background to ensure an appreciation of cross-cultural constructions of (ideal) bodies. Yet, any differences may be diminished in light of globalization, migration, and mass media which have emphasized traditionally 'western' thin-ideals for girls and muscular-ideals for boys (Craig, 2021). Lastly, we pay particular attention to socio-cultural contextual factors as these may influence the children's human figure drawings (Cox, 2012).

Bio

Anne-Mette works as an Assistant Professor at Tranzo, Tilburg University. Her research is largely qualitative in nature and focuses on (consumerist) notions of malleable bodies and cosmetic procedures in particular. She is also the Chair of the Dutch center for expertise on cosmetic procedures.

Educated Dolls: How Digital Beauty Communities Impact Cosmetic Surgery Education and Decision-Making Among Female Consumers

TOKONI UTI

Robert Gordon University, UK

Abstract ID: 27

In the 21st century, consumers have easier access to cosmetic surgical procedures than ever before. \$16.7 billion was spent on cosmetic surgeries in the United States in 2020 alone and with greater access to information online, as well as greater financial accessibility, this figure is expected to rise.

Given the risks associated with cosmetic surgery and its possible impact on physical and mental health, medical professionals have espoused the importance of informed decision-making on the part of consumers. It has been found that many consumers turn to online sources, including closed beauty-centered communities, to seek information as part of their decision-making process.

This study sought to determine the level of information that cosmetic surgery consumers had regarding the procedures they had undergone. Interviews were conducted with 13 female participants recruited from Reddit who had previously undergone cosmetic procedures. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes during which they recounted their decision-making process.

A majority of participants were able to describe, often in highly technical detail and employing medical terminology, how their procedures were performed and what they entailed. This would imply that most participants were educated regarding their procedures and made informed decisions.

However, over a third of the participants noted that they underwent multiple procedures at the same time, which, in some cases, has been linked with greater risks to patients. Additionally, a majority of the participants noted that they were considering further cosmetic work, with varying degrees of action already taken.

Within the wider media, repeated cosmetic procedures are often framed in a negative light and as an indication of a lack of education regarding the risks. Additionally, the risks and potential complications of cosmetic work are often sensationalized. However, the results of the study suggest that even among educated and well-informed consumers, repeat and multiple procedures are not uncommon. This potentially challenges the implication that consumers being educated regarding the risks of cosmetic procedures deters them from undertaking them.

Additionally, the results indicate that members of beauty-focused communities online are educated, often to a high degree, about the inner workings of cosmetic procedures. This evidences the usefulness of such communities during the information search stage of the consumer lifecycle and their importance in consumer education.

Bio

Tokoni Uti is a PhD candidate at the School of Creative and Cultural Business at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland. She holds a master's degree in Corporate Communication and Public Affairs and an MPhil in Communication, Media, and Marketing. Her research interests include digital media, beauty, and consumer behaviour.

Embodied Research of Sports in Political and Post-Social Movement Spaces

KYLIE CHIU YEE LUI

The University of Hong Kong

Abstract ID: 31

This paper presents a study on the embodied experiences of researchers within the context of sports and personal politics emerging from significant social movements in Hong Kong. The research spans over a year of ethnographic engagement at two field sites: a fitness club initiated by a local pro-democratic political group and a Chinese martial arts centre with pro-establishment leanings. The researcher's active participation in the weekly physical routines facilitated membership and integration within these communities. The project delves into how these organizations leverage their distinct political identities, adopt resonant languages, and claim public spaces by these organisations to articulate and channel personal and informal politics through the medium of sports.

Central to the paper is the argument that the researcher's body serves as an ethnographic site in its own right, undergoing transformative experiences that encompass not only the physical changes such as strengthened muscle and increased endurance but also the emotional spectrum experienced in the pursuit of physical limits. This research addresses the oft-overlooked intersection of social movement and Anthropology, proposing an embodied methodology as a means to deepen the subfield and potentially reconcile disparate areas of study. The findings provide insights into the role of researchers' bodies in generating empirical data and raise critical questions concerning identity and the politics of the body.

Keywords: Post-social movement, Sports, Identities, Ethnography

Bio

Kylie is a PhD candidate at the University of Hong Kong. She obtained a BA in History (HKU) and an MPhil in Gender Studies (Cantab). Kylie's doctoral research explores how the self-making of the body has become politicised in a linkage of personal (embodies) strength and collective (critical) power.

Embodiment and Precarity: The Value and Discardment of Women's Performing Bodies

SARAH JACKSON

University of Alberta, Canada

Abstract ID: 64C

This paper deals with the precarity of dancers' bodies in nineteenth-century advertising art, the ephemerality of the moment of performance reflected in a vanishing in the artwork of nineteenth-century music-hall women. In the late-nineteenth century music-hall, the individual celebrity of the performer ruled the stage: "the turn defines the performance as an individual, autonomous act, the untransferable possession of a single person" (Koritz 425). The "high-profile female celebrity performer" was "a significant and powerful figure" and "contemporary ideas and concerns about gender and society were reflected, refracted and resisted" in her performances (Hindson 2007, 3). The sociocultural context of both music-hall entertainment and its advertisement result in an ephemeral power of the body, contingent to the moment of its embodiment on stage. When Louise Weber (1865-1929), known as *La Goulue*, the first cancan dancer of the Moulin Rouge, died at the age of 62 she was destitute and unknown, despite having been proclaimed the "Queen of Montmartre". Her body-in-performance was of precarious value: when it began to fail, it was discarded. Questions regarding the ephemerality of both *La Goulue's* performances and her value as a body serve as a potent framing when observing how women music-hall dancers were presented in the lithograph advertising posters of the day. This presentation will explore how the body of the dancer is valued (and discarded), looking at the lithographic posters of music-hall dancers, such as Jules Chéret's *Bal au Moulin Rouge* (1889) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's *Moulin Rouge: La Goulue* (1891) and *La Goulue arriving at the Moulin Rouge* (1892). How these posters encapsulate a quality of ephemerality, transparency, of vanishing – a body which is both present and not present, and the precarious nature of their value.

Bio

Sarah Jackson is a PhD student in Performance Studies at the University of Alberta. Her research encompasses visual culture, gender and performance, archival practices, and feminist theory. She is a practicing designer with a master's degree in visual design and an award-winning and internationally acclaimed burlesque performer.

Embodying Movement of Emotion: An Exhibition of 3D Printed Heads Depicting Posed Facial Expressions

AMRINDER SINGH ROMANA

Leeds Beckett University, UK

Abstract ID: 13

Exhibition

In the dynamic field of digital animation and artistic innovation, the representation of human emotions through facial expressions is a pivotal frontier for exploration. This proposal introduces an exhibition titled "Embodying Movement of Emotion," which aims to transcend the boundaries between cutting-edge digital animation technology and tangible, physical art by showcasing a series of 3D printed heads. Each head represents the synthesis of a maximum range of movement as a reference, rather than a definitive definition of an expression, derived from the Facial Action Coding System (FACS).

Background:

The genesis of this project lies in extensive research into digital animation, particularly the development of a Parametric Framework and Tool that utilises FACS to enable precise control over facial movements in 3D characters. This tool, designed to enhance digital characters' authenticity and emotional depth, is the foundation for translating digital expressions into physical forms.

Objective:

"Embodying Movement of Emotion" offers tangible insights into the intricate and diverse spectrum of human emotion movement as depicted through digital animation techniques. Through presenting these posed facial expressions in 3D printed form, the exhibition catalyses multidisciplinary conversations among artists, animators, technologists, and scholars on the converging paths of digital technology, artistic expression, and human emotion.

Methodology:

Creating 3D-printed heads entails a meticulous selection of facial expressions spanning various human emotions. Each expression is digitally modelled using the Parametric Framework and Tool, ensuring fidelity to the nuanced subtleties of human emotional expression movement. Subsequently, these digital models are brought to life through high-resolution 3D printing, capturing every detail of the synthesised maximum range of movement as a reference.

Significance:

"Embodying Movement of Emotion" goes beyond showcasing the potential of digital tools in artistic creation. The exhibition contemplates the nature of emotion and expression in the digital era. It underscores the symbiotic relationship between technology and art, illustrating how digital tools can enhance and broaden the horizons of creative expression and understanding.

Future Directions:

The exhibition inspires further exploration of digital techniques in art and animation, emphasising the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in advancing our understanding and representation of human emotions. It sets the stage for future projects that blend digital innovation with traditional artistic mediums, unlocking new realms of creative expression and scholarly inquiry.

Conclusion:

"Embodying Movement of Emotion" materialises digital emotions in physical form, offering a novel perspective on the movement of facial expressions. Through this exhibition, I illuminate the intricate interplay between technology and emotion, inviting attendees to engage with and reflect on the profound connections between our digital creations and shared human experience.

Bio

Amrinder Singh Romana is a senior lecturer at Leeds Beckett University with 15 years of experience in creative technologies. Amrinder is completing a PhD on enhancing facial expression realism in 3D characters and authoring a book titled "Facial Animation in 3D, Games, and Extended Realities," set for a 2026 release.

Enemies, Yokels, and Uglies: The Transformation of the Meaning of an Overbite

MAXINE CRAIG

University of California, Davis, USA

Abstract ID: 17

I propose to present a paper entitled "Enemies, Yokels, and Uglies: The Transformation of the Meaning of an Overbite". It engages multiple topics listed in your call, including beauty (from the perspective of its opposite, ugliness) class, marked bodies and media representation. The paper traces how political and economic contexts transformed the meaning of imperfect-appearing teeth. I begin during World War II when protruding teeth were an essential element of racist depictions of Japanese soldiers by U.S. propagandists. This stereotype, which flourished in the context of war, had antecedents in earlier Western representations of Asians. The racialization of overbites persisted for decades after the war but was ultimately supplanted by meanings that were no longer racialized. In the context of the post-war period in which orthodontic treatment became normative for the American middle class, irregular teeth began to represent the often-linked traits of rurality, poverty, and ignorance. In popular culture overbites joined glasses and fatness in an easily representable repertoire of unattractiveness. These substitutable features appear as the unfortunate "before" conditions whose correction provides happy cinematic endings while contributing to the social ridicule of bodies deemed imperfect. The paper is part of a larger project on the normalization, medicalization and de-medicalization of orthodontics in the United States.

Bio

Professor of Sociology and director of the Center for Advancement of Multicultural Perspectives in the Social Sciences and Humanities, University of California, Davis. Editor of *The Routledge Companion to Beauty Politics*, and author of *Sorry I Don't Dance and Ain't I a Beauty Queen? Black Women, Beauty, and the Politics of Race*.

Exploring Older Women's Embodied Self-Representations Through Photography: A Therapist's Perspective

SILVIA PIOL¹, HOD ORKIBI¹, SHOSHI KEISARI¹

University of Haifa, Israel¹

Abstract ID: 39

Silvia Piol 1, Hod Orkibi 1,2, Shoshi Keisari 1,2,3

1. School of Creative Arts Therapies, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa
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3. The Centre of Research and Study of Aging, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa

Gendered ageism relates to the intersection of ageism and gender bias. Gendered ageism highlights how age and gender shape attitudes toward older women and restricts their access to societal resources. As contemporary Western societies expect women to keep young, fit, and healthy, oppressive gendered ageist stereotypes can affect how older women perceive their embodied selves. Therefore, interventions tailored to women's needs are crucial for maintaining a positive identity amidst the dominant societal aging discourse. To help close this gap, the overarching purpose of this qualitative research project is to create an arts-based intervention specifically adapted to the psychosocial needs of community-dwelling older Italian women. This intervention will center on the embodied self-representations of older women from a life-course perspective and will integrate narrative and phototherapy techniques. This abstract focuses on the preliminary phase of this research project. In this phase, the authors interviewed therapists who work with middle aged and older women through photography. The results of this phase will help develop a protocol for an arts-based intervention with older Italian women that should be implemented between 2024 and 2025. The purpose of the preliminary phase is to probe the core processes and phototherapy techniques that therapists use with middle aged and older women to address the body in therapy. This phase of the research project took a pragmatic approach to explore therapists' use of phototherapy techniques with aging women. Eight international creative arts therapists, psychotherapists, and social workers who work with aging women through phototherapy techniques participated in this study. The emerging data were analyzed through reflexive thematic analysis. Four themes were generated: (a) the relationship between the photographed body and the sense of self and identity, (b) the photographed body as a platform for loss processing, (c) photographs as a means to explore the issue of illness, (d) the body of the older woman client encounters the body of the therapist. The findings highlight the contribution of phototherapy techniques in clinical practice with older women. Photographs can elicit older women's narratives about their embodied self-representations, and therefore about the relationship between their bodies in photographs and their sense of identity. They also can serve as a platform to explore and process, in a more indirect way, issues such as illness and losses. Furthermore, therapists discussed their feelings and thoughts that came up while working with older women. In conclusion, it appears that using phototherapy techniques can provide valuable insights into therapy sessions with older women that focus on their embodied self-representations.

Bio

Silvia Piol is a psychologist and psychotherapist in training, and a PhD candidate at the School of Creative Arts Therapies of the University of Haifa. Her research interests focus on creative arts therapies, phototherapy, narrative gerontology, feminist gerontology, and the embodied experience

Externalisation Ventures and the Elusive Sanctuary: A Legal Perspective

ERMIONI XANTHOPOULOU

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 80A

The long-standing British commitment to humanitarian values and sanctuary is increasingly threatened by asylum laws and policies that appear driven by a rationale of hostility and deterrence. For example, safe and legal routes have been severely [curtailed](#) resulting in refugees having to undertake dangerous crossings to seek asylum in the UK. Deterring small boat arrivals, planning to house refugees out of sight in barges or to transfer them to far away countries while removing cartoon murals from child asylum reception centres and [reducing](#) budget for legal aid are stark examples of a repulsion rationale. Such externalisation deterrent [measures](#), often linked to colonial history (Lemberg-Pedersen 2022), threaten to change the very fabric of a British tradition to offer sanctuary in fulfilment of commitments made under international laws. This paper will address the UK asylum law and its development in ways that render sanctuary elusive, in questionable compliance with the right to asylum, the prohibition of non-refoulement and penalisation. The UK-Rwanda deal was already found to be at odds with international refugee law by the Supreme Court in November 2023. Yet, the government persists in direct defiance of international law. [Concerns](#) (UNHCR 2023) about the compatibility of the newly-adopted 2023 'Illegal Migration' Bill have also been [voiced](#). The paper will address the broader challenge of degradation of asylum law, in light of the UK government's externalisation initiatives while reflecting on the European context of externalisation (Xanthopoulou 2024).

Bio

Dr Ermioni Xanthopoulou is Senior Lecturer in law and Director of Research for Brunel Law School. She is currently teaching EU, migration and refugee law. Her research focuses on (EU) criminal, migration, and asylum law, as well as human rights. Ermioni was granted the Athena Swan Research Award 2022-2023 to conduct her individual research project on externalising trends of asylum law. Together with Dr. Nayyeri, they published evidence that the government's asylum policy was unlawful.

Female Organs on a Chip: Using Engineering to Replicate Organs at the Micro Scale

RUTH MACKAY

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 133

Authors: Ruth E. Mackay, L. A. Osorio, A. Aly, S. Qiao, A. Houlden, E. Silva

Lifestyle factors and environmental contaminants, including endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), play a role in breast cancer development but human studies linking EDCs to cancer are often inconclusive. This is mainly because EDCs are studied individually and at concentrations that don't match our day to day exposure. We are exposed to a cocktail of chemicals, which in combination, may have enhanced harmful effects. Several studies support a link between a high fat diet and breast cancer, although this link is still debated, as what lies behind this effect is unclear. A high fat diet may not on its own be a serious contributor to breast cancer but its effect may be enhanced by the presence of EDCs in our bodies.

To study the role of EDCs and high fat diets on breast cancer development the group at Brunel have developed a Breast-on-a-Chip (BOC). Organ-on-a-Chip (OOC) has developed as a field over the past decade, this field uses the development of micro-tissues within microfluidic systems to mimic the macro organ like function. The work presented here will show the development of the BOC system incorporating both the engineering and life science aspects of the project. This allowed us to develop a system that can run three chips in series with the three cell types of interest for breast cancer development. The cells were grown over a number of weeks with a constant flow of cell media and nutrients, mimicking the dynamic environment of breast tissue. The approach provides a more robust and representative alternative to current laboratory and animal-based methods.

The talk will also give an insight into other models being developed within the group including the Vagina-on-a-Chip.

Bio

Dr Ruth Mackay is a Senior Lecturer in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Brunel University London where she leads the Organ-on-a-Chip Group. She gained her undergraduate degree from the University of Dundee in 2007 in Mechanical Engineering. This was followed by her PhD Micro-electromechanical-systems in 2011, at the University of Dundee. She moved to Brunel in 2011 to work as a Research fellow on a translational MRC grant developing point of care devices to diagnose sexually transmitted infections. She became a lecturer at Brunel in 2015. Her research focuses on organ-on-a-chip technologies for women's health, low cost point of care diagnostic devices and prosthetics.

Fatness as a Material and Discursive Construct

EMILY SCROGGINS

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, USA

Abstract ID: 30

The paper is the result of observations made about the Communication Studies and Fat Studies disciplinary fields and how they could benefit from more collaboration and interdisciplinary scholarship.

Fatness is almost exclusively discussed in terms of the body: how or if the body is affected by fatness from a medical standpoint, in what ways are spaces built to accommodate fat bodies, fat folks being unable to escape judgment because of the visibility of their fatness, whether individuals who have lost weight can still participate in fat positivity as a previously fat body, and so on. Fatness is indeed an embodied identity, but limiting conversations to this aspect alone severely harms our ability to recognize, understand, and fight against institutions and systems that discriminate and oppress fat bodies. In this paper, I propose that fatness is both discursive and materially constructed rather than solely a social and biological effect. Fatness is an inherently communicative label and is defined by these communicative events. Expanding our scope in relation to fat identities past just the body and how the body interacts with the world can open various heretofore unexplored areas of analysis like discursive and materialist analysis. mistreatment. Power is infused in the decision to recognize what specific bodies matter and when. The hesitancy to include fat bodies within any one field, or even recognize them as individuals worthy of study, adds to the erasure and stigmatization of fat folks. I also argue for the place of Fat Studies in the Communication Studies field by explicating the ways that both fields inform and build upon one another; Communication Studies informs Fat Studies through conversations surrounding discourse, power, identity, and materiality whereas Fat Studies builds upon Communication Studies work and literature to make fatness legible as a constructed identity in both academia and the larger national and global communities. This paper includes an exploration of two main concepts in Communication Studies, discourse and materiality, and how they can be utilized in Fat Studies. The paper concludes by showcasing how Communication Studies can benefit from a more cooperative approach to fatness in which both fields learn and borrow from each other.

Bio

Emily Scroggins is a doctoral student at The University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Their research focuses on television representations of the body. Specifically, she is interested in how biopower functions through reality television to train, form, and interpellate specific bodies. You can find their work in *Popular Culture Review*.

Feel Guilty 4 Ever: Art, Violence and Women's Bodies in Prison

JESSICA COLLIER

NHS

Abstract ID: 71

Female prisoners experience entrenched societal misogyny which systemically categorises them and proliferates demeaning stereotypes. This paper offers an innovative contribution to the interdisciplinary dialogue between intersectional feminist criminology, art psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and art history. It will explore how images made by women prisoners can contribute to understandings of the complex construction and self-perception of embodied, gendered identities in prison (Chamberlen, 2018). It will do this by interrogating the way criminalized women are depicted in the media and across the visual arts, and use images created by incarcerated women to examine how they commit, collude or are subject to acts of violence against themselves and others (Welldon, 1988) and how these contrast with conventional representations (Collier, 2022, Collier, 2019). Foucault (1979) delineated the pathway from physical torture to the taking of an individual's liberty, tracing the invention of the modern soul and body as a vehicle for sociological and philosophical concepts of retribution; from torture, to punishment and discipline, and finally to prison. It is well understood that oppressed, socially disadvantaged, minoritized women are subject to inconceivable levels of shame, humiliation and feelings of inferiority, and that violence is stimulated by sexism, racism, misogyny, and homophobia (Gilligan, 2000). With a rapidly rising female prison population, the widespread attack on women's reproductive rights and freedoms, increasing acknowledgement of the violence done to women on a global scale, and the push against more fluid understandings of gender, this is a particularly timely subject. In addition, the rates of self-harm in women's prisons are rising rapidly (Nacro, 2024) as they attack their own bodies in an attempt to embody and express their trauma (Motz, 2008, Motz et al, 2020). This paper will be presented by Dr Jessica Collier as a striking visual slideshow and critical analysis. It will incorporate images traversing international art history, global media and artworks made by female prisoners in the UK during art psychotherapy sessions (shown with their informed consent).

Bio

Dr Jessica Collier is a senior art psychotherapist working with and developing creative therapies for incarcerated women in prison. She has taught, lectured and published widely. Her PhD examined how the interdisciplinary dialogue between feminist criminology and art psychotherapy contributes to understandings of gendered identities in prison.

Flesh and Memory: Trauma Encased in Bog Bodies and Reflected in Seamus Heaney's "Punishment"

SYDNEY FELDHAKE

Indiana State University, USA

Abstract ID:34

The paper that I propose examines voyeurism and sexualization of the body as an avenue for generational trauma through Seamus Heaney's "Punishment."

What links the hallowed and the dreaded, the deep past, the future, and the present is trauma. Trauma is an experience that is born as a response to tragic or distressing events or circumstances. In *The Etiology of Hysteria*, Sigmund Freud characterized the sensation of trauma as "any excitations from the outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield [such that] there is no longer any possibility of preventing the mental apparatus from being flooded with large amounts of stimulus which have broken in and binding of them," or, more clinically, a missed encounter with death (7). The memories of the event bear down, we can't forget them; the mind itself is wounded. What is interesting about a wound of the mind is that it cannot scab or scar therefore it is unseen by others and, at times, to the bearer. A wound to the brain is not something you can rub ointment on or even predict how or when it will fester; trauma is unbidden, uninvited and unable to be commanded. In its grip, our behaviors change, our expectations change, and sometimes even our cultures change as a collective response to the inciting incident. Trauma exists in the past through our memory, the present through our behaviors, and the future through our actions and responses; trauma is always present, and it live inside and outside of our bodies. It is a persistent presence. The act of writing can exemplify trauma's ability to simultaneously exist in the past, future, and present as it relates past traumas to the present, and further immortalizes both on paper. For example, Jean Toomer, an American poet, and Heaney both portray *The Windeby Child* as a sexually provocative woman in their poetry despite the body later being identified as male. Heaney, in "Punishment," describes her(his) nipples as "amber beads" in his imaginary remembering of the body while Toomer makes note of her(his) "slim body." Despite this overt sexualization, both authors use the body to depict traumas associated with their specific places and times. Thus, Heaney's reimagining of *The Windeby Child* accesses Northern Ireland and *The Troubles*, whereas Toomer's reimagining portrays the lynching of black Americans from the late 19th century to well into the 20th century as ritual blood sacrifices. Both narratives evoke depictions of trauma that is feminized and generational. Through poetry Heaney acts as not only an archaeologist of lesser-known stories but also as a weaver of multi-generational traumas through the use of voyeurism and the written word. While we may never know the full true stories of the bodies that have been uncovered thus far. Seamus Heaney's poetry inspired by the bodies and the bogs they are excavated from not only create new narratives for these voiceless bodies but also incorporate his generation's own familiar narratives with them.

Bio

Sydney Feldhake is an Academic Advisor and Instructor at Indiana State University. They hold a M.A. in English from Indiana State University, where their work focused on analyzing the representation of trauma in literature, particularly through the lens of bog bodies and the poetry of Seamus Heaney.

Following Your Desire? Exploring the Embodied Experience of Orgasmic Meditation Practitioners

KATY PILCHER

Aston University, UK

Abstract ID:53

My paper is based upon my recently completed British Academy project 'Empowering Pleasures?: 'Sexual' Leisure Spaces for Women'. Abstract below:

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.

Bio

Dr Katy Pilcher is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Aston University. Katy's research includes work around erotic dance; sex work; 'sexual' leisure spaces for women. She has published three books: 'Embodying Religion, Gender and Sexuality' (2021, with S Page); 'Erotic Performance and Spectatorship: New Frontiers in Erotic Dance' (2017); 'Queer Sex Work', (2015, with M Laing and N Smith).

Forgetting the Body : Rethinking the Empathetic Gaze

KRISTEN LOUTENSOCK

Binghamton University, USA

Abstract ID:108

In this paper, I argue that recent depictions of “empathy” in film and television call for a rethinking of the intersection of various cinematic theories of the gaze and the gendered/raced/queered/disabled body. Taking as a central text current depictions of American medicine, this paper will examine how the space of the hospital in these shows reconfigures the body as a known and knowable object, available to the penetrating gaze of the disabled, white, male doctor but narrativized by the older, white, male administrator. These two categories of male knowledge see through and into the body but remain detached, able to forgo the messiness of embodied sympathy in favor of a detached, endlessly mobile, and supposedly detached gaze. This understanding of the body is supported and deepened by the sympathetic gaze of the non-white, non-male, non-cis, and non-heteronormative characters in the hospital, who are portrayed as too connected to the body as subject and to embodied practices of care. These shows thus reaffirm the ability of some bodies to be forgotten and some minds to participate in a type of cognitive tourism, connecting empathy to white masculinity that is held up as a new and better authority. The bodies that are still too fleshy for this endless forgetting are both necessary for care-work but over-burdened by sympathy, held outside the neo-liberal ideal even while they prop it up.

Bio

Kristen Loutensock received her PhD in Film & Media Studies from the University of California, Berkeley and has taught in American Studies, Health Humanities, Disability Studies, and Gender and Sexuality studies. Their work focuses on the intersection of the body and the neoliberal ideal of empathy.

Form and/or Function: Examining the Stigmatised Body Through Evidenced-Based Conceptual Art

KATE LUXION

University College London, UK

Abstract ID:123

Workshop

Within the arts there is a division between artists and makers, between utilitarian objects and those meant for observation and minimal interaction. However, there are things that can happen to objects, like chairs, vases, and other home goods, that translate them into found objects and high art. Often this is due to marking, staining, or obscuring the "original use". Using the language of furniture design and reproductive health, this workshop will discuss the ways in which form and function can further the discussion on how we view and value the body as well. Additionally, it will engage with how we speak about and stigmatise certain facets of self and daily life as an extension of respectability politics in place of bodily autonomy. The artwork being discussed aims to use humour and double entendre to discuss topics and spark conversation, while also exploring when and why dis/comfort leads to barriers within both art and health.

A series of questions will be used to speak through the planning process for creating an art installation as a public health intervention.

Bio

Kate Luxion is a conceptual artist and social scientist specialising in reproductive health and parenthood, with a special interest in LGBTQ+ health and wellbeing. Also, with completing their PhD in Social Sciences, Kate is working to increase awareness on the importance of interdisciplinarity and more inclusive health systems.

Get Off Your Ass and Work': Tracing the Working Woman Narrative from Greek Mythology to Kim Kardashian

RYANNE PROBST

University of North Carolina Wilmington, USA

Abstract ID: 14

Feminist scholar Jess Zimmerman once wrote that monstrous women are “the bedtime stories the patriarchy tells itself.” The oldest stories in that particularly fun genre of demonizing women often begins with a woman at work.

In this paper, I analyze the root of our fascination with a woman’s labor, particularly labor that stems from and relies on their bodies. Where previous threads have sought to connect femininity and monstrosity through the body, I take this observation one step further by suggesting the root of monstrosity lies not in the feminine body itself but rather in the feminine body in action. To do this I examine two of our oldest cautionary tales of women at work: the mythological Sirens and Charybdis. I apply Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s monster theory and Marianne Govers Hopman’s work on Greek monsters as cultural signs to show how these myths built a rhetorical framework for how we continue to discuss the working woman. I point to current conversations surrounding pop culture icon—and modern mythic monster—Kim Kardashian. I thread public response to Kardashian’s career, a career she built off commercializing her own body, with the response to work the Sirens’ and Charybdis’ did with their bodies. In doing so, I show that the working woman narrative—from Homer to TikTok—persists in creating harmful rhetorical frameworks that refuse the feminine body in action any value or empathy.

Bio

Ryanne Probst teaches English composition at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and is a feminist and pop culture scholar. Her work has been published by *Cosmopolitan*, *Nylon*, and *Polyester*, and she has a forthcoming chapter in the academic anthology: *Monstrosity in Media: Reflections on Vulnerability*.

Ghoulish Capital and Domestic Labour in Maria Fernanda Ampuero's *Cockfight* (2018)

KATE HOULDEN

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 38

Latin American writing has taken a visible turn to the Gothic in recent years, adopting a range of new forms and tropes overtly recognisable under the discourses of 'body horror' and 'folk horror'. This literature, predominantly written by women and expressly invested in what has been termed 'Fourth Wave' or 'Green Wave' feminism, inflected by social reproduction theory and by the priorities of the feminist strike movement, takes the female and/or queer body as its starting point for a radical critique of heteropatriarchal and racialised neoliberal capitalism. Emerging across nations, ethnicities, and geographies, and negotiating tropes often aligned with peripheral cultures – including folk histories of witch hunts, zombies, cannibalism, and 'black magic' – this writing reflects prominently those forms of violence that Sayak Valencia conceives of as 'gore capitalism' (2018). Negotiating monsters in various forms, as well as those monstrous practices directly connected to everyday life, this fiction highlights domestic and public cruelties enacted on the gendered body. These include the systemic institutionalisation of rape, abuse, and exploitation in the name of 'market freedom', as unwaged social reproduction and violent sexual oppression grease the cogs of economic competition. By mapping their horrors on the female body, these fictions grant voice to the mind-shattering spectacle of Capitalocene power. Here, what passes for 'development' or post-crisis 'transition' is in fact the neocolonial expropriation of global Southern resources and the brutalisation of women and minorities in the name of progress.

Interlinked context criss-crosses the stories of Ecuadorian María Fernanda Ampuero's collection *Cockfight* (2018), building an expansive picture of combined and uneven development (WReC 2015). Specifically, the full monstrosity of peripheral inequality is brought to light through the bodies of female domestic workers, figures whom, in Ampuero's fictive universe, must battle against the poisonous effects of what Federici terms 'a "maids-madams" relation' (2012: 71).

Bio

Dr. Kate Houlden is a Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Fiction at Brunel. Kate's research focuses on the intersections between queer studies, materialist feminism and world-literature. She is currently writing a monograph, *Female Migrant Domestic Workers in Post-Millennial Global Fiction* for the Palgrave series, *New Comparisons in World Literature*. With Sharae Deckard, she has a special issue in *Feminist Theory* on 'Social Reproduction Feminism and World-Culture' (2024), including an essay on the gendered precarity of neoliberalisation as seen in the work of Pat Barker and Mike McCormack.

Give Voice To Your Pain and Tell Us Your Story: Critical Analysis of Media Narrative about Unwanted Consequences of Cosmetic Procedure

MARIJA GEIGER ZEMAN¹, MIRELA HOLY², ZDENKO ZEMEN¹

Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia¹

VERN University, Croatia²

Abstract ID:24

Pain is a complex, challenging and multidimensional phenomenon. Although pain is a universal experience shared by all living beings, there are some difficulties in articulating and communicating one's pain to others (Scarry, 1985). Folkmarson Käll (2013, p. 1) points out an interesting dynamic between the universality and individuality of pain - although pain is universal, it is at the same time individual because it is "always subjectively experienced". The dominant medical paradigm approaches pain in a way that "reduces the experience of pain to an elaborate broadcasting systems of signals" (Bendelow & Williams, 1994, p. 169), while ignoring the rootedness of pain in layered systems of meaning that position pain in spatial and temporal frameworks that transcend individual experience (Folkmarson Käll, 2013, p. 1). There are different intensities and different forms of pain that intertwine in multiple ways. Elaine Scarry (1985, p. 1) wrote: "Physical pain has no voice, but when it at last finds a voice, it begins to tell a story". The focus of the paper is a critical discourse analysis of media narratives about the pain caused by the CoolSculpting method experienced by the iconic supermodel Linda Evangelista. As a well-known supermodel who reproduced the rigorous aesthetic standards defined by the fashion industry (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2012), from the beginning of her supermodel career, Evangelista was (re)presented in the media as a glamorous persona (Soley-Beltran, 2013). After several years of absence from the public, Evangelista opened up a space and gave voice to her pain and in 2022 spoke publicly about "emotional and physical pain" as well as a series of consequences that drastically changed her private and professional life after a cosmetic intervention with unwanted consequences (Sheeler, 2022). The case of Linda Evangelista and her media-presented "the deeply subjective topography of suffering" (Gotlib, 2013, p. 47) points to the complexity of her embodied identity (Davis, 1995) and symbolic, social, gender and cultural meanings of her pain. Also, Evangelista's experience poses challenging questions about cosmetic interventions as a part of fashion models' aesthetic labour (Wissinger, 2012) and "public conversation" (Holliday, Jones & Bell, 2019, p. 42) about "awful cosmetic surgery" (acc to Jones, 2008, p. 14). The paper is prepared by Marija Geiger Zeman, Mirela Holy and Zdenko Zeman.

Bios

Marija Geiger Zeman (PhD) is a Senior Research Scientist in Sociology at the Institute of Social Sciences in Ivo Pilar in Zagreb, Croatia. Geiger Zeman is interested in many issues related to gender, body, ageing and qualitative methodology. She received the Annual Science Award in Social Sciences from the Croatian Parliament (2010).

Mirela Holy, PhD works at the VERN' University in Zagreb as Head of study programs. She has published six books and many environmental, human rights and communication articles. She received the Miko Tripalo Award for outstanding contribution to society's democratization and promotion of human rights in 2012.

Zdenko Zeman (PhD) is a Senior Research Scientist in Sociology at the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar in Zagreb, Croatia. Zeman is interested in the sociological theories of modernisation, gender, ageing issues and qualitative methodology.

Grievability and Embodied Visuality from Biopolitics to Necropolitics

DONIA MOUNSEF

University of Alberta, Canada

Abstract ID: 64

As we are flooded with visual evidence of death we can never verify or deny an allegation, even if we can locate the “evidential force” (Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 88) within a body, a history, a geography, and “specific social relations.” We are surrounded with images that are riddled with ideology and their consumption is equally multifarious ideologically as Jacques Rancière argued (*Le Destin des Images*). The paper will turn to an analysis of examples of embodied visibility. The sites of this inquiry is first the Abu Ghraib Prison scandal and second recent photographs from Gaza by photographers such as Mo’taz Azaiza, Saher Alghorra, Mohammed Zaanoun, Loay Ayyoub, Samar Abu Elouf, Suhail Nassar, etc. that resist the erasure of bodies in the reframing of war and elaborate on the importance of the image’s affective and de-regulatory powers in the differential distribution of precarity.

Bio

Dr. Donia Mounsef is Professor of Theatre and Media studies at the University of Alberta. A performance theorist and dramaturge, she is the author of *Chair et révolte dans le théâtre de Bernard-Marie Koltès* (l’Harmattan, 2005) and the co-editor of *Toxic Media Ecologies* (forthcoming, Athabasca UP) and “Transparency of the Text” (*Yale French Studies*, 2007). She publishes widely on performance, intermediality, gender, and violence. Her work appeared in *Global Performance Studies*, *Journal of Dramatic Theory & Criticism*, *Yale Journal of Criticism*, *Women & Performance Journal*, *Contours*, *Féminismos*, *Journal of Global Studies & Contemporary Art*, *Krypton*, etc.

Guardians of Beauty: An Exploration of Cosmetic Practitioners' Experiences of Constructing (Desirable) Bodies Through Non-Surgical Procedures

REBECCA NASH¹, ANNE-METTE HERMANS²

University of Southampton, UK¹

Tilburg University, Netherlands²

Abstract ID:21

Cosmetic surgery has long been a controversial pinnacle of invasive aesthetic labour, with recent years seeing an expansion and diversification of the medical cosmetic landscape (ISAPS, 2023). Minimally invasive, non-permanent cosmetic 'tweakments' like dermal fillers are increasingly embedded amongst, and advertised as, 'everyday' beauty practices (Hermans, 2022, 2023). This normalization has been enabled by the accessibility of these procedures, both in terms of lower costs and the locations where they are offered. In many cases, non-surgical procedures have migrated beyond medical locales and, in the UK, can be administered by a range of cosmetic practitioners in wider beauty industry settings, like hair salons and spas (Nuffield Council on Bioethics, 2017). These practitioners play a significant role in constructing bodies, particularly facial aesthetics. Changes in what treatments are available, who performs them, and where, increasingly align perceptions of non-surgical treatments with those of 'everyday' aesthetic interventions.

This shift in 'gatekeepers' of cosmetic procedures, however, highlights contested professional boundaries regarding who has the expertise to 'shape' bodies using these methods. There have been repeated calls in the last decade for robust regulation of non-surgical procedures in the UK (Keogh et al. 2013; Department of Health and Social Care, 2022). In addition, the ease of obtaining non-surgical procedures, and the often informal ways they are advertised, has (re)ignited debates about gendered pressures to alter appearances that reflect both pervasive and temporary aesthetic trends (Nuffield Council on Bioethics 2017, 2018).

Considering discussions surrounding the legitimacy and scope of their business models, this paper will reflect on the experiences of beauty entrepreneurship(s) of cosmetic practitioners who offer non-surgical treatments. Understanding how cosmetic practitioners frame their position and aesthetic preferences in the construction of (desirable) bodies, and how they adapt to rapidly changing aesthetic trends and evolving technologies can provide valuable insights into contemporary medical cosmetic body projects. Given that many non-surgical treatments are not permanent, bodies can be (re)shaped more readily and repeatedly. By focusing on the role of practitioners across diverse cosmetic servicescapes, we situate non-surgical, often discreetly transformative, interventions within everyday (gendered) routinized body projects.

Bios

Rebecca Nash, currently a Senior Teaching Fellow in Academic Practice at the University of Southampton, and my research interests focus on gender, beauty and cosmetic procedures. I am tentatively stepping back into scholarly work alongside my role as an Academic Developer.

Anne-Mette Hermans works as an Assistant Professor at Tranzo, Tilburg University. Her research is largely qualitative in nature and focuses on (consumerist) notions of malleable bodies and cosmetic procedures in particular. She is also the Chair of the Dutch center for expertise on cosmetic procedures.

History in Practice: Using Material Culture and Zines to Explore a Victorian Medical Device

JENNIFER WALLIS

Imperial College London, UK

Abstract ID: 05

This paper will explore the interaction between medical objects and the body in the 19th century, looking at the case of the respirator. The respirator was patented in 1836 by a British surgeon, Julius Jeffreys. After the death of his sister from tuberculosis (TB), Jeffreys wanted to design a product that would offer protection to those suffering from TB, asthma, and other respiratory conditions. The respirator, as Jeffreys described it, was 'an apparatus to abstract the heat from the breath ... and thus warm the air'. The main part of the device, placed over the mouth, was made up of a series of thin metal plates. These were covered in black cloth and the respirator was kept in place with elastic ties around the head. Like many doctors of his time, Jeffreys was not necessarily concerned with the risk of infection – that would come later in the century – but with the effect of cold air on the lungs.

The respirator both liberated the wearer – now able to venture out in cold weather – and constrained them, by preventing speech. The visibility of the respirator could also prove stigmatizing, singling out the wearer as a likely sufferer of TB, a hypochondriac, or both. The intimate contact with the skin could also make wearing the respirator an unpleasant experience, as the device collected moisture and dirt (as evidenced by surviving examples in London's Science Museum stores).

This paper investigates the bodily experience of wearing the respirator, but moves beyond simple historical analysis to explore the device in new and creative ways. A replica of the respirator was made based on original patents, and this in turn informed the creation of a zine. Combining historical research, material culture, photography, and collage, the zine draws on my own bodily engagement with the replica respirator to enhance our appreciation of how 19th-century wearers likely experienced this device. The 19th-century respirator was frequently associated with hypochondriacal spinsters and, although the zine recognizes this, it also suggests that we might reassess the respirator, in the modern day, as a fetishistic object.

In charting my own research process, from traditional archive-based historical work to creative interventions, this paper will argue that engaging directly with the material culture of history allows us to procure original insights into historical experiences. It will also show how, by pursuing creative forms of historical engagement such as zines, we can open up new avenues for sharing historical work with a wider audience.

I'm very keen to work with others at the conference, and have ample experience of collaboration with different groups via my current teaching and research, including leading a module on Creative Reflection for Professional Practice and working with a conceptual artist on a project about the visual cultures of empire.

Bio

Dr Jennifer Wallis is a Lecturer in History of Science and Medicine, and Medical Humanities Teaching Fellow, at Imperial College London. She teaches modules on medical humanities, creative reflection, and the history of medicine. Her publications include *Investigating the Body in the Victorian Asylum: Doctors, Patients, and Practices* (Palgrave 2017).

'I Did Not Go Hungry Even Though I Hungered For So Much': Roxane Gay's *Hunger* (2017) and a Creative Analysis of (Bodily) Hunger

REBECCA PIZZEY

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 41

This talk explores what it means to exist in a body that hungers for the 'many things' that Roxane Gay captures in her 2017 memoir *Hunger* (155). It examines the semantics and lexicon of hunger, particularly female hunger, as having contradictory connotations, and even definitions: it symbolises, or is, lacking, and a need to be fulfilled; while at the same time it represents ambition and desire. Why is it that the antonym of 'satiety' is hunger when ambition and fulfilment are synonymous with a symbolic representation of hunger? This talk argues that the variant definitions of hunger leave us open to play within, and outside of, the expectations attached to them – and within, and outside of, our bodies. It makes a case that bodies are a public representation of our interiors; what, how and why women eat can often say more about them than their own words, particularly in a Western patriarchy that fears and attempts to diminish female hunger. This talk draws on Gay's memoir, in which she writes about 'what it means to hunger without being hungry' (2017, 176), and explores creatively that tension between 'to hunger' and 'being hungry'. Ultimately, I ask: is there feminine power in hunger?

Bio

Rebecca Pizzezy is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing. Her thesis, composed of a novel and an exegesis, explores the daughter's perspective of maternal ambivalence, food and the various forms of female hunger, and female sexuality.

Imagined Futures : Ode to Water

KAT PEGLER

Artist

Exhibitor

If water could talk to you, what would you say to it? Inspired by the electrolysis process needed to create Green Hydrogen, and, at a time of increased scarcity and disrespect as sewage spills over our shorelines, Kat questions how as humans, we can move from seeing water as a resource to exploit, to being a collaborator. But, as she explores the concept of bringing water to life through technology so it can aid flow states for innovation, she realised that water probably wouldn't want to collaborate with humanity. So she needs your help. Give your message to the water to help change its view.

Bio

Kat Pegler is an interdisciplinary future-folklore artist, producer and researcher whose work explores more-than-human perspectives in the context of the climate emergency. She believes that collaboration across sectors and species is the solution to generate change. Kat is currently Artist-In-Residence for Hydrogen Research at Brunel where she is working with Hydrogen Scientists to create future-facing artwork, interweaving soundscapes, AI and nature.

Find out more at www.kerbsidecollective.com or @katkatmusic

Imperfection of the Perfect Body: A Psychoanalytic Exploration of the Female Gymnast's Body

KLAUDIA WITTMANN

Coventry University, UK

Abstract ID:55

In 2020, the world of sports was shaken when Netflix documentary *Athlete A* revealed the systemic emotional, physical and sexual abuse of female gymnasts in the USA. Following the film, an international wave of scandals erupted. In 2022, the Whyte Review was published, which responded to a group law suit of gymnasts and Olympians against British Gymnastics; it confirmed the allegations of abuse and found that “a culture of fear” defines women’s gymnastics in the UK today (Whyte, 2022, p. 102). Most recently, the problem took again centre stage in the media, with ITV’s streaming of *Gymnastics: A culture of abuse?* in 2024. Literature discusses these phenomena of systemic abuse as a result of two fundamental (bodily) factors in the sport: aesthetic perfectionism and ideals of femininity (Cervin, 2021). Women’s gymnastics originated from the ambition to create an athletic discipline which was not only considered to appropriate for the woman’s body, but took as its key goal to define what that body was. While these definitions changed over time, the underlying attempt to answer the question of what a woman is has remained unchanged. Like no other sport, gymnastics relied on the binary distinction between its male and female versions through differences in equipment, costume, scoring criteria and movement styles.

This paper draws on Lacanian psychoanalysis, feminist and queer theory to investigate how the female gymnast’s body is generated and shaped on a socio-political level. It asks: what function does this body have within society? What is its correlation with systemic abuse? In order to address these questions, the paper mobilises the psychoanalytic notions of the gaze and enjoyment (McGowan, 2013; Žižek, 2014). In this context, the gaze is theorised as a point of failure in the completeness (or perfection) of the image of the gymnast. The gaze thusly marks a traumatic encounter with the Real of the body, that which cannot be inscribed in social structures and language. The concept of enjoyment will be deployed to show how socially shared, ideological fantasies function to cover over this imperfection in the image on an unconscious and bodily level. Put differently, this paper analyses women’s gymnastic’s structures of enjoyment in order to illuminate its unconscious fantasies with regard to social categories such as gender and race. This conceptual frame allows the paper to move beyond addressing questions of social ideals on the level of identity, and to confront the paradox of how oppressive structures operate within supposed positions of power, for example that of a national or even Olympic champion.

Bio

Klaudia Whittmann is an AHRC -funded PhD Researcher at the Centre for Dance Research (Coventry University) where she studies gendered oppression in women's gymnastics through choreographic practice. She is co-director of KWAM Collective, an artist-led group conducting multidisciplinary artistic projects in the UK and a psychoanalyst in formation at the Site for Contemporary Psychoanalysis. Formerly, she had been an elite rhythmic gymnast, part of the German national team from age 13 and multiple-times German champion.

Is the 'War on Gaza' Also a War on Moral Courage? Examining the Moral Courage to Challenge the Disposability of Living Civilian Bodies in Gaza

MOHAMMED ALI SYED

Brunel University London, Uk

Abstract ID: 79

The military interventions in Gaza and Ukraine have at times exhibited remarkable similarities, such as the cutting off of essential supplies such as water and electricity to civilian populations, yet reactions from key western politicians and mainstream media have been markedly different. This suggests that the valuation and disposability of civilian lives is viewed differently. So whilst key politicians, the media and virtually all segments of western societies reacted to the war in Ukraine through vocal and demonstrable support for the people of Ukraine, similar breadth of support for the people of Gaza has not been forthcoming. This is despite the fact that many more civilians, mostly women and children, have been killed in Gaza over a much shorter period of time. Accusations are levelled against politicians, and the West more generally, of having double standards due to the apparent disregard, not only for the human rights of Palestinians, but their very existence. These accusations arise from widespread public awareness, mostly gained through social media coverage from Gaza, of the ongoing killing of civilians there and their dire situation due to the prevention of the supply of the bare necessities to sustain life including food, water and medical supplies. It is well known, for example, that children injured by bombing and requiring limb amputations are having to be operated upon without anaesthetic. Negative reaction to the onslaught of civilians, especially of women and children, is a universal norm.

Notwithstanding the muted reactions of key politicians and the mainstream media to the onslaught in Gaza, what can explain the virtually absent reactions in public to the ongoing loss of civilian life in Gaza amongst many other segments in society, such as universities, which have provided obvious support in relation to the people of Ukraine and would usually be expected to speak out as a reaction to the ongoing mass killing of civilians, regardless of their location internationally? This position of universities is in most cases starkly contrasted by that of their own students, many of whom now demonstrate and protest against their own universities. What can explain this?

This paper introduces a possible explanation through an examination of the moral courage to challenge the disposability of living civilian bodies in Gaza. Using an adapted version of the Integrative Model of Moral Courage and Relative Determinants introduced by Halmburger, Baumert & Schmitt (2016), the paper will include the screening of video clips to illustrate the use of the adapted model and examine the cases of two well-known public figures in the UK, Charlotte Church and Gary Lineker.

Bio

Dr Mohammed Ali Syed is the Research Development Manager for International Research at Brunel University. With a background in international development, his research interests span the social science disciplines to examine extreme cases of political, economic, social and violent oppression and injustice.

J'ai Perdu Mon Corps: Migration as Psychosis in Animation

JON HACKETT

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 51A

J'ai perdu mon corps (I Lost My Body, Jérémy Clapin, 2019) is French animated feature that takes the point of view of a dismembered hand in the search of its host body. It has gone on to win prizes at Cannes, the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, and at the Césars, among other ceremonies. Its largely 2D drawn animation style recalls earlier classics of French animation – as well as traditions of the French comic book, or bande dessinée. The film is also a migration story of sorts, with its protagonist Naoufel (unless the protagonist is in fact his hand), a Moroccan immigrant forced to come to France on losing his parents. We track his motions as a pizza delivery worker in Paris, a lonely milieu full of anomie for the orphaned character, before he loses his hand in an accident.

One way we might interpret the film's rather grotesque premise is in relation to the 'psychopathology of migration', as elucidated by Léon and Rebeca Grinberg (1989), themselves exiled analysts who fled Argentina after the 1976 military coup, at a time during which analysts themselves were frequently 'disappeared'. According to the Grinbergs, migration can cause 'mourning for the objects left behind and the lost parts of the self' (2), dramatised in Clapin's cel-like animation by a crawling hand. There would also be scope for analysing the scenario, following Deleuze and Guattari, as an instance of a 'catatonicized' body without organs (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 150). When the film's point of view moves to that of a disembodied hand, the film effects a sort of apprehension of a wandering, fragmented body, an uncanny instance of the perceptual expansion characterised by Sylvie Bissonnette (2019) as 'becoming animated'.

This paper will consider the formal aspects of the animation that evoke the context of earlier French animation styles, as well as how animation transforms a macabre horror premise into an aesthetic object. In doing so, it will consider some conceptual dimensions of migrant journeys that inform the film narrative. Can we see animation here as allowing a working through of experiences and contexts that defy mimetic treatment in other media?

Bio

Dr Jon Hackett is a Senior Lecturer in Film and Television at Brunel University; and former Head of the Department of Communications, Media and Marketing at St Mary's University. He is the co-author with Dr Mark Duffett of University of Chester of *Scary Monsters: Monstrosity, Masculinity and Popular Music* (Bloomsbury, 2021). His current research focuses on migration in the media, and political cinemas.

Khutwasa as Therapy: Spirits, Multiple Selves and Unbounded Bodies in South Africa

ISAK NIEHAUS

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 50

In my proposed talk I draw on multi-temporal fieldwork in Bushbuckridge, South Africa, to analyse the khutwasa ritual. This ritual is held after a person had been possessed by ancestral and foreign spirits and undergone an eight month apprenticeship in divination and healing. In the presentation I challenge the established view that the therapeutic potential of spirit possession lies in its capacity to increase awareness of the social landscape and to resituate the self. Instead, I argue that the ritual aims to awaken and uplift spirits from within and allow them to pervade the body. The ritual builds the person, requires them to embody different substances, and create a body capable of perpetuating movement and flow. In this context, health is understood as fluidity, and sickness as stagnation. Finally, the novice is put to the test. They must demonstrate their capacity to work in concert with different possessing spirits, locate hidden objects, and exorcise malevolent spirits from the bodies of kin. The unbounded body and multiple self, constructed in the khutwasa ritual differs significantly from the integrated and autonomous self of cosmopolitan psychiatry.

Bio

Isak Niehaus teaches social anthropology at Brunel University London. He has done extensive research in South African rural areas on witchcraft accusations, masculinity on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. His most recent monograph is *AIDS in the Shadow of Biomedicine* (Zed Press: 2018).

La Demande - The Voluntary Attempt to Overcome Unnecessary Obstacles (Suits, 1978)

HUGO GLOVER

Northumbria University, UK

Abstract ID: 51

Part of an animator's tacit knowledge is an embodied memory of how it feels to be in the world. Mark Johnson's description of how meaning arises from physical engagement with the environment, in a non-dualistic instinctive way, is a foundational aspect of animation knowledge (Glover, 2021). In this paper I will lay out how I use my physical engagement with the environment to inform the animation work I make. I will show how Animatory thinking (Glover, 2021) as a methodology, combines lived experience, performance, auto ethnography and action research within my practice. To achieve this, I use my memory of a journey I made in 2023, a pilgrimage of sorts, from the north east of England to the south of France to climb a route in the Verdon Gorge called La Demand. Near the top of the 1200ft cliff I became stuck, wedged in between to vertical walls of polished limestone, unable to climb higher or to descend safely. This moment of stuckness (Pirsig, 1974), and the journey by train and foot that lead me to this point, was a balancing point, where deep time, lived experience, motion and play all meet. The memory of effortful futility is relived through my animation practice which also functions as a nodal point where philosophy, making and memory interlock.

Bio

Hugo Glover is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences at Northumbria University. He lectures on experimental design, practice-based research, interdisciplinary design thinking and tacit knowledge.

Hugo holds a Ph.D. from the Innovation Design Engineering Department at the Royal College of Art, London, an MA in Design Products also from the Royal College of Art, and a BA in Industrial Design with Applied Technologies (Distinction) degree from Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Prior to academia he worked in product design, branding, motion graphics, animation, and digital film restoration.

His educational interests are experiential learning, learning through play and collaborative learning spaces that initiate curiosity. Hugo's passion is to support students in discovering new skills, the sharing of ideas and lateral thinking.

With an industry background and extensive professional network, he utilises his industry contacts to enhance the student experience, through guest speakers, live brief enhancements and field trips. He is proud to acknowledge dyslexic thinking and ADHD as aspects he brings to thought-provoking practice-based research, teaching and making.

Labouring Bodies and Magical Souls in British Fantasy Adaptions

JENNIFER DOVETON

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 48A

A Cartesian dualism of body and mind underlies discourses of social class, race and gender in Britain. While Bourdieu suggests that all bodies are inscribed with markers of class capitals (2010, 1989), Bev Skeggs notes that “some bodies”, in particular the bodies of the working-classes, “are made readable” by middle-class processes of inscription (2004). Skeggs’ analysis of the construction of middle-class subjectivity points to a mobility and flexibility away from the fixity of the physical and the bodily (ibid). Colonial narratives of White, European and male supremacy, as Theresa Pfeifer observes, “afford [ruling elites] the conceit of transcending the earthbound idiom of the body” in favour of “the detached and objective intellectual of modernity”: “rational, enlightened, and spiritual - or of the mind” (2009).

The fantasy genre is constituted around a transcendence of the physical limitations of reality and the manifestation of internal desires, beliefs and impulses (Attebery, 1992; Jackson, 1981; Walters, 2011). Screen adaptations of the portal-quest subgenre (Mendlesohn, 2009) foreground the trope of the “chosen one” - the singular hero embarking on a quest away from “the real world” and its limitations. While this journey may at first appear to leave such inequalities behind, historic class hierarchies are re-enacted in this secondary world.

In case studies such as the Harry Potter series and the recent *His Dark Materials* television series, physical labour becomes the inherent destiny of certain bodies – usually non-magical people or subspecies. My narrative and textual analysis reveals that, in both texts, magical ability is aligned with middle-class habitus (Bourdieu, 2010), carrying with it an entitlement to the labour of Others. Furthermore, non-magical characters associated with labour are unfavourably bound to the bodily, and subject to earthly laws. Such bodies are eventually disposed of in service of the hero’s higher-order pursuits.

This paper proposes that these popular fantasy adaptations draw on the dichotomy of the mind/body in their construction of hierarchies of magical/non-magical. This, alongside other motifs of aspirational middle-class subjectivity I have identified throughout these texts, reproduces and reflects narratives of class superiority in contemporary British discourse.

Bio

Jennifer Doveton is a third year *Techne* scholar in Film and TV at Brunel University. Her thesis is on the construction of aspirational middle-class subjectivity in British fantasy screen adaptations – explored through written and audio-visual essays. She has a Masters in Critical & Cultural Studies from Birkbeck University, London.

Leaky Leadership: Female-Sexed Bodies in Business Self Help Books

MORWENNA CARR¹, FIONA DENNEY¹

Brunel University London¹

Abstract ID: 81

This paper argues that female leadership in Business self-help texts is constructed as less effective, less efficient, and less desirable through a representation of female-sexed and –gendered bodies as leaky. Bodies are connected to leadership abilities; a good leader has a good (=male) body.

Business self-help books are increasingly ubiquitous in bookshops, bestseller lists, and bookshelves – whether you believe in 'The Happiness Advantage', know 'How to Win Friends and Influence People', or get up at 5am to practice 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People'. These books shape our ideas of leadership, both personal and professional.

This research finds that men are more visible than women in business self-help books (a ratio of 13:7 male to other); that men are significantly more likely to be associated with positive control and authority; that women who are authoritative are also overwhelmingly perceived negatively (83%); that female-sexed bodies are sexualised and scrutinised narratively and linguistically in these texts.

This paper will consider the crossover of bodies and business present in business terminology such as “pump and dump” (inflating shares for profit / discarding breast milk) and delve into the representation of women in post-2020 business self-help books. In doing so, it will argue that these educational texts (re)create tensions around female leadership.

Gender misrepresentation is visible across the business world, from entrepreneurship - where the gender gap in male/female entrepreneurs is equivalent to 1.1 million missing businesses (Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship, HM Treasury 2019) - to SMEs - with just 19% led by women (BEIS 2022) - to FTSE 250 directorships, of which 38.9% are held by women (Cranfield University, 2022). The misrepresentation of women starts before formal business education, in business and leadership self-help books. In these texts, female leadership is overwhelmingly associated with negative traits and behaviours. This has a significant impact on expectations of leadership and attainment for women, both for themselves and for those around them. Gender bias is encoded into leadership through these texts. In addition to missing revenue and opportunities, this results in a reality in which UK women are twice as likely to live in poverty (Prowess, 2023) and, in the US, 3.5 million women left active work in 2020 (45% of mothers of school-aged children). This project will work to unravel biased narratives in business and leadership self-help texts, contributing to the dismantling of gender imbalance in business.

The inclusion criteria for texts used in the study was designed to ensure that the texts were both industry-recognised and widely read. English-language texts had to both:

Have been longlisted for either the Nautilus Book Award, the CMI Management Book of the Year, the Axiom Business Book of the Year, or the Business Book Award between 2020 and 2022.

Placed at 50 or higher on a business-related or adjacent Amazon Bestseller list on 5th May 2023.

A thematic codified methodology was combined with narrative analysis to allow for deeper consideration of the data, and to site it within its socio-cultural context. This method ensures the project can explore complex business phenomena within the context of real-life narratives, enhancing the authenticity and relevance of findings.

Bio

Dr Morwenna Carr is a Senior Lecturer at Brunel Business School, having pivoted to Leadership and Business Education from material gender construction in Early Modern drama.

Professor Fiona Denney specialised in Leadership and Business Education, with a focus on human-centered leadership.

Lying Down

CRESSIDA J. HEYES

University of Alberta, Canada

Abstract ID: Keynote 1

Doesn't all the best politics happen standing up? How can I be an agent of change without being vigilant and vertical? This presentation looks at the philosophical fetish that is "agency," and suggests that one can be an agent while lying down. I examine the exclusionary histories of verticality before analysing three examples of horizontal activism: Ono and Lennon's Bed-In and the Die-In (famous from AIDS and Black Lives Matter organizing); the disability politics of Johanna Hedva; and the installation Black Power Naps by artists Navild Acosta and Sosa.

Bios

Cressida J. Heyes is Professor of Political Science and Philosophy and holds a Henry Marshall Tory Chair at the University of Alberta, Canada. They are the author of three monographs, including *Self-Transformations: Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies* (Oxford University Press, 2007), and, most recently, *Anaesthetics of Existence: Essays on Experience at the Edge* (Duke University Press, 2020), which won the 2021 David Easton Prize from the American Political Science Association. Dr. Heyes has been working for some years, very slowly, on a book about sleep and gender, called *Sleep is the New Sex*. More at cressidaheyes.com.

Maternal Bodies: Ambivalence, Possibility, and Power

CLAIRE LYNCH¹, REBECCA PIZZEY¹, HELEN WILLIAMS¹

Brunel University London, UK¹

Abstract ID: 49

This session will take the format of a 'Correspondence panel'.

Each speaker will present, taking in the breadth of their collective research from Victorian maternal health, the complexity of mother-daughter relationships in fiction, and literary representations of IVF and queer motherhood.

Indicative questions:

- Adrienne Rich argues that 'there is an inescapable correlation between the idea of motherhood and the idea of power' (1976: 72). To whom does this power (really) belong?
- From whom / where does the mother's body come?
- Does the mother create the child, or does the child create the mother?
- What role do social and cultural assumptions/expectations around maternity play in the (corporeal) experience of motherhood?
- To what extent does maternal emotion (desire / ambivalence) impact women's sense of identity?

Bios

Claire Lynch is a Professor of English and the author of *Small: on motherhoods* (2021).

Rebecca Pizzezy is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing exploring maternal ambivalence.

Helen Williams is a writer, motherhood journalist and teacher of English and Media Studies. Helen is particularly interested in the cultural shift that has happened in women's education over the last four generations and how the challenges this has presented to women who combine a career and motherhood have been reflected in the novel, from 'mum's lit' to literary fiction.

Microbial Multitudes: Navigating the Transdisciplinary Terrain of the Human Microbiome

ENRIQUE CASTRO-SANCHEZ

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 47

The human microbiome, comprising trillions of microorganisms residing in and on our bodies, is a complex ecosystem that plays a crucial role in our health and well-being. The proposed contribution aims to explore the intricate interplay between the human microbiome and the broader concept of interdisciplinary bodies within the context of liberation and resistance.

By delving into the liberatory and resistive capacities of the human microbiome, this presentation will discuss how these microbial communities contribute to our overall resilience and ability to adapt to various challenges. We will examine the constraints imposed on the microbiome by external factors such as diet, environment, and lifestyle choices, shedding light on the ways in which these constraints can be overcome or mitigated.

Furthermore, we will explore how the human microbiome embodies transformation and renewal, constantly evolving in response to internal and external stimuli. Through a lens of pleasure and pain, we will investigate the impact of microbial diversity on our physical and mental well-being, highlighting the significance of inclusivity and diversity within microbial communities.

This contribution will also address the collective nature of the human microbiome, emphasising its role in shaping not only individual but also community and collective health. By discussing current research findings and emerging trends in microbiome science, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between human and microbial bodies.

Overall, this presentation seeks to provoke thought and dialogue on the intricate relationships between the human microbiome and interdisciplinary bodies, inviting conference attendees to consider the implications of microbial diversity for human health, identity, and belonging.

Bio

Enrique is Senior Lecturer in Global Challenges (Planetary Health) as the BAsC Global Challenges, Brunel University London. His research includes planetary determinants of infectious diseases and drug-resistant infections, including the influence of policy on antimicrobial stewardship, and the effect of inequalities, including limited health literacy, on infection prevention behaviours.

Narrating the Unnarratable : Queer Pregnancy, Maternity and Embodiment in Femslash Fanfiction

Alice Chapman-Kelly

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Abstract ID: 87

According to Jenny M. James, ‘queer maternity remains an unnarratable experience within the story of lesbian romance’ (2018: 293), because despite considerable advancements in LGBTQIA+ rights in the Western world, there are still few media narratives foregrounding the experiences of queer women and people who are also mothers/parents. The lack of cultural representation for queerer parental formulations and models impacts the lived realities of real queer and trans women, non-binary individuals and folks assigned female at birth, who frequently face discrimination and ignorance throughout the process of becoming parents and of raising children (Wojnar & Katzenmeyer 2014; Reed 2018; Carpenter & Neilsen 2021; Goldberg & Allen 2022).

In queer female ‘femslash’ (female-female) fan cultures though, as I’ve argued elsewhere (Kelly 2020), fan authors routinely use the creative and commercial freedom of the fanfiction space to think through and articulate the nuanced, complex ways in which queer desires and identifications can and do co-exist with maternal longings. The ‘Swan Queen’ fandom, for example, is an online fan community that has organised around the project of imagining two female characters who are canonically mothers to the same son, Emma Swan and the Evil Queen from the conservative Disney-owned American fairy tale television show *Once Upon a Time* (2011-2018) – two women strictly marked as cisgender and heterosexual in canon – in a queer romantic relationship. The early seasons of the show pits these characters against each other, with the maternal identity of the white birth mother, the heroine Emma Swan, presented as natural, benevolent and instinctive, as opposed to the austere, awkward maternity of the child’s adoptive mother, the villainous Latina Evil Queen (Regina). Swan Queen fan authors, generally, interrogate *Once Upon a Time*’s racialized anti-adoption storylines by investing in Regina’s maternal identity, but everdeen, in the magical surrogacy fan text *i’ve tried to resist being last on your list* (2016), takes this even further by writing about Regina’s longing for the baby Emma carries as her surrogate (in this fic) as being just as embodied, just as rooted in her own body, as Emma’s experience of the pregnancy.

This paper argues that Swan Queen fan texts, like everdeen’s *i’ve tried to resist being last on your list* (2016), queer orthodoxies of expectant motherhood through an exploration of alternative temporalities, embodiments and affects. If, as Goldberg & Allen have argued, non-biological queer mothers/parents in real life tend to find themselves ‘defined by what they are not—nongestational, nongenetic,’ in legal, medical and civic spaces throughout their partners’ pregnancies (emphasis original, 2022: 382), then the reconceptualization everdeen’s Swan Queen fan text offers about the specific kind of embodiment that can characterise non-biological queer maternity – just as embodied, just as pregnant (as in expectant) in its own queer way, as the body of the birth (biological) mother/parent – is a radical intervention into traditional ideas about motherhood, maternity and the pregnant body.

Bio

Dr Alice Chapman-Kelly (she/her) is Postdoctoral Research Fellow on the ‘Remediating Stevenson’ project at the University of Edinburgh. She is the author of *Decolonising the Conrad Canon* (Liverpool UP, 2022) and a new monograph, *Fanfiction as Queer Healing: Femslash Authorship and the Swan Queen Ship* (Bloomsbury Academic), out in November 2024.

Narratives of Bodily Resistance: Perras de Reserva by Dahlia de la Cerda

MARIANA FELIX

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 38A

Latin American writing has taken a visible turn to the Gothic in recent years, adopting a range of new forms and tropes overtly recognisable under the discourses of 'body horror' and 'folk horror'. This literature, predominantly written by women and expressly invested in what has been termed 'Fourth Wave' or 'Green Wave' feminism, inflected by social reproduction theory and by the priorities of the feminist strike movement, takes the female and/or queer body as its starting point for a radical critique of heteropatriarchal and racialised neoliberal capitalism. Emerging across nations, ethnicities, and geographies, and negotiating tropes often aligned with peripheral cultures – including folk histories of witch hunts, zombies, cannibalism, and 'black magic' – this writing reflects prominently those forms of violence that Sayak Valencia conceives of as 'gore capitalism' (2018). Negotiating monsters in various forms, as well as those monstrous practices directly connected to everyday life, this fiction highlights domestic and public cruelties enacted on the gendered body. These include the systemic institutionalisation of rape, abuse, and exploitation in the name of 'market freedom', as unwaged social reproduction and violent sexual oppression grease the cogs of economic competition. By mapping their horrors on the female body, these fictions grant voice to the mind-shattering spectacle of Capitalocene power. Here, what passes for 'development' or post-crisis 'transition' is in fact the neocolonial expropriation of global Southern resources and the brutalisation of women and minorities in the name of progress.

Dahlia de la Cerda's *Perras de Reserva* offers a unique exploration of the complex identities and experiences of women confronting systemic violence in Mexico. This paper explores de la Cerda's portrayal of a broad range of female characters — encompassing women in positions of power, sicarias, witches, and migrants. Each character embodies the multifaceted and complex feminist resistance against machismo and societal oppression.

Bio

Mariana Felix holds a Master's degree in Creative Writing and is currently a PhD candidate dedicated to exploring the power dynamics between domestic workers and their employers in Mexico. Her research delves into the nuanced interactions within these relationships, shedding light on broader societal implications. Mariana is particularly passionate about the power of fiction to reveal and challenge entrenched social hierarchies. With a keen interest in power dynamics, female literature, decolonial feminism, Latin American horror, and social reproduction theory, Mariana's work spans a diverse array of themes that intersect with her primary research focus.

"No Place With Human Beings, Living or Dead". Unmourned Bodies, Grievability, and Absence" Deals with Contemporary Adaptations of Antigone

LILY CLIMENHAGA

Univeriteit Gent, Belgium

Abstract ID: 64B

Few plays are as widely produced, adapted, and studied as Sophocles' *Antigone*. The text's engagement with the politics of burial and remembrance, state oppression, and resistance has lent itself to numerous reinterpretations and contexts. *Antigone's* central conflict is instigated by the absence of a body. A body meant to be left unburied, ignored just beyond the city walls. Antigone's brother Polynices was meant to remain unburied and unmourned – while his brother Eteocles' body was honoured – but in the disappearance of Polynices' corpse, his illegal burial by Antigone, he is again acknowledged and thus grievable. When Judith Butler, who uses Antigone as an example, describes grief as a resource of the visible – “if a life is not grievable, it is not quite a life; it does not qualify as a life and is not worth note. It is already the unburied, if not the unburiable” – she aligns herself the complexities present in Mbembe's necropolitics and the death-worlds, filled with the unburiable, of the neoliberal Global North.

This presentation will explore how Polynices' absent body fits within Mbembe's concept of necropolitics, while also looking at how recent adaptations of *Antigone* have used its themes of state power and burial rights to engage ongoing discussions on migration and the devastation of neoliberal regimes. How both transform those in Western Capitalism's shadow into a ungrievable “living-dead”. This presentation will look at Thomas Köck's *antigone. ein requiem* (2019) and Milo Rau/NTGent's *Antigone in the Amazon* (2023), two distinctly post-colonial, European adaptations of *Antigone*, exploring what these texts do with not only Polynices absent body, but also how they engage with the many corpses of Sophocles' text.

Bio

Dr. Lily Climenhaga (she/they) completed a joint PhD in Performance Studies and Theatre Sciences between the University of Alberta and Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität and is currently undertaking the FWO-funded postdoctoral project “Institutionalized Resistance: Milo Rau's NTGent Period” (1290323N) at Universiteit Gent. Lily is a dramaturg, editor, blogger (<https://lostdramaturgininternational.wordpress.com>), critic, translator, and occasional stage manager.

Pain, Power, Perversion: The Tortured Body in Orwell's 1984

RÉKA TÖRZSÖK

University of Debrecen, Hungary

Abstract ID: 85

This paper is concerned with the representation of the tortured body in George Orwell's 1984 (1949) through an examination of the climactic Ministry of Love torture sequence, in which the protagonist, Winston Smith is tortured by O'Brien. The analysis will be organised around those moments in the novel when the tortured body is particularly foregrounded, most importantly, the episode when O'Brien makes Winston observe his own wrecked body in a mirror and when he relies on electric shock torture to force Winston's compliance. As I shall argue, the vicissitudes of the abused and malnourished body are inseparable from the novel's depiction of the inner workings of torture; therefore, my presentation shall examine the torture depicted in 1984 in the light of a number of theories of torture and pain (including those of Elaine Scarry, Adriana Cavarero and Jean Améry). These theories enable us to have a better grasp of how key aspects of torture, such as the immeasurability and indescribability of physical suffering and the denial of the existence of pain are being exploited by O'Brien to bring about Winston's physical and mental annihilation. In the final analysis, the investigation of torture leads to a re-examination of the body–mind dichotomy in Orwell's novel, which, as I shall argue, is one of its key overarching themes.

Bio

Réka Törzsök is a first-year English Studies MA student at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. Her research interests include the literary representations of violence, dystopias, queer studies and narrativity in video games.

Pattern and the Improvised State: A Methodology Towards a Becoming Body

MICHELLE MANTSIO

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia

Abstract ID: 116

Addresses

- How are bodies experienced?
- How does power manifest in and through bodies?

This research is focused on developing a methodology for understanding the body via tracking repeated actions and patterns. The study seeks to investigate how the body is experienced through everyday habits, using a creative practice that involves tracking and mapping the body's movements via multi-level assemblages and communicated through film and installation. By using pattern as a foundational scaffold to track and define what is being repeated, the research aims to explore the potential for the emergence of an improvised state, and how this can lead to a becoming body. This improvised state is temporary and can emerge depending on various conditions. Pattern is essential in supporting and offering a meaningful and connected basis to explore the potential of this improvised state. The paper proposes that by being attentive and mapping the body's patterns, an opening can be offered, leading to the potential for a becoming body. The paper explores whether it is possible to have an agentic body with the capacity to improvise and become by using pattern attentively.

Bio

Michelle Mantsio's research practice lies across art and design, with a focus on the body, explored via video, installation, performance and textiles. Michelle is a Lecturer of Interior Design at RMIT University and has participated in numerous residencies, exhibited internationally. Michelle is a member of research group the Kinomatics Project.

Pleasurable Bodies: Sex, Power and #MeToo in Magic Mike's Last Dance

POLINA ZELMANOVA

University of Warwick, UK

Abstract ID: 98

The #MeToo context has created a new urgency for the exploration of sex, pleasure and consent on screen. This urgency has been reflected in the emerging scholarship on the representation of sexual violence in film and TV, but increasingly also the discussion of the changes to the representation of sex more broadly. This has particularly been facilitated through the study of coming-of-age texts, which provide what I term 'positive models' of sex and consent (see Wilz 2020; McDonald 2022). However, whilst this discussion has begun to provide an insight into the visibility of consent on screen, the focus on these 'positive models' does not allow to sufficiently address the complexities of power and pleasure at stake in this popular feminist discourse. This paper picks up this discussion by shifting the focus to the male sex worker, a figure who has historically had a contentious role in feminist discourse, often thought of as either agent or victim, but has gained a certain acceptability and visibility in recent years (Waling 2021). This figure's evolving and at times conflicting relationship with popular feminism and ideas around women's sexual liberation encourages to move away from the question of positive change and instead explore the way the figure and his body speaks to the nuances of the popular feminist sexual discourse.

To explore this figure, this paper looks at *Magic Mike's Last Dance* (2023), positioning the film in relation to the rest of the franchise and exploring the way this latest instalment speaks to the #MeToo context. While the film has been celebrated for introducing explicit consent into its narrative and striptease performance, this paper uses close textual analysis to explore the nuances of this performance, thinking about the manifestation of pleasure and power within this representation. The close textual analysis engages with performance and physicality, exploring the way the negotiation of popular feminist sexual politics of the film play out not just in the sex or dance scenes but on the bodies themselves. Through this analysis the paper also thinks through the methodological significance of what it means to be engaging with bodies in the reading of sex scenes, beyond censorship and explicitness.

Bio

Polina is an AHRC Midlands4Cities funded PhD candidate in Film and Television Studies at the University of Warwick. Her thesis is titled 'Sex in Contemporary Film and TV: Power and Pleasure after #MeToo', in which she is exploring the representation and politics of sex and sexuality in popular culture.

Pleasure and Pain: The Animated Body in Short Form Gag Cartoons

CAROLINE RUDELL

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 51

Any relationship between animation and psychoanalysis is underexplored, which is most likely because as animation studies flourished in the latter part of the 20th century, psychoanalysis was largely 'out of favour' as a theoretical approach to studying film. More recently work such as Karen Cross' exploration of the Toy Story franchise brings animation and aspects of psychoanalysis together, or psychoanalytic concepts are deployed to explore the inner world of the child in relation to aspects of play (2022). This paper poses the question of what psychoanalysis might offer to animation studies as a theoretical mode of analysis in a broader sense. Play features heavily in some aspects of psychoanalytic therapy, and several practitioners and theorists argue that play is central to the therapeutic process, and the relationship between analyst and patient. Play (and repetition) is also central to animation, although also underexplored, where animation can have an anarchic, playful quality.

This paper considers the animated gag/chase cartoon (such as Wily E. Coyote and Road Runner) in relation to the concept of play, but particularly through play as associated with psychoanalysis. How the animated body is positioned and shaped in the play onscreen that exists in the gag cartoon is differentiated between different character types. I draw attention to the way that Wily and Road Runner function as patient and analyst in the cartoons. All the frustration, effort and engagement with games and play is on the part of Wily (which we can read as a patient attempting to engage with the therapy work), while Road Runner remains inscrutable and permanently chipper. Road Runner becomes a stand in for the analyst; it is common to find many accounts of patients' frustrations with their analyst who they can find unreadable. Intriguingly, this patient and analyst relationship is played out in ways that arguably draws on a (mis?)understanding of the psychoanalytic relationship and process, but also in a way that is very specific to this type of animated product. In these Warner Bros. cartoons, Wily and Road Runner are characterised very differently. In Wily's constant attempts to catch Road Runner, his body is subject to a range of accidents that render him much less recognisable as a coyote. Wily constantly makes use of tools and objects in order to catch his prey, including giant springs, ladders, bows and arrows, painted signs, boulders, planks, roller skates, dynamite, and bombs. The use of these objects, which always backfires on him, renders him at times flattened, squashed at the bottom of a cliff, turned into various other shapes (such as a spring), blown up, skinned and furless, and a range of other bodily misshapeness. Road Runner remains infallible, and we can read their relationship as a metaphor for different therapeutic games, but importantly this is played out through the metamorphosis of the animated body.

Bio

Caroline is a Reader in Film and Television at Brunel University London. She has published widely on animation and gender onscreen. Caroline is Associate Editor for animation: an interdisciplinary journal and co-book series editor for Palgrave Animation.

Post-Death Performance and the case of Operation Mincemeat

ARIEL WHITFIELD SOBEL

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 73

This paper discusses covert and undercover espionage acts and their intersection with performance and performance methods. It primarily focuses on the theatrical practices that were used during the execution of the Second World War deception plan Operation Mincemeat. Operation Mincemeat provides an intriguing case study of the aspects of performance used in intelligence operations in its use of a dead body to play the role of a military officer in possession of classified documents.

In this paper, drawn from my doctoral research, I detail the use of the body of Glyndwr Michael, the man chosen to portray the invented character of Major William Martin. In her exploration of the body as an archive, theatre scholar Rebecca Schneider notes that 'Death appears to result in the paradoxical production of both disappearance and remains' (Schneider, 2001: 104). Aspects of Glyndwr Michael's life including his Welsh nationality, which remained on his body, influenced the creation of the new character of Major William Martin by those running the operation, Ewan Montagu and Charles Cholmondeley.

Although Montagu and Cholmondeley were unable to access the mental aspects of Michael's embodied training, which had been passed down through his family and reinforced by his cultural experiences, the physical traces remained. These physical traces of Glyndwr Michael's life informed his post-death performance of Major William Martin alongside Montagu and Cholmondeley, which resulted in a successful deception operation.

This paper explores the body as an archive accessed after death, and argues that the use of Michael's body in the execution of Operation Mincemeat directly reflects the aspects of actor training and performance that had been introduced to the British Intelligence community prior to and during the Second World War.

Bio

Ariel Whitfield Sobel is currently a doctoral researcher at Brunel University London, focusing on the history and genealogies of actor training methodologies within human intelligence practices throughout the 20th century. She has also trained professionally as an actor and actor trainer in both the United States and the UK.

Potencia of Bodies in Exigencies: A Genealogy of Performative Protect in India and South Asia

BRAHMA PRAKASH

Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract Id: Keynote 2

The power and potencia of marginalized bodies in extreme situations — a situation of despair that also carries the sense of extreme hope. One starts thinking from the barricades in a situation of extreme vulnerability. In such a situation, the body enters the state of *non possumus*—points of no return and takes unimaginable risks. How do the bodies endure it? What do they teach us? What could be some proposed cultural and aesthetic models to understand the dimensions of the bodies in urgency and exigencies? Drawing examples from acts of protests, dissents, defilements and excess of the bodies in performance under an authoritarian regime in India, this talk will focus on the formation of potential bodies in extremes — how do these dynamics unfold in the conditions of bodies on the barricades. As protests and dissents are marking a cultural and performative turn, this talk will also explore a genealogy of performative turn marked by marked bodies of the social and “hyper-visible” bodies of the neoliberal regime.

Bio

Brahma Prakash is a writer, cultural theorist and an Assistant Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies at the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is a scholar of South Asian folk culture and performance traditions. His research intersects ritual, performance and festival studies in relation to the questions of marginality, aesthetics and cultural and ecological justice. He is the author of critically acclaimed book, *Cultural Labour: Conceptualizing the 'Folk Performance' in India* (Oxford University Press, 2019) and *Body on the Barricades: Life, Art and Resistance in Contemporary India* (LeftWord 2023). His popular columns on art, culture and politics frequently appear in Scroll, Wire, Outlook, Indian Cultural Forum and other media platforms. His opinions have also appeared in the BBC, Aljazeera, New Arab, Print and other popular podcasts in Hindi and English.

3D Printing Applications for Healthcare Research

BIN ZHANG

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract Id: 58

3D printing is garnering growing interest in the healthcare and scientific communities due to its flexibility and potential for customizing personalized medicine, in contrast to traditional mass manufacturing techniques. Previous research has primarily focused on investigating the impact of material formulation and structures on the fabrication of 3D-printed pharmaceutical devices and their drug release mechanisms. In this study, we aim to develop new material formulations to explore the potential of 3D printing in the development of food and nutritional products.

Bio

Dr Bin Zhang is a Lecturer in Additive Manufacturing in the department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. Her research focuses on the 3D printing of micro medical devices, the development of drug-loaded devices with extrusion-based 3D printing methods as well as 3D printing techniques for the development of medical training models.

Problematizing "Mentally Ill Teachers" in Okinawa/Japan : Bodies, Resistance and Desire

YUKO IDA

University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Abstract ID: 112

This solo-authored paper interrogates how the effect of the phallogocentric "Zest for Living" (Ikiru Chikara) discourse in Japan has manifested in the bodies of teachers. This paper's contribution is to illuminate the understudied link between the effects of "Zest for Living" and the bodies of teachers.

In 1996, the Central Educational Council in Japan published a report titled "About Our Nation's Education – How It Should be in the Prospect of 21st Century." The report highlighted three concerns: 1) children in Japan did not have enough time to "relax" due to competition related to entrance exams and meritocracy; 2) a rise in the number of bullying in schools and students who are refusing to attend school; and 3) decline of education power at home and communities. According to the council, there was a need and imperative to cultivate a "Zest for Living" in children by growing their well-balanced, sound mind, body, and soul in a pressure-free school-home-community triad. The embodiment of Zest for Living is desired through everyday practices at the triad.

Despite prescription after prescription over the course of years, however, the number of students who were "absent" from school for more than 30 days – called "futoukou" – was 29,9000 in 2023 (Kimura, 2023), and that of "mentally ill teachers" rose to 6,539 (Hisanaga, 2023), breaking historical records. The media highlights that worsened teachers' working conditions are the cause of making teachers "mentally ill." In the enactment of the author's memory as a public-school teacher in Okinawa, this paper problematizes "mentally ill teachers" as the effect of Zest for Living. Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, this paper conceptualizes the Zest for Living as a bio-disciplinary-pastoral power/knowledge discourse that governs one's conduct of conduct and desires.

Through this discourse, the mechanism of inclusion/exclusion is enacted to re/produce an ideal image of teachers through the discursive practices of the state and media, who are "caring" and have a "sense of mission" to cultivate Zest for Living in students. The more internalized the ideal image of such a teacher, the longer labor time became, and the less self-caring teacher I became. Although I "appeared" as one of the "mentally ill teachers" in statistics of 2012, 2015, and 2016, my body resisted the pathological inscription as well as the capitalist imaginary that matters and values certain bodies. My body was desiring to become free from such constraints.

Utilizing policies, statistics, objects of schooling (e.g., curriculum and textbooks), and media articles as "data," this study attempts to illuminate that the "increasing number" of "mentally ill teachers" and the worsened working conditions in Japan are both the effects of Zest for Living, which have real material effects on teachers' bodies, desires, and work/life. This paper argues that in making "mentally ill teachers" as natural and self-evident, social problems in the nation-state are individualized, psychologized, and obscured from the public. "Mentally ill teachers" are not naturally self-evident "beings" but socially, politically, and ideologically constructed biopolitical epistemic-ontology for the Raison d'être of the State.

Bio

Yuko Ida is a PhD student in the Department of Educational Foundations (EDFF) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). Yuko holds a M.Ed from EDEF at UHM and a B.A. in Education from the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa. While in college, she studied philosophy at Atenisi Institute in the Kingdom of Tonga as an exchange student. Yuko was a public elementary school teacher in Okinawa and Nagoya, Japan, prior to her graduate study in Hawaii.

Public Perceptions of Traditional Singing to Promote Wellbeing and Respiratory Health. Survey findings from Makkah region, Saudia Arabia

SAEED M ALGHAMDI

Umm Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract ID: 132

Background: Singing is the production of musical tones with the voice. It involves the respiratory system, including respiratory muscles. This universal human behaviour practiced for thousands of years in various cultural contexts including religious ceremonies, social gatherings, and artistic performances. Previous research suggests singing can improve various aspects of health in both healthy individuals and those with respiratory conditions. This study aims to explore perceptions regarding the use of singing to promote general and respiratory health in Makkah.

Methods: An observational, cross-sectional survey in Makkah to explore perceptions regarding the impact of traditional singing on general and respiratory health. Data was collected using a questionnaire including open and closed questions. Quantitative data was summarized as frequency and percentages, while qualitative data from open questions was summarized into themes. Ethical approval was obtained from Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah ID (HAPO-02-K-012-2023-12-1911).

Results: The participants were 273 people from Makkah region, of which 153 (56%) were female, the majority aged 21 to 41 years (63%), 88 (32%) reported chronic respiratory diseases. Among all participants, 158 (58%) engaged in daily singing, 161 (59%) believed that singing has a positive impact on general health and 117 (42%) were agreed that singing can improve lung health. Overall, 146 (54%) of the participants agreed that singing can improve quality of life. Perceived barriers to singing participation included absence of support from family and relative (113; 41%), singing is a tradition and has no effect on health at all (80; 29.3%) and singing has no health benefits (91; 33.3%).

Conclusion: People in Makkah believed that singing could have an impact on general and lung health. Further research assessing the impact of singing on clinically relevant parameters would be useful.

Bio

Dr Saeed Mardy Alghamdi is an Assistant Professor at Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. He is recognized for his significant contributions to the field of Respiratory Care, Telehealth, Clinical Education, Physical Activity, and Cough. I have a commitment to advancing knowledge in these areas. My work is widely cited, with over 1,627 citations since 2019. My google scholar h-index, a measure of productivity and citation impact, stands impressively at 152. I also contributed to the academic community with an i-10index of 21, indicating that 21 of my papers have been cited at least 10 times.

(Queer) Body Politics, Phenomenology, and (Performative) Spectacle within Select Queer Feminist Poetry: A Comparative Study

SAHER BANO

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India

Abstract ID: 130

Through analysing select postmodern queer poetry of Carol Ann Duffy ('from Mrs. Tiresias' and 'Mrs. Quasimodo') and Suniti Namjoshi ('Snapshots of Caliban' and 'Sycorax'), this paper examines queer bodies as a spectacle, a deconstructive site, a 'polysemic' postmodern self, and a metaphor of 'liminal' resistance narratives in contention with the phallogocentric discourses. The select 'little narratives' contextualise 'coming-out' of the non-conforming other(ed) bodies which have normatively been 'panopticon-ed' and relegated to the fringes, problematizing essentialist understandings of the category constructs of gender, sexuality, and identity. Through referring Sara Ahmad's concept of 'Queer Phenomenology', which contextualises queer body and space, how queer subjectivities are involved in rewriting and reinventing the traditional (hetero)patriarchal structures into new forms of queer(y)ing. The study explores queer embodiments within the context of postmodern queer feminist poetry, which involves an intersectional examination of gender, sexuality, and identity, which allows for a nuanced understanding of the diverse ways in which individuals express themselves and navigate their experiences. The paper, further, refers to Judith Butler's conceptualisation of the materiality of the body as a socio-cultural construction marked by sexuality and gender, theory of gender performativity; and bell hooks' concepts of 'oppositional/counter-gaze', which aims at understanding the 'de-objectification' and deconstruction of conventional body images. The study investigates how queer bodies and subjectivities are situated within the predominantly heteronormative culture of visual narcissism and cisgender body hysteria. The performative bodies mentioned in the poems embrace their sense of 'in-betweenness' and revel in transgression, alterity, and defiance. Through these gendered and sexual (re)presentations, queer phenomenology, bodily acts, and performances amplify a leap into the future possibilities of genderqueer, and makes a space for alternative 'coalitions.'

Keywords– queer body politics, queer phenomenology, deconstruction, performativity, spectacle, counter-gaze

Bio

Saher Bano is a Senior Research Fellow, working with Dr Sarbani Banerjee, Assistant Professor at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee. Her research interests include Gender and Queer Studies, primarily focused on Postmodern literatures and theory. Currently, she is working on Contemporary Queer Feminist Poetry and Cinema. She has presented papers at numerous International and National Conferences focused on Queer Poetry and Gender Studies. She is a teaching assistant for NPTEL courses on 'Narrative Mode and Fiction,' 'Partition Literature' and 'Performative Gender and Religion in South Asia'.

Re-Embodiment as Radical Collective Practice: A Proposition

JO WINNING

Monash University, Australia

Abstract ID: 44

This conference paper makes a proposition which also seeks to act as an intervention in the contemporary moment. By bringing medical humanities' formulations of illness experience into dialogue with the conceptualisation of radical vulnerability advanced by scholars in the Global South, it aims to advance the concept of re-embodiment. Susan Sontag prefaces her *Illness as Metaphor* (1977) with the mapping of the two 'kingdoms' that govern human life: the kingdom of the well and the kingdom of the sick. Whilst dual citizenship is in fact a given for each and every human subject, Sontag records the profound denial of this fact by the human subject in health, and that structures the imaginations and practices of Western societies. Illness is constructed as an abject embodiment, a vulnerability to be disavowed. Sontag's late 20th-century geographical metaphor still pertains, accurately describing both the large-scale denials that underpin contemporary failings to deliver sustainable healthcare systems, as well as individual human health behaviours. A seminal work in medical humanities, Sontag's argument derives from her location in the Global North, and whilst offering deep critique of Western discourses, it nevertheless speaks from a place of innate privilege, and of a set of cultures whose metaphors around health, illness and the body are textured by colonial power. In a different field, contemporary scholarly voices from the Global South have recently advanced the concept of radical vulnerability. Richa Nagar and Roozbeh Shiraz describe 'the rips and fissures that we live and embody', the vulnerable embodiments that constitute our subjectivity. This vulnerability becomes radical when it is acknowledged and 'bodies enter into intense embodied journeys' with each other, proceeding in a collective endeavour to 'wrestle with incommensurable gaps in lived experience' as a shared compassionate and political project (Richa Nagar & Roozbeh Shiraz, 'Radical Vulnerability', *Antipode*, 2019). In his memoir *The Grammar of My Body* (2023), Abhishek Annica writes of how the embodied experiences of disability and queerness can be understood as structural elements of subjectivity, demonstrating that the body is a grammatical system. Yet against this, he contends, disability and queerness be reframed through the concept of radical vulnerability, as coordinates of power and potentiality, within individual lives and across social connections. This paper will ask what happens if we bring these different formulations from medical humanities and Global South scholarship into contact with each other. What if health was to be recognised as a transient state, and the kingdom of the sick to be understood as the principal home of the embodied human subject (we might borrow here too from Johanna Hedva's 'Sick Woman Theory')? What if radical vulnerability was to be understood as a universal state? This paper will argue that read together, these formulations bring us to a concept of re-embodiment. Further, it will propose that re-embodiment offers potential for radical collective practice in the face of the multiple global crises (climate emergency, pandemic, global conflicts, etc) that face us.

Bio

Jo Winning is Professor of Modern Literature & Critical Theory, and Head of School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University, Melbourne.

Reimagining Embodiment in Arts Therapies: An Intra-active Framework of Becoming

DOMINIK HAVSTEEN-FRANKLIN¹, ALICE MYLES¹, DANIEL STOLFI¹, LILIANA MONTOYA DE LA CRUZ¹

Brunel University London¹

Abstract ID: 124

This paper introduces a critical examination of the foundational constructs in arts therapies, particularly those rooted in developmental psychotherapies, to elucidate the complexities of embodied practices with therapeutic settings. By problematising conventional concepts such as relationality, boundaries, and the mechanisms of change, we propose an innovative intra-active framework that reconfigures the art-therapist-patient triangulation. This retheorisation challenges the centrality of human subjectivity by integrating embodiment and environmental factors as pivotal components in therapeutic transformation. Our analysis draws on interdisciplinary intersections among art, developmental psychotherapies, arts therapies, and aesthetics to craft a novel approach that emphasises the dynamic interplay between individuals and their surroundings. This paper aims to offer a fresh perspective on the role of arts in therapeutic practices, advocating for a model that not only respects but leverages the fluidity of boundaries and the significance of non-human agencies in the co-construction of therapeutic spaces. Through this intra-active lens, we explore the potential for a more nuanced understanding of change processes, one that foregrounds the mutual influence of embodied experiences and environmental contexts on therapeutic outcomes

Bios

Dominik Havsteen-Franklin (b. 1972) is a British Art Therapist and Clinical Academic of international acclaim, known for his pioneering work in the areas of arts and health. With a dedication to exploring and advancing innovative models of arts-based intervention, he investigates the transformative potential of body movement, musicality, and visual image making within healthcare and public domains. Presently holding the position of Professor of Practice in Arts Therapies at Brunel University London, Dominik is instrumental in developing arts-based therapeutic practices. In addition, he serves as a Consultant in Arts Psychotherapies for CNWL NHS Foundation Trust. A founding member and Vice President for the European Federation of Art Therapy, Dominik's leadership extends beyond borders, fostering a collaborative and dynamic interdisciplinary terrain for art therapy on an international scale.

Alice Myles Alice qualified as an art psychotherapist from Goldsmiths in 2014. She currently lectures on the MA Art Psychotherapy at Brunel University and works as an art psychotherapist in forensic and adult mental healthcare in a psychiatric inpatient setting and in private practice in South London. Alice completed the Psychoanalytic Studies programme at the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research in 2020. Her current research interests and projects include intersections of ethics and aesthetics in quantitative methodologies in art psychotherapy and the regeneration of reflective practices in secure hospital settings via transhumanism and posthumanism.

Daniel is a UK-based dramatherapist and medical anthropologist and has a background in English Literature. He teaches the Anthropology and Aesthetics module on the Art Psychotherapy MA at Brunel University. He has a specialist interest in the therapeutic uses of puppetry, and how our understanding and experience of suffering

and healing are informed by and reproduce social and cultural values. He is active in education, training, research, and publishing in these fields, and has presented his work extensively in the UK, Europe, and the US.

Liliana Montoya De La Cruz is the Programme Lead for the MA in Art Psychotherapy at Brunel University. She is an art psychotherapist, visual artist, and art educator born in Colombia, and has lived most of her life in Europe between the UK, France, and Spain. She has an MA in Art Therapy from the Pablo de Olavide University in Seville, where she has been lecturing and tutoring since 2017. In her clinical practice, she has worked with children and adolescents in schools, and in social services with women victims of domestic abuse. More recently, she has worked in the humanitarian sector with the Red Pencil and the Red Cross implementing art therapy interventions for asylum seekers in refugee camps.

Representing Ordinary Abortion, Abortion Stigma, and Reproductive Justice in Keabetswe Makhooane's "I dare you to call home" (2017) and Zola Ndimande's "Entering the Void" (2017)

RACHEL HURST

St. Francis Xavier University, Canada

Abstract ID: 96

The way we talk about abortion needs to change. Abortion is a safe medical procedure that has a significant impact on one's life, is emotionally and materially experienced in different ways, and must be recognised as fundamental to bodily sovereignty. These realities are not captured by the binary, US-centric polarisation of abortion as a "debate" between pro-choice and pro-life positions. Even in contexts where abortion is decriminalised or legal, abortion stigma, misinformation, and unequal access continue to pose significant barriers to achieving reproductive justice as a human right. Reproductive justice connects reproductive rights to social justice, and is the right to have children, not to have children, and care for one's own children in a safe community (Ross and Solinger 2017, Luna 2020). The broad argument of my research is that focusing on ordinary experiences of abortion promises valuable insight into best practices for abortion access and care, as well as non-legal barriers to accessing abortion, which can inform activist struggle for reproductive justice as well as more robust policies and legal approaches to abortion care.

My current research aspires to a world in which abortion is not a topic considered taboo or inappropriate, but instead is understood as an ordinary life experience. The imaginative labour of artists, performers, writers, activists, and abortion providers to represent abortion and creatively respond to legal, social, and attitudinal barriers over the past 50 years animates this research. Their representational work is liberatory and revelational, challenging mainstream understandings of abortion as a polarised and volatile subject. This paper is an analysis of visual artworks by Keabetswe Makhooane and Zola Ndimande in the "Body of Work: Abortion Conversations" exhibition within the context of ordinary abortion in South Africa. In South Africa, abortion was legalised in 1996 under the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act, which was a part of widespread legislative change during the transition from apartheid to independence enshrined in the new constitution. The movement for abortion rights initially focused on public health, and expanded to make connections between unintended pregnancy, gender-based violence, and apartheid policies that denied Black South Africans access to quality healthcare through strengthened coalitions between legal, human rights, and health activists (Favier et. al 2018). South Africa is recognised as having some of the most progressive abortion laws in the world; nevertheless, the legacies of population control and apartheid haunt discussions of sexual and reproductive health and rights (Stevens 2024) and there are multiple barriers to accessing abortion, including abortion stigma. Ndimande's sculpture "Entering the Void" (2017) creates a physical space for narratives about abortion that are unsayable within the contemporary prochoice movement, such as failure to use contraception, multiple abortions, or grieving an abortion (Ludlow 2008). Makhooane's painting, "I dare you to call home" (2017) is an abstract rendering of the layers of abortion experience, including the difficulty of finding accurate information about the abortion procedure and the isolation and loneliness many people feel when accessing abortion. As artworks that address abortion stigma in South Africa within its historical and political contexts, Ndimande's and Makhooane's artworks are powerful examples of representational reproductive justice work.

Bio

Rachel is Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at StFX University. Her research concerns relationships between power, embodiment, and visual culture. Author of *Surface Imaginations: Cosmetic Surgery, Photography, and Skin* (MQUP, 2015) and editor of *Representing Abortion* (Routledge, 2021), her most recent essays were published in *Feminist Studies*, *Configurations*, and *Body & Society*.

Reproductive Bodies and Nutrition - Field Observations From Central India

DEVANSHI CHANCHANI

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 121

From research in central Chhattisgarh, this paper interprets the bearing that healthcare beliefs and practices may have in shaping maternal and child nutrition -both in the light of biomedical recommendations and within the context and constraints of a rural village setting. It contends that ideas about 'hot' and 'cold' bodily states influences nutrition practices. These practices could have, in light of biomedical recommendations, varying influence on health and nutrition of mothers and infants. I contend that health beliefs and practices that are at variance from biomedical recommendations appear to have few consequences for gestational nutrition. In the postpartum however, health ideas at variance from biomedical recommendations appear to have an important bearing on maternal nutrition and infant feeding, and may put mothers and children at risk of nutritional deficiency. While caring practices are influenced by cultural formulations, they also reflect, perhaps, adaptations to health risks.

Bio

I am a Lecturer in Global Futures at Brunel University London. I work in the field of development studies.

Restricting the Right to Asylum in the UK: A Legal Analysis of Securitisation Strategies

CRISTINA SÁNEZ PÉREZ

University of Leeds, UK

Abstract ID: 80B

Securitisation has characterised the reform of immigration law in recent years and centred academic commentary in this area. Notions of sovereignty and border control justified the tightening of immigration laws, advancing the goals of Hostile Environment policies through new security mechanisms. In recent years, securitisation strategies have extended to asylum, an area in which criminal law and externalisation mechanisms have become essential pieces of reforms adopted after Brexit. This paper will analyse the externalization strategies adopted in the field of asylum in the UK and their connection to the so-called 'hostile environment' policies. It will examine how these mechanisms operate to further the goals of the so-called "hostile environment", blurring the lines between refugee and immigration law and excluding asylum seekers from access to basic human rights.

Bio

Dr. Cristina Saenz Perez is a Lecturer in Criminal Law and Criminal Justice at the University of Leeds. Her research focuses on EU criminal law, Brexit's implications on security and human rights, and Europe's multi-level security governance. Cristina previously taught at the University of Lincoln and Nottingham Trent University and worked as a Graduate Research Assistant at the Centre for European Law and Internationalisation (University of Leicester).

Rethinking Cancerous Bodies Through Jo Spence's Practice of Photofantasy

LIZZIE MERRILL

University of York, UK

Abstract ID: 127

This paper will analyse the ways in which visual images and visual narratives can express the embodied experiences of people who have had cancer. It will focus on Jo Spence's *The Final Project* (1991-2) and the visual outcomes of a workshop based on Spence's method of photofantasy, held with participants (which produced 32 artworks). Jo Spence was a British photographer and cultural worker whose method of artmaking altered significantly following a leukaemia diagnosis in 1990.

Spence's collaborator, Terry Dennett, has recalled the effects of her leukaemia, noting that it made her "less mobile" and "sapp[ed] her energy", leading Spence to the realisation that "her health was no longer good enough for her to engage directly in photography" (Dennett in Spence 1995, 222). Where Spence had once sought new locations for her photographs to take place, she now needed a practice that required less mobility. Spence termed the artistic method that developed from this photofantasy. This method allowed the artist to continue making work from her sickbed, by accessing images from her vast archive to create new dynamic scenes. Photofantasy involved Spence collaging her old images "by sandwiching slides together and making camera double exposures" (Dennett in Lee 2013, 9), rather than taking new ones.

The challenges experienced by Spence's leukaemia, namely lowered immunity and exhaustion, are commonly experienced by other cancer sufferers because of the effects of their disease and/or treatment. For this reason, the method of photofantasy appears to be one uniquely attuned to the physical challenges that cancer patienthood imposes. Further to this, however, photofantasy as a method offers a unique insight into aspects of the experience of cancer patienthood that are inaccessible through language alone. The nature of collaging photographs affords the capacity to affect photographic realities, allowing the artist or maker to reimagine scenes in a new light. Equally, the nature of collage is such that meaning can emerge as the practice unfolds, so makers do not need to begin artmaking with any fixed or whole idea. Therefore, I argue that through photofantasy, Spence and the workshop participants are afforded new tools to explore and manage their experiences of cancer.

My study employs a methodology of visual analysis and auto-theory to analyse the ways that photofantasy has generated new tools for exploring cancer experience. I will focus on the visual metaphors that emerged through this practice regarding the cancerous body, considering how Spence, participants and I explored the ways our bodies were affected and altered by diagnosis and treatment.

'The Final Project' is often critically referred to as merely a meditation on death and dying (Boyer 2016, Dennett in Lee 2013). However, through the combined experiences of myself and workshop participants, I will contest this, offering Spence's primary method in this project, Photofantasy, as a rich site for the exploration of illness experience.

Bio

Lizzie is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Women's Studies at York University and is supported by WRoCAH. With a background in practice-based fine art, Lizzie's project explores how creative methods can express our embodied experiences of illness. Lizzie currently holds a BA in Fine Art from Central St Martins and an MSt in Women's Studies from Oxford University.

Revolting Transformations: Uncanny Bodies in Stop Motion

AYDEN LAMB

California Institute of the Arts, USA

Abstract ID: 51B

This paper focuses on “queered” bodies as found in the art of stop motion animation, and their liberatory potential in regards to our perception of ourselves. Bodies in stop motion animation morph well beyond the limits of our own, transcending the boundaries of physicality in ways that can be both gruesome and liberating to witness. The hybridization of the uncanny physics of animated space with the embodiment, texture and heft of the physics of the real world can be interpreted both as an expansion of these realities, and as a failure to achieve either. The human body as a site of possibility, failure, and above all, change in stop motion echoes the many roles the queer body has played societally alongside of it. Various methods by which the body can resist or revolt against societal limitations are envisioned in both animation history and queer history, in ways that often mirror or compliment one another. In this paper, I investigate several stop motion works ranging from Jan Svankmajer’s 1971 short *Jabberwocky* to the surreal GIF work of artist and educator Erma Fiend in conjunction with theoretical texts to argue for the generative possibilities of grotesque and “failed” bodies in stop motion animation. I will explore the concept that the “failure” of these queered stop motion bodies to meet a utopic, binaried ideal creates the potential for new visions of what a body can be. Through this, I propose to demonstrate the radical, freeing promise of unusual and uncomfortable embodiment, both in animation and in life.

Bio

Ayden Lamb is a multi-media artist and filmmaker based between Los Angeles and the Canadian prairies. Their practice gravitates towards the dark, the dreamy, and the surreal— their work explores memory, loss, and the ties that bind through the lenses of fibre art, puppetry, and ritual. They are currently an MFA candidate in Experimental Animation at the California Institute of the Arts."

Searching for an Absent Citizen: The Unmasked Truth

ASHWATHI SOMAN

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 18

This paper will examine how the framework of intersectionality can be better used to comprehend the double-edged experiences of disabled women face. Individuals in society fail to understand that disabled women are sexual beings, should have control over their reproductive choices and access to their sexuality when exploring and fulfilling relationships in their lives. It is not always societal misconceptions about disability and sexuality, but society does not want to accept that disabled women can indeed have romantic feelings and want to exercise their reproductive freedom. It is necessary to adopt an epistemological attitude before discussing how legislative instruments do not take this component of the intersectionality narrative into account. It is unrealistic to expect the format of the law to alter and eliminate all stigma. Therefore, a number of international agreements will be used to investigate the notion that disabled women have abnormal bodies. However, it is arguable that because this issue is underrepresented in legal frameworks, and it is viewed as a grave human rights violation with a view to self-determination.

This paper will expound that there is a paucity of legislation to ensure disabled women's rights are not interfered by systemic discrimination. These are fundamental to comprehend because disabled women from ethnic minorities are disallowed to express their sexuality due to different interlocking oppressions. Arguably, the law needs to be stripped to avoid discriminatory structures.

Although, the CEDAW has pledged to safeguard reproductive health rights of all women, it does not delve into greater detail to examine how the failure to recognise intersectionality can contribute to the perpetuation of prejudice. It will explicitly question traditionalist approaches methodology. The cisgender white woman is the standard by which women's protection is measured. This ideology refuses to acknowledge the discrimination, disabled women face on multiple levels. CEDAW has been accused of disregarding the intersectional nature of discrimination and promoting of a single, homogeneous group of women, owing to its idleness and inertia for this technique. It will be established that the CEDAW falls short of offering particular protection or comprehension for the discrimination of disabled women encounter, regarding their sexuality. Although, this particular feature of CEDAW is mentioned, there is no clear legal framework for discussing intersectional oppression.

Hereof, this piece attempts to highlight concerns that legislative tools such as CEDAW ignores, women can experience disadvantage due to their multiple identities. There is a dissonance between intersectional theory and discrimination law, which will be investigated. It is accepted that prejudice is prevalent, it needs to be understood, how an intersectional approach will be successful in its outcomes by using CEDAW. This piece will focus on the marginalisation of disabled women in specific legislative contexts, where they are viewed as disposable objects, contributing to the pervasive narrative of animalisation. Accordingly, it will be explained how the CEDAW is applied as an emancipatory instrument to comprehend the steps that parties take to address harmful and damaging stereotypes.

Bio

I have a first-class LLB and LLM degree, awards from the Law School, Thompson Reuters, and Vice-Chancellors for my academic performance and volunteer activity. I enjoy motivational speaking for corporate training sessions and volunteering in lecturing for multi-disciplinary subjects at Brunel University London. I am a believer in rejecting taboo subjects.

Shapeshifting Forms, Cleaving Ecologies of Encounter: Urban Folk Project's Yellammaanaata; StillPoint's Detritus

SUPRAJA R

Ashoka University, India

Abstract ID: 90

This paper brings together two seemingly different, yet remarkable theatre, performance and contemporary dance pieces together - the Urban Folk Project's shapeshifting 'Yellammaanaata' (2016-present) across Bangalore city, and that of the Kolkata based Arts Forward's meditative and provocative 'Detritus' (2022-present). These are brought together in conversation in and of their separate engagements with questions surrounding the politics of form, place, and the aesthetic (re)encounters they generate by virtue of their performances. The first, the Urban Folk Project, helmed by the theatre artist and performer Shilpa Mudbi, holds in their repertoire embodied knowledge-systems from their work across the hinterlands of Karnataka (in Southern India): they collect various "folk" songs surrounding the (subaltern) Goddess Yellamma. Their 'Yellammaanaata', which translates to 'the play of Goddess Yellamma' has taken on many shapeshifting forms of rendition across the urban cityscape of Bangalore city since 2016. In these encounters and their reimaginings, I discern their work to cleave a relationality with the cultural labour of the "folk", while nonetheless cleaving novel ecologies of encounter to emerge in the cityscape. Yellamma's own fragmented, mythopoetic body, I argue, is accessed in changing ways through the Urban Folk Project's sonic registers, culling forth questions of caste, region and the politics of the same. The second, 'Detritus', performed by members of the Kolkata-based Arts Forward, run by the artist-performer Paramita Saha, is a contemporary dance site-specific piece. Detritus enquires into questions that look to collapse the human-nonhuman divide, and in my reading, bring forth a non-representational aesthetics on the climate crisis, wounded ecology, and their encounters with the ethics of "ecoperformance", as such. How does contemporary dance, a movement or dance form that privileges a so-called breaking across all forms, heed and cleave at re-imagining urgent encounters amidst the body, waste, land and sustainability for life at large? These are some of the questions I would like to pose and work out with the (Inter)Disciplinary gathering, and chart where these two aesthetic, contemporary and historically-contingent theatre, performance and dance pieces lead us to re-imagine bodies and our relationalities with the conditions of the world(s) we have inherited.

Bio

Supraja R is a Doctoral student in the Department of English, Ashoka University. Their work is concerned with questions of aesthetics, human and non-human relationships, notions of the body and ecology.

‘She Flays They Say With An Amazing Grace’: The Somatics and Story of Georgian Flagellation Practices

EMMA MITCHELL

Brunel University London

Abstract ID: 100

This practice-based paper explores the dynamics of flagellation in the eighteenth-century through movement and story. ‘Le vice anglais’ was a popular Georgian fetish and the 1761 edition of Harris’s List of Covent Garden Ladies, a directory of sex workers operating in central London, lists several women offering this service, including the highly skilled Nancy V-ne. Using contemporary literature, including manuals and erotic fiction, and somatic storytelling practices, this paper explores what it means to be a middle-aged woman making a living through sex work in an industry that prizes youth and above all, virginity. This is experimental historical fiction that places the body front and centre, accessing the repetitive action of whipping as creative impetus and writing prompt to add dimensionality to the female ciphers contained in a work written by men for male pleasure.

Bio

Emma Mitchell is a comedian brand strategist, Creative Writing doctoral researcher at Brunel University London, and Techne scholar whose work centres on the body, especially the female body, and its relationship to culture, material experience and the self. Her research focusses on experimental writing practices & forms as vehicles to express lost and marginalised female voices.

Sick, White and Famous: Remembering the (Colonial) Author Body- or, Robert Louis Stevenson in Three Portraits

ALICE CHAPMAN-KELLY

University of Edinburgh, UK

Abstract ID: 69

Plagued with chronic bronchial problems throughout his life, the famous Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson travelled to the Pacific with his family in search warmer climes in the late 1880s; they settled in Samoa in 1890, where he wrote prolifically about the ills of colonialism and warned of its encroachment in the region, before dying suddenly from a stroke four years later, at the age of 44. In this way, Stevenson, as a figure, has come to represent a number of competing cultural discourses, with his biography marked by colonial conceptions of time, place and ownership, and also by anti-colonial resistance movements, and the anachronisms and asynchronies of chronic illness and 'crip' temporalities (Kafer 2013).

In the basement of Edinburgh's Writer's Museum, the Robert Louis Stevenson exhibit includes three portraits of the author that encapsulate the contradictory formations that have shaped his entry into cultural memory: one that his nanny loved, one that his wife hated, and one, at the exhibit's entrance, that appears to be cropped from a larger photo of Stevenson and a Samoan chief, Tuimaleali'ifano Si'ua'ana. Stevenson's migration to Samoa is the essential but occluded backdrop to each of these pictures. The ill health that motivated the move to Samoa is in evidence in the photograph that his beloved nanny, Alison Cunningham, is thought to have treasured (his long hair in the photo ascribed to medical advice to keep warm in the cold Scottish winters). In contrast, the Pieri Nerli portrait that Fanny Stevenson would one day disparage as a 'represent[ation] ... the author of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' rather than of 'just Louis' (cited in Van De Grift Sanchez 2008 [1920]), was painted at the Stevenson's estate in Apia, 'Vailima', an experience that was characterised by Pacific heat and humidity for all involved. Stevenson's time in Samoa is also present in the museum through the absence of Si'ua'ana in the image at the exhibit's entrance, as it appears this paramount chief, one of the leaders of the non-violent Mau movement for Samoan independence, has been edited out of this famous image – a photograph once erroneously known as 'Stevenson and his boy' – so that Stevenson stands alone to welcome his many visitors.

This paper analyses each of these author-images to consider how the famed (dead white male) author body is constructed and memorialised within the Scottish cultural imaginary through colonial and neo-colonial mechanisms of archiving and collection. Part literary studies, part museum studies, part art history, it treats the author-body as a distinct discursive concept that is quite studiously kept apart from the living, breathing, sweating, freezing – and often hurting – person writing behind it (Quah and Ridgway 2022), and considers how such a body materialises on the author-portrait canvas to work on behalf of a specific version of the nation and its literary history (Sabeti 2023; see also Belting 2011).

Bio

Dr Alice Chapman-Kelly (she/her) is Postdoctoral Research Fellow on the 'Remediating Stevenson' project at the University of Edinburgh. She is the author of *Decolonising the Conrad Canon* (Liverpool UP, 2022) and a new monograph, *Fanfiction as Queer Healing: Femslash Authorship and the Swan Queen Ship* (Bloomsbury Academic), out in November 2024.

Sound in the Trees: Public Soundscape Sculpture of Voice Curation

MARIANA BOGDANOVA

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 70

Exhibition

The contribution is a public art sound sculpture which is a curated knowledge exchange between the University and the voluntary sector in the community using creative conversation and the arts. Brunel academics, students, and VCOs have discussions which are turned into a soundscape installation, with which we “speak to the public” about our views on the work of the voluntary sector as they pass by. The exhibition comprises birdhouses and birdcages installed around the University’s campus in the trees (map and QR codes to be provided). Each sculpture streams one of two soundscapes, comprising the voices of people involved in the discussions and/or their creative work – interview responses, group discussions, individual reflections, poetry reading, sounds and music. The themes are issues emerging from the interviews with the voluntary workers and their beneficiaries, followed by Brunel students and staff as they “respond” with their own content and views on the issues raised. The birdhouses become the collective body of stories of hope, the optimistic voice of community. The birdcages (with resident faux canaries) are the collective body of concern, struggle and hard times, just like the canaries in the mine warned the miners of trouble lurking in the dark...

At a time when online digital spaces are dominating public conversations, the role of a physical place where people gather to receive and provide help and find meaning may be overshadowed. A community exists in a real geographical place with its unique history, transformations, and diversity of people. As part of this community, the voluntary sector in the UK is an eclectic collective body with a mission to provide space and support for people and interest groups, especially those without the means to cope on their own or the voice to improve their place in society. Despite the great work the voluntary sector is doing in providing services to the public sector, caring for the community, creating social value and support for the most vulnerable groups in our society, it is going under and closing its doors because of lack of funding. In this sense, a disappearing body of the sector's work lives on in the voices of people involved in this work or inspired by it. Through the sculptures, the researcher aims to speak to the public, but in effect, the voices are metaphorically and literally "left to the wind" as they play in the trees.

Bio

Mariana is an organisation studies academic and Lecturer in Management. Research interests include voluntary sector management, civil society, knowledge and learning organisations, and creative teaching and research methods. Joined Brunel Business School in 2021 from the London School of Economics (2018-2021), PhD from City University London (2013).

Spin

ELLIS SHARPE¹, NICOLA DEMOSTHENOUS¹, SERENA PAVER¹

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust¹

Abstract ID: 82

'Spin' would be a short film lasting for several minutes. This film would be made in collaboration with the three Arts Therapists currently working across the same adult inpatient wards but on different days for people experiencing acute mental health problems. The film seeks to explore some of the challenges and courage of the people who find their way into a therapeutic space in which engagement with art materials, music or dance movement is offered as part of their recovery journey. Film would be the most suitable medium for this collaboration to echo the interdisciplinary spirit for the international conference. The film would incorporate art, dance/movement and music in the following ways:

- Audio of a disembodied voice describing a painting- an 'audio-descriptive painting'. The voice describes the image for the viewer to visualise and then to interact with.
- Footage of the body in dance/movement. The dance/movement could be in response to some of the descriptions/instructions from the disembodied voice.
- Music/footage i.e. the body making sound by use of musical instruments.

Bio

We are three Arts Therapists establishing therapeutic spaces in recent months across adult inpatient wards for men and women. We currently work in collaboration with each other across art, music and dance/movement and wish to venture into new territory by creating a collaborative artwork of our own for (Inter)Disciplinary Bodies.

Storying the Body: Narratives from a Sri Lankan War Zone

NELOUFER DE MEL ¹, RUHANIE PERERA ¹, VISAKESA CHANDRASEKERAM ¹

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, ¹

Abstract ID: 107

Film

This is a screening of the film-essay *Journey* (2023), followed by a Q&A with the film maker and researchers involved in the film project. *Journey* draws on a two-year applied theatre project with Tamil women in the East of Sri Lanka who were severely affected by the Sri Lankan civil war (1983-2009). It invites an exploration of how the women share their stories, at times contemplative and elegiac, at other times invoking the vengeance of the Goddess Kannagi. As it figuratively narrates these stories, the film asks how a collective memory of war might be embodied: assembled in relation to the historical event, as well as carried and performed by bodies that are deeply gendered, ethicized and classed. Its stories are of bare life and trauma, resilience and survival; of journeys that are never linear. The film-essay is, therefore, as much about the stories the women tell, as it is about the structures of storytelling. Storytelling draws on both the immersive experiences of the body, as well as embodied memories that are located in the specificities of time and place. The landscape of stories referenced in the film-essay emanate from transitioning bodies, and in their sharing, builds a reciprocal relationship between multiple lived, embodied experiences. The screening and panel discussion will speak, therefore, to the concerns of the conference on (Inter)Disciplinary Bodies, engaging with questions on the body in contexts of conflict as ontological, (ill)legal, political, sexualized and gendered and therefore the locus of experience, community, nation and the state.

Background:

From 1983-2009, a civil war was waged in Sri Lanka over the formation of a separate state of Tamil Eelam. It was fought predominantly in the Tamil speaking areas of the north and east of the island. Women were severely affected by the war. While some remained silent in the face of immense trauma, grief, shame and fear, others chose to share their stories behind closed doors, or join protest movements seeking justice.

A team of Sri Lankan academic researchers, theatre and film practitioners affiliated to the UKRI GCRF Gender Justice and Security Research Hub worked in collaboration with a group of war affected Tamil women, and women theatre artists based in the east of Sri Lanka, on an arts-based storytelling project over a two-year period. The project was titled "Narrating (In)Security, Community Storytelling: War, Memory, Justice". Using image and playback theatre, memory mapping, journals, movement and film, what evolved was a journey in process-centred creative work that explored how these stories could be re-told: figuratively, ethically, aesthetically and politically. Outputs from the project were the video installation *Now You Must Bear Witness*, research papers, and the film-essay *Journey*.

Bios

Neloufer de Mel (Principal Researcher) is Chair Professor of English, Department of English, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Co-Director of the GCRF Gender Justice and Security Research Hub. Working on two of the Hub's projects, her research has been on conflict related sexual violence in Sri Lanka and arts-based methods in conflict zones.

Ruhanie Perera is a theatre performer and lecturer at the Department of English, University of Colombo. She is a founding member of the Floating Space Theatre Company. "Inscribing Her" (2013) and "Somewhere Between Truth and its Telling" (2012) are two of her solo performances that reflect her preoccupation with the body, embodiment, and the lived experience of women.

Visakesa Chandrasekeram is a film maker who is also a lawyer and an academic. He has three award winning films to his credit. His PhD, from the Australian National University, was on the use of confessionary evidence under counter-terrorism laws. He currently works as a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo.

Strokes

DAVID CRUMP

Independent Animator

Abstract ID: 131

My film *Strokes* animates two bodies distorting in a sexual way based on a Francis Bacon Painting, (*Two Bodies* 1965)

Bio

David Crump is a painter turned animator, exploring the potential of stop motion, and plasticine to emulate visceral feelings of painting. Using plasticine like paint, mixing up colours and making considered applications of plasticine to try and capture a persons inner feelings very much how an artist might approach a portrait. His work often includes a boil, which means each frame a character is rubbed down, letting the viewer understand his marks are all over this work, which compliments the personal stories he is trying to tell. The boil is performative but also the life force of his figures, letting the viewer understand the characters are alive in complex ways beyond the movement, or lack of movement that they may or may not make. Much like painting it's the accidents and uncontrollable elements that often lead the direction of the work, animating instinctively and letting the plasticine direct David where to go next. Swipes and contorted figures are regular themes throughout his work, leaning into almost sculptural territories. The work explores themes of vulnerability, shame, acceptance, and sexuality, and are about the artist's own personal experiences growing up gay.

Technologies of Sentiment and the Making of Racial Differences: Reassessing Caroline Gurrey's 1905-1909 Photographic Portraits of Mixed-Race Bodies

HANNAH TAVARES

University of Hawai'i, Manoa

Abstract ID: 04

It has been over thirty years since the American scholar of comparative literature and African studies, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., announced "Race, as a meaningful criterion within the biological sciences, has long been recognized to be a fiction" (1985, p. 4). Yet, in a recent publication titled, *Race, Monogamy, and Other Lies They Told You* the American anthropologist Agustín Fuentes warns once again the ubiquitous idea that humans are divided into biological races (Black, White, Asian, etc.) is an enduring societal misconception. While humans are not inherently divided into biological races, racialism and racism exists and has significant implications for all of humanity. The photographs of Caroline Gurrey, a photographer based in Hawai'i at the turn of the twentieth century, appear to have appreciated how race mattered. Race figured prominently in her photographs but not according to prevalent racial discourses of the time. By the 1850s, as Gates calls attention to, ideas of "irresistible racial differences" were commonly held (1985, p. 3). Still, the series of photographic portraits attributed to Gurrey are in stark contrast with the photographic images that comprise the racial psychology studies on Hawaiian and immigrant school children by her contemporaries including the renowned psychologist, Stanley D. Porteus (1883-1972) who served as the Director of the Psychological and Psychopathic Clinic at the University of Hawai'i, and the iconic 1897 photograph of the first graduating class of the Kamehameha School for Girls. Developed prior to another well-known Hawai'i based photographer, R. J. Baker (1880-1972), I propose Gurrey's photographs comprise the tension of a thing that is both actual and contrived. My argument is that race, and the racialized subject, are not things that pre-exists and then re-presented through the technology of photography and made visible in the photographic image; rather, race and racialization is what emerges through the encounter of being photographed.

My paper on the role of photography in the making of race differences inevitably departs from critical research in photography that posits subjectivity is constructed through a photographic system of representation. The issue with this is, as Daniel Rubinstein argues, "they take as given the observation that photography is a technology that produces an image and that the image is one of resemblance" (2023, p. 10). In agreement with Rubinstein, "Photography produces meaning by repetition, but it is not a repetition of identity or sameness; it is a repetition of difference" (2023, p. x). The emphasis here is placed on photography not purely as a description of picture-making but as the product of specific technological processes. I exploit the tension Gurrey's photographs generated in the making of race differences. On the one hand the portraits effectuate a category of racially mixed subjects and on the other they generate possibilities for revaluing the cultural dominant discourses on racial segregation expressed in anti-miscegenation laws in the United States. Devised in a distinct space-time, the portraits were completed in 1905 - 1909, my paper features a theoretical orientation which prefers to remain agnostic to the long tradition which considers photography as a regime of representation. It asks how power manifested in and through the making of the mixed-race body in the early twentieth century and how might we come to to engage its twenty first century construct.

Bio

Tavares is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Her work explores the personal, relational, and diasporic, and the construction of geographical identity. Her practice draws from multiple cultural and disciplinary perspectives to examine the ambivalence and complexity of territorial and cultural boundaries. At the center of her work is the body, understood as a site of power and action.

The “Ever Presence” of Unnamed & Unseen Female Bodies Through Voices in the 1940 and 2020 Film Adaptations of Rebecca

ALEXIS NICOLE LYGOUMENOS

University of Georgia, USA

Abstract ID: 91

In her essay “Caught and Rebecca: The Inscription of Femininity as Absence,” Mary Anne Doane critiques Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rebecca* because of its depiction of two women absent from their own narratives: Mrs. de Winter absent of agency, and Rebecca absent of bodily presence. The film, Doane writes, “Manifest[s] an obsession with certain physical mechanisms which have been associated with the female (chiefly masochism, hysteria, and paranoia).” In this paper, I apply a feminist materialist lens to indicate that 2020’s *Rebecca* both builds upon and critiques Doane’s argument, decentering the body and recentering attempts by the women of the film, both in front of and behind the camera, to expand their residence, sovereignty, and to ultimately prosper. As for Rebecca, rather than “ever absent” as Hitchcock depicts and Doane describes, in the 2020 iteration, she is what I term “ever present” through her voice, as an extension of her body.

I define both Mrs. de Winters’ states as “ever present,” acknowledging and pointing to their constant influence and agency regardless of physical occupancy. The titular character is no longer absent, but rather “ever present,” pointing to her lingering constancy of occupancy, despite lack of corporeal form. This can by extension, be applied to her successor too. She is thus all-knowing in a ghostlike sense, peering over the thin veil between this world and the next. This aligns with The British Film Institute’s Patricia White, who notes what she terms the “pervasive presence of Rebecca” in the 1940 film.

I will examine ways in which the 2020 film deploys strategic camerawork, material objects, the voice, and class struggles to effectively engage with the story of two women: one with no name, haunted by another with no corporeal form. Under sonic materialism, the material roots of the voice derive from the utilization and modification of one’s vocal cords and orifices to bring about voiced sound, resonance, and articulation. Sound is, of course, a form of energy that is caused by the vibration of matter, the fundamental substance in nature and all things. This then falls under the categorical concept of materialism, most specifically, new materialism, which encompasses the corporeality of material bodies including the voice’s interconnected ontologically inseparable relationship within that host. “Though not themselves ‘material’” write Nick J. Fox and Pam Alldred in *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*, “such elements have the capacity to produce material effects.” I will reference *mise-en-scènes* throughout the 2020 film, with particular focus on Jane Goldman with Director Ben Wheatley’s engagement with four key scenes: the proposal, Maxim’s final confession, Mrs. de Winter’s vocal impression of her husband at the mirror, and an exchange with marionette puppets. Through eliminating problematic scenes, the lingering materiality of occupancy and voice, and the bolstering of agency, I argue the 2020 variation exceeds the “woman film” or “woman’s picture” trope of its predecessor, successfully taking it from a “woman’s film” to “these women’s film,” encompassing individualized contributions of a variety of female creatives.

Bio

Alexis Lygoumenos is a Performance Studies PhD Candidate at the American University of Georgia. Under the stage name Alexis Nichols, she is an award-winning actor, writer, director, model, and voiceover talent. As such, she is most interested in the isolation and subsequent re-calibration of body and voice.

The Body as Content: Artificial Intelligences and the Shaping of Identity

SARAH-MACE DENNIS

Ravensbourne University/Independent Artist, UK

Abstract ID: 59

The Body as Content is a performance/ presentation that provides insight into how bodies and the identities that enliven them are transformed through their spatial distribution across sites of physical and virtual power.

Emerging from my experience of very severe traumatic brain injury, this performative conference paper shifts between philosophical, scientific, participatory and performative registers to present a theory of identity that is formed through both habitual and resistant interactions with institutional languages and routines. Drawing on the philosophical writings of Catherine Malabou (Plasticity at the Dusk of Writing) and Antonin Artaud (Body without Organs), as well as neuroscientific insights from David Eagleman (Livewired) Joseph Le Doux (Tell Tale Brain) and Antonio Damasio (Looking for Spinoza), I describe the complexity of neurological annihilation — and the life altering impact this has had on my body, consciousness and identity. Using a ficto-critical writing style to thread speculative-fictions into critical-facts, I describe how I now understand the synapses that wire together our bodies/ thoughts/ brains as a series of performative dialogues between conscious awareness and medical, environmental and clinical intelligences. Trying to understand the uncanny presence of my phantom brain/ body as I move through and interact with institutional, political and social environments, I constantly shift between the performances of me, her, them and I.

Switching between first- and second-person internal monologues, my embodied experience of brain transformation is shared through participatory performance techniques to invite the audience to listen to and attempt to embody the conflicting experiences of identity I have inhabited since the accident. In the first performative scenario we observe me/ her/ us in a neurologist's office, being assessed for severe undiagnosed vertigo. As the scene unfolds, the Doctor reverts to habitual patterns of communication, interrogating her subject for what she perceives as inaccurate and often contradictory descriptions of her symptoms. This is followed by two more scenarios, where the Protagonist is interrogated by two more characters in hierarchical roles. The first insists that she must present brain injury related data because there is no visible evidence, while the second interrogates her cognitive ability after mistakenly assuming she is neurodiverse.

Throughout the performance/ paper, both the audience and AI are asked to respond to text prompts about the relationship between clinical knowledge, language, identity and care. Embedding their responses into the theoretical insights integrated throughout the work's narrative, this participatory research investigation reveals the ways in which transgressive bodies are used as content for subconscious projections that feed into complex performative utterances, that change how we view ourselves, each other, and our position in social structures. By reframing the habitual, often speculative languages and technologies used to label the brain and brain function, this work asks audiences to participate in a dialogue that questions how the body acts and reacts to discursive power, and how institutional hierarchies influence our desire to both reach for and resist new ways of thinking, being and working together.

Bio

Sarah-Mace Dennis is an artist/filmmaker working at the intersections of critical writing, performance, spatial practice, and the moving image. She has been commissioned to create public projection works in the UK and Australia. Her writing and films on consciousness, dance and brain plasticity have been exhibited and published internationally in *The Routledge Companion to Medicine and Performance* and *Moves, Movies, Music: The Sonic World of Dance Film*. She is Artistic Director of Flaneuse Creative and Senior Lecturer in Digital Creation at Ravensbourne University.

The Business of Fertility Commodification: Reviewing Wombs for Rent through the Lens of Feminist Hedonic Jurisprudence

PIN LEAN LAU

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 08

The business of fertility commodification, commonly known as 'wombs for rent' or commercial surrogacy, has emerged as a controversial topic in contemporary society (Oliveras 2017). This paper aims to review the practice of 'wombs for rent' through the lens of feminist hedonic jurisprudence. Feminist hedonic jurisprudence provides a framework for analysing the ethical and moral implications of surrogacy, particularly from a feminist perspective. It is a niche within the broader area of feminist legal theory, which particularly explores how law and legal systems can positively contribute to women's well-being and happiness. The focus of hedonic jurisprudence isn't merely to rectify gender biases in law but to frame laws in a way that supports women's satisfaction, fulfilment, and overall life quality (MacKinnon 1988). However, it's important to note that the term 'feminist hedonic jurisprudence' isn't as widely used or recognized in the academic literature, and the use of hedonic jurisprudence within this paper is to be understood within the broader feminist jurisprudence discourse.

The paper begins by examining the discourse surrounding 'wombs for rent', including fertility businesses capitulating on its commercialisation, and how it intersects with issues of gender, sexuality, and power. It explores how the concept of 'wombs for rent' has been used by hetero-activist groups in Ireland to align themselves with feminist movements, while simultaneously promoting heteronormative and patriarchal ideologies (Browne, Nash, and Gorman-Murray 2018). Furthermore, the paper addresses the concerns raised by feminist scholars regarding the exploitation of women's bodies in surrogacy arrangements. Feminist critiques centre around three main concerns: the exploitation of women's bodies, the commodification of women's and children's bodies, and the resulting commodification of parenthood (Malmquist and Hojerstrom 2020). In doing so, this paper focuses on the feminist scholarship of three notable feminist scholars: Martha Fineman, Mari Matsuda, and Mary Joe Frug.

The paper further analyses the potential violation of fundamental human rights and the dehumanizing effects of commercializing a woman's body by renting her womb and putting a price tag on the children born through this process (Patrikiou et al. 2022). It acknowledges that the practice of surrogacy is complex and subject to diverse perspectives. However, it argues that feminist hedonic jurisprudence provides valuable insights into the ethical implications of 'wombs for rent' and offers a critical lens for understanding the power dynamics and gender inequalities inherent in the commodification of reproductive labour (West 2000).

The paper concludes by highlighting the need for further research and open dialogue on the topic of 'wombs for rent' to ensure a comprehensive understanding of its implications for women's rights, bodily autonomy, and the ethics of reproductive practices. By examining the discourse surrounding 'wombs for rent' and analysing it through the framework of feminist hedonic jurisprudence, the paper aims to contribute to a deepened understanding of the ethical and moral implications of surrogacy, particularly from a feminist perspective (Ruiz-Robledillo and Moya-Albiol 2016), whilst shedding further light on the potential exploitation and commodification of women's bodies within the surrogacy industry, necessitating intervention by the law.

Bio

I am a Senior Lecturer in Bio-Law in Brunel Law School. My research encompasses European, international, and comparative law for genome editing (with a focus on pre-implementation genetic diagnosis, reproductive technologies and women's bodies; and the proliferation of virulent gene-edited pathogens and global bio-security); propertization and commodification studies of generic materials and biomedical technologies; the ethico-legal governance for artificial intelligence (AI) systems (with a focus on protection of fundamental rights, spatial 'body citizenship' and bio-constitutional implications of the AI-augmented biological human body, and AI in women's health); and technologies horizon scanning and legal future foresighting for new and emerging technologies and environments, such as the Metaverse.

The Case of Patrice Lumumba: The Vanishing Body that Refuses to Die

PIET DEFRAEYE

University of Alberta, Canada

Abstract ID: 64A

Patrice Lumumba (1925-1961), the first (and so-far only democratically elected) leader of independent Congo was brutally assassinated 6 months into his term of office. His body was dissolved in acid, so as not to leave any material trace for forensic examination or post-mortem veneration. While Lumumba during his short political career had emerged as a forceful figure in the decolonisation process of Africa, particularly in his launch of pan-Africanism, his death has catapulted him in an ongoing practice of political and cultural-artistic response.

Lumumba's corpse (and lack thereof) has been a central trope in scores of artistic responses – whether it be in painting, theatre, sculpture, film, novels, poetry, even in memorializing architecture. While Achille Mbembe defines necropower as a colonizing force that decides on the right to live and thus condemns a category of people to “the living dead,” I will argue that Lumumba, in the ongoing cultural-artistic (and opportunistic-political) responses has been elevated to a living dead. The lack of a material corpse has in fact inspired artists to create what Mbembe himself calls a Fanonian subject: a refusal to subjugation and to representation. I propose to look at Sven Augustijnen's film *Spectres* (2011) and the urban installation *AWB 082-3317 7922* (2012) of the same artist, together with a long cycle of Lumumba performance in

China under the umbrella title *Chidao zhan'gu* (1965), in which the Congolese leader remained conspicuously absent. In Jean Leroy's play *Les Funérailles de Monsieur Lumumba* (2007), the focus is equally on the absent body (metonymized in an empty casket on stage). This is in sharp contrast to the politics of the remnant tooth, which does, inevitably lead to a symbolic representation of the missing whole, a relic which in turn ends as a sort of plaything. As part of a reverse necro-politics, the tooth was officially and ceremoniously repatriated to Congo's capital in 2022 for it to be buried in the Lumumba mausoleum – yet to be built. Various artists have also responded to the tooth with remarkable poems, paintings, sculptures, and cartoons, both underscoring as well as challenging the symbolic power of the necrophiled body. The paper will be illustrated with original sources. (The paper is part of a large 15-year long research project on the cultural discourse and practice around the figure of Patrice Lumumba).

Bio

Dr Piet Defraeye, Professor, Performance Studies, University of Alberta. A scholar, theatre director, and dramaturg; he researches strategies of stage provocation and focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to performance. He has toured internationally with several productions, including Edmonton, Bangalore, Innsbruck, Munich, Antwerp, Kiev, London, Edinburgh. He has published on contemporary *mise-en-scène*, the Rwandan genocide and is at the apex of an ambitious interdisciplinary research project on the figure of Patrice Lumumba, the assassinated first Prime Minister of the Congo, as he appears in a variety of cultural discourse and practice. His most recent publications include two chapters in the edited volume *Lumumba in the Arts* (ed. Matthias De Groof), a special issue on Milo Rau for *Theater* (Yale) (co-edited with L. Climenhaga), and *Brussels 1900 Vienna* (co-edited with H. Mitterbauer and Chr. Reynolds).

The Digital Sex Working Body

RACHEL STUART

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 104

Building on the work of Imogen Tyler (2021), this presentation (based on a forthcoming article) explores how the communication technologies essential to webcamming, which ostensibly appear to enhance, facilitate and democratise sexual commerce, are also experienced as stigma machines by digital sex workers. Tyler, in her work on stigma, describes men as using the virtual equivalents of the brank – the scold's bridle- to humiliate and terrorise women publicly. Branking was a form of social control experienced by women whose speech was considered unruly or rowdy between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries (ibid, 46). It was part of a broader political project - women's enclosure within the new social relations of patriarchal capitalism, which saw marginalised women publicly humiliated, branked and burnt at the stake to serve as a warning to other women that the new ideals of obedient domestic womanhood were to be upheld.

The current transition to neo-liberalism is arguably as turbulent as that which accompanied the transition to capitalism and is marked by some strikingly similar features (2021, p26). These similarities include the use of stigma to devalue entire groups of people to maintain existing social hierarchies and the creation of capitalist opportunities for the redistribution of wealth upwards. One of these redistributions is the re-introduction of sex work as a form of elite profiteering. The corporate owners of webcam hosting sites have created digital sex working spaces that remain virtually unlegislated globally. The predominantly female workforce experiences and resists misogynistic violence, such as doxing – the release of private information into the public sphere and stalking (Jones 2015a; 2016b; 2018). However, the harm caused by 'technologically – facilitated sexual violence' (Tyler 2021, p49) is exacerbated by the business model of hosting sites and algorithms that allow customers to connect with performers' personal media accounts.

This presentation will explore how stigma is always 'enmeshed within wider capitalist structures of expropriation, domination, discipline and social control' (Tyler 2020, p18). Webcamming represents an economic mainstreaming of a form of sex work for the benefit of corporations. However, sex work is still stigmatised, and hosting sites, spaces of almost pure capitalism, do nothing to protect its replaceable workforce from the impacts of the stigma that they experience due to the dissemination of the stream from cammers' chatrooms. During the industrialisation associated with capitalism, workers' bodies could be marked for life with the incidental stigmata of their work – miners, factory workers, and soldiers were all marked in ways that signalled their labour. Neo-liberalism, it appears, has introduced a new form of stigmata to the body of the worker, the stigma attached to camming. Given Langlois & Sloane's (2017) observation that information mining is commonplace and forgetting impossible, it can mean a permanent blemish on the figurative body of the performer. In common with other stigmatised people, performers are cognizant that the 'stigma machines' in which they find themselves entangled have been engineered, and they offer resistance (Tyler 2020, p18), and this will be explored in this presentation.

Bio

I am an early career research who specialises in the research of marginalised communities. My PhD thesis examined the experiences of adult content webcam performers as they negotiated the corporate-owned hosting sites from which they broadcast. I am interested in the digital sex working body and how it differs from its physical counterpart.

The External Dimension of Italian Migration Policy: A Political Science Perspective

MATILDE ROSINA ¹, IOLE FONTANA ²

Brunel University London, UK ¹

University of Catania, Italy ²

Abstract ID: 80

This paper seeks to conceptualise the external dimension of Italian migration policies. Specifically, we ask: what tools characterize the external dimension of Italian migration policies? How have they changed across time and space, and why? Building on an original dataset encompassing Italy's migration-related agreements of the last three decades, the article argues that the external dimension of MS' migration policy is far richer than initially expected. From the immediate neighbourhood, Italy's EXMIPO has gradually extended well beyond its geographical borders, leading to severe implications for migrants and refugees.

Bio

Dr Matilde Rosina is Lecturer in Global Challenges at Brunel University London, and Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her work lies at the intersection of international migration, public policy, and international relations. Matilde obtained her PhD from King's College London, winning the King's Outstanding Thesis Prize.

The Joy of Sets: A Data Drawing Workshop About SexTech

REBECCA SAUNDERS

Cardiff University, UK

Abstract ID: 37

Workshop

This is a workshop which explores the growing interpolation of data practices into contemporary sexual culture and the body.

It first establishes the role of emergent technologies such as sex tracking apps, sexual consent apps and smart sex toys, which gather data directly from people's bodies and/or require the manual inputting of data about sexual partners, sensations and emotions. These technologies raise important questions about the perception of data as offering definitive truths of the – often particularly female – body. They also raise questions about the relationship between data power and the biopolitics of sexuality in the twenty first century, as the sexual data produced through these technologies are often used in commercial and medicalised contexts.

The session then briefly sets out the findings of my pilot research project (2023) which collected analogue diaries from users of the Lioness, a smart sex toy which generates data about women's bodies using biosensors. Participants described unexpected, agential and meaningful ways of engaging with their sexual data. However, the analogue diary methodology was also used to encourage reflection on the impact of data practices on people's sexual subjectivity and conceptualisations of their bodies, at a remove from the digital media where datafication takes place.

Bio

Dr Rebecca Saunders specialises in research on gender and sexuality and digital culture. Her first monography *Bodies of Work the Labour of Sex in the Digital Age*, analysed the relationship between digital pornography and digital labour. She taught on these subjects as a lecturer in digital culture at King's College London and is now a senior lecturer in digital media and society at Cardiff University.

The Limits of Care for the Female Other's Disfigured Body in J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

EMNA SFAIHI REBII

University of Debrecen, Hungary

Abstract ID: 101

My contribution is a paper as I intend to approach the body from an academic perspective. I am a forth-year PhD student of English literature and I am interested in trauma theory, concept of care, gender studies and post-colonial literature. In *Waiting for the Barbarians* by J.M. Coetzee, the unnamed female protagonist is maimed after being tortured at the hand of the male agent of the state Colonel Joll. Blind and limping, she roams the street as a beggar. She catches the attention of the seemingly humane male protagonist, The Magistrate. The latter stretches the hand of care to the barbarian girl and provides her with an abode to live in, a work to earn a living but more importantly attempts at repairing her disfigured body. In this paper, I aim to investigate the Magistrate's approach to the disfigured female body by studying the dynamics of their relationship. Drawing on concepts of care, trauma theory, gender studies and postcolonial theory, I argue that the Magistrate's gestures of care have a nefarious effect on the female traumatised body, hence the limit of care to the altered body of the female other. In this endeavour, Kittay's notion of the transparent self that is "a self that defers or brackets its own needs in order to provide for another's" will be pivotal to explore the limits of care the Magistrate provides.

Keywords: Body, Care, Coetzee, post-colonialism, trauma theory, gender studies.

Bio

Emna Sfaihi, a PhD student of comparative literature at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. My fields of interest are the concept of care, trauma theory, gender studies and post-colonial literature.

The Mediated Experience of the Body

RYM KIRECHE-GERWIG¹, NELLY QUEMENER²

Sorbonne University, France¹

Abstract ID: 78

The proposition consists in a paper given by Rym Kireche-Gerwig and Nelly Quemener (nelly.quemener@sorbonne-universite.fr), Professor in Communication Studies at CELSA-Sorbonne University and head of the research center GRIPIC, specialist of power relationships in digital controversies, humor performances and media entertainment, analyzed from a queer perspective imbricated with affect theories.

Rooted in Media and Communication Studies, this paper proposes to articulate cultural studies and semiology to examine the body as the bearer and producer of experience in media devices. Drawing on our respective works on bodily performances in fashion and entertaining disciplinary systems, on the one hand, and on the circulation and production of images and discourses on platforms, on the other, the purpose is to sketch out a reflection on the best ways to grasp social conflictuality based on the circulating body images and bodily indices left in mediation devices.

The starting point is a discussion of the existing frameworks to make sense of body images. As Grossberg (1982) reminds us, the constructivist perspective tends to make experience the point of origin of the systems of representations available in the social world. Thus, the study of texts, images and representations, leads to an apprehension of the body as a product of discourses. It implies to examine the body as an active and expressive entity that language/sign system semiotizes but never fully grasps (Barthes, 1982; Butler, 2009). Methodologically, one challenge is to identify continuities and shifts in the images of the body, to account for (ir)regularities in the semiotization of experience, to outline “central systems of meaning” and their contestations from the margins (Hall, 2008).

The virtue of such perspectives is to emphasize the multiplicity of determinations that affect and produce the body. The blind spot is that they establish “unity”, “identity” and “subjectivity” as categories of analysis that enable to define positions within power relationships. Such perspectives thus might not be completely relevant to grab contemporary phenomena of wide media circulation of body images and of bodily expressions in digital devices. The so-called “unity” of such phenomena and of the bodies in presence often becomes unidentifiable and/or difficult to seize.

This paper therefore outlines an alternative way of telling the story of the “body of experience”. The first line consists in examining the mass circulation of the body-image in media devices from a semiotic perspective, that understands the body-image as an arrangement of signs in a constrained space (Baudrillard, 1970). By focusing on the circulations of body-images, this perspective distances itself from the search for “identity” or “subjectivity” and places the emphasis on semiotic arrangements or logics of de-territorialisation. The body is seen as a vector for political, artistic, commercial and advertising statements, as much as an image in its own right (Kireche-Gerwig, 2023; Martin-Juchat, 2020).

The second line of research focuses on the affective dynamics that underlie online bodily expressions. Digital practices, such as comments on platforms or social networks, are constantly producing signs of the body, through framing, sharing, mediated reactions, tone or even hype. In the wake of affect-based approaches, this paper proposes to see in these practices as many processes of semiotization of feelings in a given context and device, and as many reactions leading to dynamics of chain reactions (Julliard, 2018; Quemener, 2022).

These theoretical and methodological pathways invite us to locate tensions, negotiations, frontiers in relational cartographies and to reflect on the constitutive effects of the intensification processes.

Bios

Rym Kireche-Gerwig is an Associate Professor in Communication Studies at CELSA-Sorbonne University and a member of the research center GRIPIC. Her work focuses on the commoditisation of the body in creative industries like fashion and luxury field, as well as the digital circulation of body-image and the potential for resistance.

Nelly Quemener, Professor in Communication Studies at CELSA-Sorbonne University and head of the research center GRIPIC, specialist of power relationships in digital controversies, humour performances and media entertainment, analyzed from a queer perspective imbricated with affect theories.

The Movement and Fluidity of Self-Love: Exploring Women's Experiences of Self-Love Within Collectivist Cultures, an IPA and SEA study

KAVITA BHOPAL

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 119

I would like to present my doctoral research which is currently on-going. I would like to present my research via a PowerPoint presentation, combined as part of an interactive workshop with some optional exercises that they can engage in. The presentation aims to provide an overview of my research, but also emphasise the significance and potential healing impact that self-love may have in accepting oneself, including the physical aspects of the self, such as the body, and accepting limits to the body and our existence, such as physical health illnesses, and death. In my research, there is also an emphasis that self-love is a fluid concept, one that changes over time, and is not a fixed concept, similar to how our bodies are also evolving and changing. Some research suggests that having a sense of self-love, can lead to increased acceptance and positive regard for the self, which may allow one to accept aspects of the self, such as, their bodies.

My doctoral research is about exploring women's lived experiences of self-love within collectivist backgrounds, and how they experience self-love in their worlds. My research is also looking at how self-love can be experienced and manifested in varying dimensions, also known as the four dimensions of existential worlds. The research aims to also explore how self-love may manifest for women in the physical dimension too, which includes the body. The physical dimension also aims to explore how women relate to their own body, their own sense of life and mortality, and the natural environment and givens of the world around them, and how one may reach a sense of body acceptance by cultivating self-love into their lives.

There is a common consensus that self-love can have significant psychological benefits to individuals and can improve both physical health & mental health and overall well-being of individuals. However, there has been no studies on how self-love may be defined and experienced from a collectivist cultural perspective, with current studies mainly showcasing the individualist and western perspectives on self-love. My study is designed to see how self-love may be experienced from other cultures, and the impact on well-being, therapy and how self-love may differ from individualist cultures.

Bio

Kavita Bhopal, a third year doctoral student, pursuing the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy (DCPsych) at the NSPC joint with Middlesex University. I am also working as a Trainee Counselling Psychologist at both Brunel University London and NHS West London Trust as part of my clinical placements.

The Oriental Woman's Body as the Spectacle 'Other': Reading Select Book Cover Illustration of Indian Diasporic Fictions

AFROJ JAHAN

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India

Abstract ID: 88

'Fetishism takes us into the realm where fantasy intervenes in representation; to the level where what is shown or seen, in representation, can only be understood in relation to what cannot be seen, what cannot be shown.'

— Stuart Hall

'The act of gazing, and the privileged position it places the Gazer in, is an exercise of power in itself', remarks Lisa Lau. While interrogating the Orientalist tropes of the Western Gaze posited upon the Oriental Women's bodies, this academic paper will examine the differential nuances of strategic construction of visual representation to reflect upon the inequitable power relation between the Occidental 'Self' and the Oriental 'Other'. It will demonstrate how visual representations of book cover illustrations are politically motivated and sites of specific and systematic stereotypical knowledge production. This paper places the spotlight on the Indian women's stereotypical representation on the book covers of Indian Writing in English by writers of the Indian diaspora. The select book cover illustrations that this paper reads will include the two editions of Bharati Mukherjee's *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Penguin edition of *Oleander Girl* (2013); Divakaruni's Abacus edition of *Queen of Dreams* (2005) and Black Swan publication of Divakaruni's short story collection *Arranged Marriage* (1997). It argues that the visual representation of artistic illustrations of Indian women on select book covers by the Western publishing industry is a means of the larger imperial project coalescing cultural capitalism with the colonization of the minds. Drawing upon the critical foundations of postcolonial theory laid by Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, it further studies that the representations of the female bodies are an outcome of colonial fantasies that cater to the colonizer's fetishism of the 'Other' as spectacle. The representation of the Oriental female body through visual grammar demonstrates the coloniser's fetish for 'difference'. The complexities of representation surface in its attempt to project differences that are both strange and familiar as it engages with emotions, anxiety and fear. Finally, this paper will argue that Oriental Women's bodily representation is mediated through the gaze of Western readers. This paper employs the theories of John Berger, Stuart Hall, and Natasha Eaton, among other postcolonial literary critiques, to enquire about the aesthetics of political-ideological representation of the female bodies depicted in the select book cover illustration. In its reading of the select illustrations, it further negotiates how the visual representation of specific sensualised body parts of Indian women is depicted without leaving any agency to defy and challenge such projection while succumbing to the consumer's desires for the Oriental female body.

Keywords: Bodies, Spectacle, Oriental Women, Book Covers, Diaspora

Bio

Afroj Jahan is pursuing her PhD in English Literature from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Roorkee. She earned her M.Phil from The University of Burdwan. Her research interest lies in the fields of Postcolonial, Visual and Diaspora Studies. She has been published in journals like *The English Academy Review* (Taylor & Francis).

The Oscillation of Contemporary Bodies Between Biopolitics and Necropolitics: Tania Bruguera's Migratory Work

KATERINA PARAMANA

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 56

Cuban artist and activist Tania Bruguera has been creating politically situated works for decades, ranging from performance to community work. Her works are intended to function as 'useful tools' for a collective movement, re-establish 'aesthetics as a system of transformation' by having ethics at their core ('est-ética') (Sanromán and Kantor 2018), and present situations that challenge spectators to become active citizens who question and unlearn normative behaviours (Arte de Conducta [Behavioural Art]) (Montenegro Rosero 2017). Her activism is put into practice through her long-term, ongoing projects such as Immigrant Movement International (IMI) (2010 – ongoing). Bruguera's work has always been politically positioned in its economies of creation and presentation, critiquing institutions, power structures (including the Cuban government), and the ways in which contemporary bodies oscillate in 'the field of tensions between biopolitics and necropolitics'.

In this paper, I discuss Bruguera's work 10,148,451, a Hyundai commission about migration presented at Tate Modern in 2019. Thinking with Achille Mbembé's work on necropolitics, Lauren Berland's work on 'slow death', and Michel Foucault's writing on biopolitics, I propose that 10,148,451 addresses the collective subject and critiques contemporary necropolitics. Through my analysis of the work, I show how Bruguera's work is created to comment on the specific political economies in which it is presented and what insights the work might therefore offer to them. By examining this artwork as an economy in itself which is situated within larger economies, I argue that, through her artwork, Bruguera has often done more work than local and national governments, though this often goes unnoticed (and at the same time one could argue that she lets these governments off the hook to some extent by doing the work for them). Finally, I propose that what I refer to as her 'symbolic work with activist parameters' (i.e., work that functions at the level of the symbolic but is linked to actions that have concrete effects for its participants – as with the work discussed here) is surprisingly more efficacious than her activist work. I conclude with the insights that Bruguera's work offers for the future of bodies in the 21st century.

Bio

Dr Katerina Paramana is Senior Lecturer in Performance at Brunel University London. Her monograph on performance and political economy is forthcoming with Routledge (2024). She is editor of Lateral journal's section 'Political Economy and the Arts' and co-editor of Performance, Dance and Political Economy: Bodies at the End of the World.

The Soil and The Sea

DANIELE RUGO

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 46

Film

In Lebanon there are more than 100 untouched mass graves dating back from the Civil War, and thousands of families awaiting a missing relative or at least a bone to bury

The Soil and the Sea unveils the violence lying beneath a garden, a school, a cafe, a hotel, and other unremarkable landscapes. As the camera interrogates these everyday spaces, voices fill them with erased stories.

More than 30 years after the end of the war, families in Lebanon have been unable to find answers about the fate of their loved ones. However, the creation of a National Commission for the Disappeared in 2020 has injected new hope that these sites will be investigated and that remains will one day be returned to families awaiting a bone to bury. This documentary stands as the first record of these sites, threatened by neglect, real estate developments, and oblivion.

Bio

Daniele Rugo is an award winning filmmaker and scholar and Professor of Film at Brunel University London.

The Veiled Body and Agency in Contemporary Egyptian Cinema

ALAA BELKIS NOUASRI

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 48B

This paper examines connections between portrayals of the fictional veiled (hijabi) body in contemporary Egyptian cinema and the shifting sociopolitical attitudes in Egypt, specifically in relation to agency. Drawing upon symptomatic film interpretations, Egyptian cinema is used here as a “mirror” which reflects the changes in “social structures and their respective value systems in the wider society of Egypt” (Gaffney 1987:54).

In 1995 an Egyptian documentary titled *Sobyān Wa Banāt* (On Boys, Girls, and the Veil) was released. This film became a useful reflection of Egyptian society during a time when religion and politics intersected, re-constructing and policing the veiled body. Not only was this body visually co-opted by Islamists, but it was also banned by the state to assert an opposing political stance. van Nieuwkerk (2008) discusses the state’s “modernity policy” which included banning the veil from the media, and educational institutions. In accordance with this policy, the veil was also used as a tool in what could be considered the state’s official propagandic anti-Islamist films such as *Al-irhabi* (1994), and *Al-Najūna Mina Al-Nār* (1994). Here, the veiled body served as a vital catalyst in this ideological battlefield.

The 2000s and 2010s, however, have brought a new hijab presence to cinema that is not exclusively associated with Islamism. Kamil Al-Awṣāf (2006) and Ahlā Al-Awqāt (2004) are two examples of this initial change in veiled representation. This paper takes interest in this specific, often unexamined, cinematic period, exploring the portrayals of 8 veiled fictional bodies and their implications for agency.

The research reveals an increase in agency associated with veiled fictional bodies. Specifically, in films made after 2010 the examined hijabi characters are multifaceted agentic figures, meanwhile characters in pre-2010 films are often relegated to fetishising, and one-dimensional depictions. This agency is linked to the body’s behaviours, clothing, and interactions on the screen.

Overall, this paper theorises that this change in hijabi bodily representation is possibly linked to the Egyptian revolution, thus making the fictional veiled body a potential site to unpack and analyse transforming political and societal attitudes towards notions of the veiled body, and gender in post-revolutionary Egypt.

Bio

Alaa is a film curator, lecturer (University of Worcester), and PhD researcher (Brunel University London), looking into female agency in Egyptian cinema. She is passionate about Arab women’s presence on the screen, and film as a tool to examine society from a gendered perspective.

The Venus Atmosphere: An Exhibition of Vulva-Themed Visual Poems

EMMA FILTNESS

Brunel University London, UK

Abstract ID: 72

Exhibition

In 2020, alongside Emma Mitchell aka Miss Glory Pearl, I had the pleasure of facilitating three vulva-themed visual poetry workshops online for the Vagina Museum. Ahead of these, I created a little duo of visual poetry works to inspire participants: 'Dreamscape' and 'Wavesong'. I combined retro Hubble telescope images with vintage seashells to create a vulva-centric sex-positive cosmic pleasure-scape in collage. I also made use of a Sea Salt clothing brochure and cut and stuck salty sea-themed words and phrases, along with text from the Hubble and Seashell books (the books were sourced second hand from eBay and thrifted from local charity shops).

A series was born, and I created more of what I came to cheekily call my "cosmic cunts" in all their trippy, expansive, explosive, weird and oceanic glory. Hours were spent selecting and pairing shells with galaxies, sea-scapes with star-clusters, then adding found text to the mix to complete each piece.

The collages were collected and published in a full-colour pamphlet by Steel Incisors, a micro-publisher of "visual poetry with teeth". Briony Hughes, poet and editor at Osmosis Press, provided a review for the back of the pamphlet: "Playfully merging the cosmic, the oceanic, and the yonic, Emma Filtness invites her reader to delve into orgasmic printed debris. The folded edge of a shell is exposed to an intergalactic backdrop, the spit of the sea spills from the whorl of a conch and then into the wider cosmos; the expanding universe is refigured as a flaring outer lip."

Bio

Dr Em Filtness (she/her) is a poet and senior lecturer in creative writing at Brunel University London. Her pamphlets of collage and erasure poems are out now with Steel Incisors and Broken Sleep Books. Follow her on Twitter/X and Insta: @em_filtness

The Waters that Binds Us: Exploring Water Citizenship, Knowledge and Understandings in Wales and Aotearoa New Zealand

BELINDA WHEATON¹, **KATE MOLES**², **MARG COSGIOFF**³, **MIHI NEMANI**⁴, **POPPY HOLLAND**⁵

University of Cardiff, UK²

University of Waikato, New Zealand^{1,3,4}

Media Design⁵

Abstract ID: 63

Coastal waters are key spaces where communities come together for leisure, work, and well-being, demarcating boundaries of belonging and identity. In this project, we build on a body of interdisciplinary research focused on bodies, 'blue spaces' and wellbeing (e.g. Olive & Wheaton, 2021; Bates, & Moles, 2023). This research recognises the importance of human-more-than-human interrelationships, and that blue spaces are both therapeutic landscapes, and places of exclusion (Wheaton & Liu, 2024; Wheaton, et al. 2021). Here we explore how we know, live and relate to each other through, on and in the waters of Wales and Aotearoa New Zealand. Both countries have long coastlines that run through the stories we tell about ourselves, our language, our histories and the ways we relate to each other and other places. The ways we think about and with water in these two countries has similarities and differences, which will help us uncover the ways in which a 'water citizenship' (Whyte, 2019) flows through our collective imaginary of ourselves and the things we do. Yet, saltwater citizenship holds many contradictions, and the navigation of complex and diverse identities reflective of the multiple relations of bodies, communities with their environments.

The exploratory research project involved a collaboration between researcher in Cardiff Wales and Hamilton New Zealand with workshops and research activities both countries (April & June 2024). The focus of this paper is the research in NZ. Our methodology involved interactions at the beach with diverse community members who work in/on the water including recreational water users, (e.g. swimmers, surfers, fishing, paddling) artists/ photographers, Indigenous Māori and members of environmental and citizen science groups. The participant-defined interactions included conversations, mobile methods (e.g. walk-and talk and swim along), and experiential encounters such as collecting and sharing kai (food). We also utilised participant co-produced 'mood-boards' a creative technique that have been advocated as a creative visual method that can help express emotions that can be difficult with traditional talking methods alone (Spawforth-Jones, 2021).

The paper discusses the benefits and challenges of these methods for understanding the complexity of local saltwater citizenship, and the ways it is understood and enacted. More widely, the paper speaks to the multiple, complex relations of bodies with their 'local' environments, and impacts for human, more-than human wellbeing.

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Olive, R. and B. Wheaton (2021). "Understanding Blue Spaces: Sport, Bodies, Wellbeing, and the Sea." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 45(1): 3-19.

Spawforth-Jones, S. (2021). "Utilising Mood Boards as an Image Elicitation Tool in Qualitative Research." *Sociological Research Online* 26(4): 871-888.

Wheaton, B. and L. Liu (2024) "Chinese migrant communities' relationships to coastal spaces in the 'City of Sails', Aotearoa New Zealand." *Annals of Leisure Research*: 1-27.

Wheaton, B., et al. (2021). "Coastal Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing: Advancing a Trans-Disciplinary Agenda for Understanding Ocean-Human Relationships in Aotearoa New Zealand." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18(2): 450.

Whyte, D. (2019). "Belonging in the Ocean: Surfing, ocean power, and saltwater citizenship in Ireland." *Anthropological Notebooks* 25.

Bio

Belinda Wheaton is Professor in the School Science, University of Waikato, Aotearou/New Zealand. She is a cultural sociologist with research interests from across leisure, sport and popular culture, and a focus on identity, inclusion and inequality. Belinda is Managing Editor of *Annals of Leisure Research*.

The Well-Managed and Energetic Body: a critique

HEIDI BICKIS

University of Central Lancashire, UK

Abstract ID: 92

My proposed contribution is an academic paper. Drawing from a larger project, the presented paper will explore some examples of how contemporary solutions for managing tiredness and maximizing energy imagine, narrate, and conceptualise bodies and energy in particular ways and, by extension, both rely on and reinforce normative ideas about bodies and their energies.

Bio

I am a lecturer in sociology in the School of Medicine at the University of Central Lancashire.

There Is No Sexual Relation: The Kardashians and Black Masculinities

MANUEL HARPIN

Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, USA

Abstract ID: 20

This paper employs a sociocultural analysis of American representations of interracial violence in the entertainment industry. The cultural impact of the O.J. Simpson trial and its recent reimagining as a miniseries, attests to the power of racialized fantasies and fears. Exploring this context, the Kardashians' two claims to fame can be analyzed: the O.J. Simpson trial and Kim's sex tape with Ray J (William Ray Norwood Jr). In my reading, the spectacle of interracial violence set the stage for the spectacle of interracial sex. I argue that it is only with the memory of O.J. and Nicole Brown Simpson in mind that Kim's sex tape with Ray J resonated with its American audience. Recruiting P.H. Collins' (2004) scholarship on Black masculinities in the media, through which dual depictions of Black men as inherently violent or hypersexual are made plain, I consider how this perverse exchange of sex and violence becomes possible. Engaging with psychoanalysis as a critical tool, the family's repetition of Black sexual partners is denaturalized and put into question.

An intersectional analysis of racialized bodies lends itself particularly well to understanding the Kardashian predilection for athletes and rappers, as well as the apparent exchangeability and disposability of these characters. When prepared as a talk, the focus will fall on the Kardashians' accumulation of racialized bodily capital via their proximity to the bodies of Black men.

Bio

Manuel Harpin is a Boston-based psychotherapist. His clinical practice centers individuals experiencing psychosis or altered states. Manuel is currently a doctoral student at the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, pursuing a degree in Psychoanalysis, Society, and Culture.

Use of Artificial Intelligence and Holography: Robert Kardashian Resurrected?

LIDA PAPAKONSTANTINO

Free University of Berlin

Abstract ID: 09

My proposed contribution is a paper that will be published as a chapter in the upcoming volume 'Kardashians: A Critical Anthology' by Taylor & Francis. The proliferation of contemporary digital technologies has changed every aspect of human life, including our communication with the dead in cyberspace. In celebration of Kim Kardashian's 40th birthday, Ye (formally known as Kanye West) gave her as a gift the hologram of her late father, Robert Kardashian. This gesture was met with positive and negative criticism by the public. This empirical case will be used as a reference to provide an analysis of the use of holography by investigating its implications on transhumanism, psychological wellbeing as well as on the current legal framework about personality rights protection.

More specifically, transhumanism will be investigated by looking closer at its salvific and spiritual meaning (quest for transcendence) in respect to (im)mortality. Our contemporary technological age allows interaction and communication with others in cyberspace without the mediation of our bodies' physicality. This raises multiple questions about the future use of artificial intelligence (AI) as a way to deconstruct or even negate mortality by investing in technology that resurrects the dead.

Moreover, the paper explores the implications of the use of holography as a therapeutic and clinical tool employed in case of trauma or bereavement. Robert Kardashian's hologram is an example of the application of personalised technology as part of the grief process and triggers a debate on the psychological repercussions thereof.

Lastly, issues of post-mortem privacy and the protection of individual rights in the face of digitalization will be presented. It is argued that the new circumstances of the current digital world require the re-examination of the legal meaning of death and the deceased's entitlement and right to consent when represented in holographic form.

Another purpose of the chapter is to pave the way for discourse around the future use of artificial intelligence in relation to the usage of the dead celebrity body as a media spectacle and the creation of digital afterlives. It is argued that the ramifications of celebrity afterlives can have a great social impact on our understanding of mortality/death and perplex our mental health and perception of reality.

Bio

Lida Papakonstantinou is a Forensic Psychologist (M.Sc.) and is currently holding a position as a predoctoral fellow and teaching assistant at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. Lida's dissertation focuses on everyday deception and situational perception. Her broader goals include the improvement of policy making decisions and credibility assessment tools, as well as to promote substantive democratisation of knowledge.

Visualizing the Datasphere: Representations of Old Bodies and their Data in Promotional Images of Smart Sensor Technologies for Ageing at Home

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Abstract ID: 42

Technologies for people ageing at home are increasingly prevalent and include ambient monitoring devices that work together with wearables to remotely track and monitor older adults' biometric data and activities of daily living. There is, however, little research into the promotional and speculative images of technology-in-use. Our paper examines the ways in which the datafication of ageing is offered up visually by technology companies to promote their products. Specifically, we ask: how is data visualized in promotional images of smart sensor technologies for ageing at home? And in these visualizations, what happens to the ageing body and relations of care? We include in our definition of smart sensor technologies both wearable and ambient monitoring devices, so long as they are used for the in-home passive monitoring of the inhabitant by a caregiver, excluding those devices targeted for institutional settings or those used for self-monitoring purposes. Our sample consists of 221 images collected between January and July of 2021 from the websites of 14 English-language companies that offer smart sensor technology for ageing at home. Following a visual semiotic analysis, we present 3 themes on the visual representation of old bodies and their data: (1) Captured Data, (2) Spatialized Data, and (3) Networked Data. Each, we argue, contribute to a broader visualization of the 'datasphere'. We conclude by highlighting the underlying assumptions of old bodies in the co-constitution of ageing and technologies in which the fleshy and lived corporeality of bodies is more often lost, reduced to data points and automated care scenarios, and further disentangled from other bodies, contexts and things.

Presenting author: Dr Wendy Martin (Brunel University London)

Bio

Dr Wendy Martin's research focuses on ageing, embodiment, the digital and everyday life and the use of visual, material and digital methods. She is Co-Investigator for UKRI Ageing Development Award 'Sound', Environment and Ageing: Bringing the Outside Into Care Homes' and for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) international partnership 'Ageing in Data'.

What's In A Label? A Researcher's Reflection on Neuroqueer Identities for Bodies That Simply Won't "Fit In"

BECK LOWE

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Abstract ID: 23

In 2022, I completed a Masters study about gender diverse perspectives on the period positive movement. I was honoured to present my findings at the International Society of Critical Health Psychology (ISCHP) in 2023 and won the Feminism & Psychology's award for Best Presenter. As an absurdist, non-binary researcher who is impassioned by 'cyclical living' (honouring menstrual cycles despite linear-orientated ideologies), I entered this research project with a view to raising awareness of queer perspectives and speaking out on their injustices. It also just so happened to help me reaffirm my own non-binary identity; speaking on the subject with such conviction would solidify my sense of self once and for all... or at least, that's what I thought.

During the research phase, I was told by a therapist I may be autistic, and this became a separate, deeply personal obsession. Despite my newfound non-binary identity, I zealously read and followed anecdotal reports of autism in women, relating to most traits and re-writing my past to better accommodate the others. Eventually I was validated: I received a clinical diagnosis. Yet, rather than experiencing closure, the diagnosis threw my entire self-concept into doubt. Rather than finally belonging somewhere, I felt as though I didn't fit anywhere at all. Had my non-binary identity, which I struggled to associate with my fat, 'effeminate,' physical form, been a 'symptom' of autism all along? Was it really autism if I was diagnosed so late? Furthermore, why was I so obsessed with identity labels in the first place? Was it autism, self-advocacy, or, as more conservative thinkers may suggest, a marker of my deep-rooted insecurities around not fitting in?

With that, my proposed contribution would comprise of an absurdist, feminist and 'neuroqueer' relaxed but academic (let's call it 'sclack-ademic') presentation about the process – and philosophy – of seeking labels, for someone whose body and lived experiences fit none. As a fledgling researcher going head first into a hot button topic for my PhD, I want to discuss my physical, psychological and empirical position(ality) on the necessity and efficacy of identity formation in the context of a pseudo-individualist society, and the turbulence I may face as I embark on a self-reflexive, transdisciplinary PhD about conflating identity with mental health conditions, and mental health conditions with gender, through the medium of TikTok. I will call for openness and honesty as we navigate these uncomfortable subjects, while acknowledging the dangers of embroiling one's 'self' in the process of research. Us 'research nerds' tend to pursue things that hit a personal nerve, but at what cost? To what end? Might we forget what happens to our relationship with the body as we explore the kaleidoscope of identities so readily up for discussion online? I don't profess to have the answers to these questions, but will lay my cards on the table in the hope that one day we will come to a collective conclusion. I invite you to join me in embracing the chaos of self-discovery, challenging societal norms, and navigating the labyrinth of identity. Let's embark on this journey together, not in search of definitive answers, but in pursuit of a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Bio

Absurdist, non-binary and autistic PhD student at University of Worcester, winner of Feminism and Psychology Best Presenter Award at ISCGO 2023 Conference; former performing artist/creative so happy to take part in others' activities on the day.

'Why Is The Chubby Guy Running?': Trans Pregnancy, Fatness and Gender Intelligibility

FRANCIS RAY WHITE

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Abstract ID: 84

Since the late 2000s trans pregnancy has received increasing public and academic attention. Research has sought to better understand transgender and non-binary experiences of pregnancy and advocate for improvements in healthcare provision. Much of this work has critiqued the spectacle of the 'pregnant man' and elaborated on the supposed tension between maleness, masculinity and pregnancy. This paper will explore an aspect of the lived experience of trans pregnancy that has been previously neglected – the relationship between trans pregnancy, fatness and gender intelligibility.

Using interview data from an international study of transmasculine practices of reproduction, the paper brings Judith Butler's concept of the 'cultural intelligibility' of gender (1990, 1993, 2004, 2006) to pregnant trans participants' experiences of being read in public, not as pregnant, but as fat. Thus, the paper explores why an onlooker could ask of a pregnant trans man taking part in a 5k run, 'why is the chubby guy running?' but did not ask 'why is the pregnant guy running?'. Drawing on theory from both trans and fat studies, it further considers how the relationships between pregnancy, fatness and trans/gender work together to test the limits of gender and of intelligibility.

Bio

Dr Francis Ray White is a Reader in Sociology at the University of Westminster. Francis' work is interested in theorising gender at the intersections of fat, queer and trans embodiment. Their previous research has been published in books and journals including *Fat Studies*, *Sexualities* and *Somatechnics*.

Witch Hunts, Petrol, and Neocolonial Brutality in Present-Day Mexico: Fernanda Melchor's *Temporada de huracanes* (Hurricane Season)

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Abstract ID: 38B

Latin American writing has taken a visible turn to the Gothic in recent years, adopting a range of new forms and tropes overtly recognisable under the discourses of 'body horror' and 'folk horror'. This literature, predominantly written by women and expressly invested in what has been termed 'Fourth Wave' or 'Green Wave' feminism, inflected by social reproduction theory and by the priorities of the feminist strike movement, takes the female and/or queer body as its starting point for a radical critique of heteropatriarchal and racialised neoliberal capitalism. Emerging across nations, ethnicities, and geographies, and negotiating tropes often aligned with peripheral cultures – including folk histories of witch hunts, zombies, cannibalism, and 'black magic' – this writing reflects prominently those forms of violence that Sayak Valencia conceives of as 'gore capitalism' (2018). Negotiating monsters in various forms, as well as those monstrous practices directly connected to everyday life, this fiction highlights domestic and public cruelties enacted on the gendered body. These include the systemic institutionalisation of rape, abuse, and exploitation in the name of 'market freedom', as unwaged social reproduction and violent sexual oppression grease the cogs of economic competition. By mapping their horrors on the female body, these fictions grant voice to the mind-shattering spectacle of Capitalocene power. Here, what passes for 'development' or post-crisis 'transition' is in fact the neocolonial expropriation of global Southern resources and the brutalisation of women and minorities in the name of progress.

Re-writing for a very different time and geography the Gothic tropes made famous in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), Fernanda Melchor's 2017 novel *Temporada de huracanes* (Hurricane Season (2020)) tracks the local relations leading to witch hunts within contemporary Mexico. In so doing, it offers a poignant example of how contemporary Latin American writing Gothically critiques global capitalist institutions, re-working local and indigenous folk narratives to reframe colonial violence in new terms.

Bio

Emily Horton is a Senior Lecturer in World Literature at Brunel University. Her research interests focus on contemporary British, American, and Latin American fiction, specializing in the Gothic; affect theory; and fictional critiques of neoliberalism and globalization. Her first monograph, *Contemporary Crisis Fictions*, was published with Palgrave Macmillan in 2014, and her second, *21st-Century British Gothic*, with Bloomsbury in 2024. She has also co-edited three volumes: *Ali Smith*, with Monica Germanà (Continuum, 2013); *The 1980s: A Decade in Contemporary British Fiction*, with Philip Tew and Leigh Wilson (Bloomsbury, 2014); and *The 2010s: A Decade in Contemporary British Fiction*, with Nick Bentley, Nick Hubble, and Philip Tew (Bloomsbury, 2024).

Women's Bodies, "Toxic Legacy of Infertility" and Right to be Child-Free: Critical Analysis of Media Representation of Childlessness Celebrities

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Abstract ID: 25

There is a historical continuity of reducing women to their bodies due to which "the entire female existence is condensed in the role of mother, combined with the sexual function necessary for childbirth" (Froidevaux-Metairie, 2020). Patriarchal essentialist ideas of fertility and motherhood have been the subject of numerous feminist analyses and discussions (Kelly, 2009; Neyer & Bernardi, 2011). Also, the infertility issue "represents a prima facie tension for feminists" (Thompson 20023, p. 52). In the traditional culture, childlessness was denoted by the negatively connoted word "barren", which functioned as a stigmatizing label for childless women who were treated as worthless, inferior and insufficient members of the community. In contrast, infertility was treated as a sign of physical and moral deviance, so such women often had a reputation as witches (Uber Barrens Club, 2019). The paper presents scientific theories that deconstruct the "toxic legacy of infertility" (Lindemann, 2018) and the "myth of the maternal instinct" (Vicedo-Castello 2005, acc. Lindemann, 2018). Bohannon (2023), in her recently published book *Eve: How the female body drove 200 million years of human evolution*, puts the complete opposite of the dominant beliefs. According to Bohannon, women are not fated for motherhood, and infertility in women is not a deficiency but an extension of the essential feature of female biology. Namely, Bohannon claims that pregnancy carries risks for women's survival, and this danger led to the evolution of various protective mechanisms, including female infertility. In a "pronatalist culture" (Lindemann, 2018), voluntary childlessness is still considered a significant deviation from the gender norms and societal expectations for biological reproduction. Considering the explicit and implicit glorification and idealization of childbirth and maternal function, the question arises as to how voluntarily infertile female celebrities are portrayed in the media. The main research question is how selected articles from widely read British general information and lifestyle portals represent and portray three famous child-free women: Jennifer Aniston, Oprah Winfrey and Helen Mirren. Based on the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2015; van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2009), the paper aims to reveal how selected media articles are used to construct and maintain gender-biased social norms, power dynamics and ideologies. The language of the selected articles is not neutral but reflects and reinforces power relations and ideological structures within society. The discursive strategies used by the media, which are visible from the selected articles, serve to shape gender-biased public opinion, influence gender-biased perception, and, accordingly, construct a gender-biased reality. These strategies include media framing, lexical choices, metaphorical language, and the manipulation of tone and register. Usage of these media discursive strategies must be reconstructed to challenge hegemonic discourses and assert non-biased gender perspectives.

Keywords: female bodies, motherhood, infertility, child-free, media presentation, famous women, critical discourse analysis, gender stereotypes

Bio

Marija Geiger Zeman (PhD) is a Senior Research Scientist in Sociology at the Institute of Social Sciences in Ivo Pilar in Zagreb, Croatia. Geiger Zeman is interested in many issues related to gender, body, ageing and qualitative methodology. She received the Annual Science Award in Social Sciences from the Croatian Parliament (2010).

Mirela Holy, PhD works at the VERN' University in Zagreb as Head of study programs. She has published six books and many environmental, human rights and communication articles. She received the Miko Tripalo Award for outstanding contribution to society's democratization and promotion of human rights in 2012.

Writing Selves by Inward- and Outward-Looking: Exploring Autoethnography in Medical Education

ANA BAPTISTA

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Abstract ID: 94

Workshop Autoethnography is a qualitative research method anchored in personal and reflective ways of looking at lived experiences while simultaneously describing and mainly critiquing cultural beliefs, practices, experiences, and theories. Autoethnography emerged as a method that recognises the limits of 'objective', positivistic scientific knowledge particularly regarding identities, lives and experiences. This is thus a research method that increases the visibility of individual, nuanced, complex and usually unheard stories, while "offering a novel avenue to engage in reflexivity" (Koopman et al., 2020, p.2). This is particularly relevant to medical education, while simultaneously being transferable to other settings and/or vocational contexts, namely across other healthcare (educational) disciplines. Autoethnography allows creative and multimodal approaches to share inner worlds of experiences, thoughts and emotions, opening up possibilities to access diverse truths, frequently deep and rich in details, as well as "otherwise inaccessible private human experiences" (Koopman et al., 2020, p.2). It thus presents itself with great potential to showcasing different emergent narratives from students, teachers, researchers and practitioners navigating different medical (education) terrains and experiences.

With this workshop we intend to:

- Systematise what autoethnography is as an academic research method;
- Expose the participants to a wide range of autoethnographic published manuscripts that address death and dying, emotions and affect, and disease and illness, (co-)authored by medical educators (clinical and/or non-clinical) and medical students;
- Promote discussions about the relevance of autoethnographic studies and the feasibility of designing an autoethnographic research projects.

To achieve these aims, we are organising the session in a scaffolded way:

- Seminar-style presentation about what autoethnography is, what constitutes autoethnographic data, quality criteria and ethically sound autoethnography;
- Reading of and reflection on selected autoethnographic excerpts on previous identified themes, firstly in small groups, followed by a collective discussion;
- Individual thinking moment to design an autoethnographic study, using a guide developed by the facilitator/presenter, followed by a collective discussion.

This workshop is aimed at all who want to expand their research repertoire, particularly in relation to a qualitative method that may not yet be considered mainstream in medical education. The link between personal experiences with theories and current academic narratives/discussions makes autoethnography an exciting method to approach medical education topics from an in-depth perspective. No previous knowledge nor experience of autoethnography is necessary. For potential participants who do have experience, consider the introduction to this workshop/session as a refresher on autoethnography.

Bio

Dr Ana Baptista is Principal Teaching Fellow and Strategic Lead for Medical Education Transformation at the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College London, UK. Ana leads on the new MBBS curriculum evaluation, being particularly interested in examining its impact on the development of students' professional identity. Ana is interested in less 'conventional' research methodologies, namely autoethnography.

"You Make Me Vulnerable": The Supernatural Male Body as Masochistic Object in *Lucifer*

REBECCA PEARCE

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Abstract ID: 48

Half police procedural, half supernatural drama, *Lucifer* (2016-2020) follows the prince of darkness as he uses his powers to solve crimes in a gritty and hedonist Los Angeles. As he is a fallen angel, attention is paid to Lucifer's fictional body. He is immortal and powerful; his body defies death, aging, attack and imperfections. Until he discovers he is physically vulnerable only around Detective Decker. Thus, the narrative uses this feature to torture our hero for viewer pleasure.

Lucifer's body is framed to be desired, but also beaten, shot, ruptured, 'performing' masculine angst, as one aim feeds the other: desire and pain are interlinked and crucial to his appeal. McCracken argues supernatural heroes offer distinct pleasures: 'beauty and body can survive repeated torture and thus can be enjoyed multiple times' (2007:123). They take on physical pain so the heroine does not have to: they function 'as a masochistic object of teen girls' erotic pleasure' (118). These heroes are more appealing romantic and sexual objects because of constant bodily permeability (123). Lucifer's physical and emotional vulnerability makes him compelling as the central anchor of the show and speaks to an alternative narrative of masculinity. While not on only teen girls, Lucifer's audience are similarly encouraged to enjoy Lucifer's body in peril.

Alexander argues a suffering hero is "not new," but that re-purposing its erotic quality for fanfiction enjoyment offers a new perspective (2008:131). The fanfiction archive A03 contains 13k works on Lucifer, 211 featuring the tag "Torture." The value of Lucifer is ultimately in the audience being able to explore the pleasure in the push and pull between immortality and human body states, e.g., 'the devil is most monstrous in Lucifer when he acts most human' (Murphy, 2020:157).

In this way, this paper will intertwine interdisciplinary ideas of the masochistic male body object, fantasy television & fandom pleasures to explore how and why these stories continue to appeal to us.

Bio

Rebecca Pearce is a PhD Researcher at Brunel University London; her thesis explores the Byronic Hero's representation in modern fantasy television. She has written for Critical Studies in Television (CST) Online and recently published a book review in *Revenant Journal: Critical and Creative Studies of the Supernatural*

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