

Book of Abstracts

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Education
Association
Conference
**Re-routing and Re-
imagining**

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Key Notes

Knowing our Roots: Valerie Walkerdine

Knowing roots: Gendering education from the postwar to the present

Growing up in postwar Britain, 2nd wave feminism changed my life. But over the course of that life, I have had many occasions to think about how that life and our understanding of and engagement with gender has changed over that period. This has been brought into sharp focus by my current research following up British women, born in the early 1970s and now in their late 40s and 50s. Many of these women were first part of research at the age of 4, then 10 and finally 21, before refinding them this year. What do we learn about gendering education and indeed their lives over that period, a time that has seen so very many changes in so many ways?

In this presentation, I explore the changing landscape that encompasses growing up and being adult in a turbulent political and economic setting in which our understanding of and approaches to gender has also changed considerably. I explore these issues with reference to the debates that drove the research and publications related to the project from the 1980s onwards, while also considering the re-routing and re-imagining of gender presented both by the changing approaches to and in the research and that presented by the research participants themselves.

Valerie Walkerdine is Distinguished Research Professor Emerita in the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University and is also currently Visiting Professor in the Dept of Gender Studies, LSE and holds a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship.

Chair: Gabrielle Ivinson, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Diversifying Routes: Fikile Nxumalo

This talk brings forward interconnected Black feminist concepts to consider their potentialities in diversifying, de-naturalizing, and undisciplining ways of knowing and being in educational research and practice contexts. Drawing from my pedagogical and research encounters, I discuss these concepts, and their accompanying ethical, ontological and epistemological commitments in relation to the urgency of affirmative, liberatory, anticolonial knowledge-making in current times of heightened precarity. I begin by situating this work; attending to what I have learned from Black feminist geographies on emplacing storied knowledges. I tether this cartographic orientation throughout the talk in thinking with concepts and their (un)doings. I turn to Black refusal as methodological and pedagogical modes of affirming Black life. Next, I think with testifying-witnessing as modes of undoing humancentric, colonial and binary thinking in educational encounters. Finally, I offer some ideas about what I have learned about Black futurity and the creative imaginaries it orients toward, as necessary for building more liveable worlds in education and beyond.

Dr. Fikile Nxumalo is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching & Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, where she directs the Childhood Place Pedagogy Lab and is also affiliated faculty in the School of the Environment and the School of Cities. Fikile is the author of over 60 scholarly publications,

including her book Decolonizing Place in Early Childhood Education (Routledge, 2019). Her work seeks to make conceptual, methodological, curricular and pedagogical contributions in disrupting colonial erasures, anti-Blackness and anthropocentrism in education, particularly within current conditions of socio-ecological precarity.

Chair: Jayne Osgood, Middlesex University, UK

Trans*forming Routes: Marquis Bey

Thinking With, and More Than, Gender

This talk asks attendees to sit with the question of trans and nonbinary genders as provocations. On the one hand, it is important to attend to lived challenges faced by those marginalized via gender, yet on the other hand, this talk will ask us to imagine another kind of world—and thus another mode of engagement—where gender does not have to be the axis around which living is done. In short, the talk will posit that the act and apparatus of gender, of *gendering*, enacts a violence, and thus a liberated world might be a world where gender, too, is interrogated.

Marquis Bey is Professor of Black Studies and Gender & Sexuality Studies, and affiliate faculty in Critical Theory, at Northwestern University. They work on black feminist theory, transgender and nonbinary studies, and abolition. Most recently, they've published Black Trans Feminism (Duke University Press, 2022) and Cistem Failure: Essays on Blackness and Cisgender (Duke University Press, 2022). Currently, they are completing a manuscript entitled A Nonbinary Life (forthcoming, Bloomsbury Press). Learn more at their website: marquisbey.com.

Chair: EJ Renold, Cardiff University, UK

Panels

Activating Routes (FEAS; Finn Mackay; Sid Mohandas; Zoha Zokaei)

Chair: Rachel Holmes, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

'What about the gender in Gender Studies?'

Finn Mackay, University of the West of England, UK

Finn Mackay is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of the West of England, Bristol and the author of 'Female Masculinities and The Gender Wars' and 'Radical Feminism: Activism in Movement'. Their professional background is in youth work and then policy and training for a London LEA where they worked on domestic abuse prevention education and anti-bullying. Finn is a Trustee of the British Sociological Association and the Feminist Archive, an Editor for the International Journal of Lesbian Studies and a proud Ambassador for the Worker's Educational Association.

Creative Podcasting : A Commitment to Care in Activism

Zoha Zokaei, University of Sussex, UK

Dr. Zoha Zokaei is an academic and award-winning podcast producer. She is currently the co-convenor of the MA in Media Practice for Social Change at the school of Media, Arts, and Humanities at the University of Sussex. Her practice-based research focuses on creative intersectional feminist methodologies for performing activism. She explores the rights and responsibilities of listening to stories absent from public discourse, bringing feminist notions of care and listening into close conversation.

Framed by the intimacy and accessibility of podcasting and audio storytelling, her work seeks to engage with underrepresented stories while fostering meaningful, activist-driven engagement. Her podcast, *Price of Secrecy*, a fictionalised series addressing the issue of child sexual abuse in Iran, won the Best Documentary in a Non-English Language award at the 2019 Third Coast International Audio Festival.

Becoming sloth(ful): queer temporalities in early childhood education

Sid Mohandas, Independent Scholar

Dr Sid Mohandas is a Montessori practitioner and childhood studies scholar, whose research in early childhood employs feminist, decolonial, anticolonial and more-than-human approaches. Sid has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals and edited book collections. They are the author of the forthcoming book *Re-imagining Gender in the Early Childhood Workforce: Feminist and More-than-human Perspectives* with the Bloomsbury Academic. More recently Sid co-edited the Special Issue on 'Bewildering early childhood pioneers' in the journal *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, and is currently the co-editor for a Special Issue in *British Education Research Journal* titled 'The state of gender(s), young people and education: inequities, inter/intrasectionality and inclusivity'. Sid also serves as an editorial board member for the journal *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*.

#FEAS Feminist Educators Against Sexism: Creating Feminist Research Communication Tactics

Mindy Blaise, Emily Gray and Jo Pollitt, Australia

Also given we are presenting in our capacity as #FEAS, please use this bio: #FEAS Feminist Educators Against Sexism are an Australian-based international feminist collective committed to developing public pedagogies into sexism in the academy. #FEAS is co-led by Professor Mindy Blaise, Dr Emily Gray and Dr Jo Pollitt, and their work has been presented at Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts Centre, and at multiple international conferences. #FEAS use humour, irreverence, creative practices and collective action to develop and perform creative interventions that generate a consciousness raising for our times that is responsive, affirmative, experimental, generative, and insistent.

Re-routing Policy (Alison Phipps; EJ Renold; Vanita Sundaram)

Chair: Joanne Dillabough, Cambridge University, UK.

Why am I such a tool? From institutional ethnography to abolition

Alison Phipps (she/her), University of Sussex, UK

Alison Phipps is Professor of Sociology at Newcastle University, UK. Her work focuses on: (1) sexual violence and in particular its functions in racial capitalist economies, societies and institutions; and (2) how feminist efforts to tackle sexual violence can become more transformative. In 2013, Phipps co-authored the first national study of ‘lad culture’ and sexual violence in higher education. Between 2015 and 2020, she co-led the Changing University Cultures collective with Liz McDonnell and Jess Taylor. In 2021, she set up the Abolition Feminism for Ending Sexual Violence collective with Tina Sikka and Nikki Godden-Rasul. Phipps’ last book was called *Me, Not You: the trouble with mainstream feminism* (Manchester University Press). Her upcoming book is called *Sexual Violence in Racial Capitalism* (also Manchester University Press).

Re-routing towards place: From policy ‘influence’ to coproduction

Vanita Sundaram (she/her), University of York, UK

Vanita Sundaram is Professor of Education at the University of York. Her research is concerned with gender-based violence in education, with a current focus on intersectional experiences of gender-based violence; co-production of inclusive methods for working with marginalised groups; and the development of theoretically-informed models for school-based violence prevention. She has recently been funded by the ESRC, Plan International and the Council of Europe to conduct research on these topics. Her publications include *‘Everything is racialised on top’: Black and minoritised girls’ and young women’s experiences of public sexual harassment in the UK* (Plan International UK); *Lad culture in higher education: Sexism, sexual harassment and violence* (with Prof Carolyn Jackson); and *Global debates and key perspectives on sex and relationships education: Addressing issues of gender, sexuality, plurality and power* (with Prof Helen Sauntson).

Staying with the polytical trouble: com-promise, creative coproduction and ethical vertigo

EJ Renold (they/them), Cardiff University, Wales, UK.

EJ Renold is Professor of Childhood Studies at the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University, Wales. Inspired by transdisciplinary feminist, queer and new materialist posthumanist theory, their research explores how gender and sexuality come to matter in children and young people’s everyday lives across diverse sites, spaces and locales. Here, they have explored the affordances of how participatory, coproduced and creative methods, resources and events can engage micro and macro polytical change (see www.agendaonline.co.uk/crush/). EJ was the winner of the UK’s [ESRC Impact in Society Prize](#) (2018), the [Huw Owen Medal for Outstanding Educational Research in Wales](#) (2021) and the American Education Research Association’s Posthuman SIG’s *Collaborative Excellence* award (2025). Their forthcoming books include, “Creative Coproduction” (with Gabrielle Iverson, Goldsmiths Press) and “Creative research on gender and sexuality with children and young people: making methods matter” (with Huuki, Pihkala and Taylor, Routledge).

Inside the university impact machine: A trans inclusive Femifesto in times of post truth populism

Jessica Ringrose, University College London, UK.

Bio: Professor Jessica Ringrose (she/her) PhD (York University Canada) is co-Director of the [Centre for Sociology of Education and Equity](#) at IOE UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, London Her research explores young people's gender and sexual cultures and activisms, and sex education and digital literacy in school settings. She has worked with a wide range of stakeholders and academics to shape policy and practice in areas of education, gender, media and communications, crime and justice. Her recent projects focus on developing [educational interventions](#) to prevent [tech facilitated gender based and sexual violence](#), online misogyny and transphobia, with findings informing the UK 2023 Online Safety Act. She was the co-chair of Gender and Education Association from 2015-2020 and the recipient of The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Distinguished Contributions to Gender Equity in Education Award in 2020. Her latest book, *Teens, Social Media and Image Based Abuse* is out with Palgrave in 2025.

Parallel Sessions

Session 1: Group 1

Grind, pinch, shake; Activating feminist performance pedagogies through Semiotics of Sexisms

Emily Gray and Mindy Blaise *Edith Cowan University, Australia*

This paper presents a re-imagining of Martha Rosler's 1975 performance work *Semiotics of the Kitchen* fifty years on. Through video art and performance dialogue by #FEAS Feminist Educators Against Sexism, the presentation outlines and demonstrates how feminist performance pedagogies disrupt hierarchies of academy-based knowledge, making room for audiences to engage with research about sexism in ways that make it possible to respond together in times of rapid change. Drawing on a long history of feminist contemporary performance work (McLean 2017, Long 2011, Barbara Cleveland 2009), through *Semiotics of Sexisms* #FEAS harness queer/feminist theories to actively subvert hierarchical notions of who researchers and performers are, in order to open the kitchen to a collective and public conversation beyond academia. The presentation includes the premiere of the video artwork *Semiotics of Sexisms*, a new creative work that responds to and expands on Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen* and her 2011 work *Semiotics of the Kitchen: An Audition*. The work deliberately positions the researchers (queer, ageing, white) bodies into the performance in order to offer research communication that "resonates and conveys beyond the signifiatory, incorporating and leveraging various excesses" (Lippman, 2020, p.183). There will be audience participation in the form of a collective and simple 8 count dance phrase that will be recorded with the opportunity for participants to be included in version 2 of the video work.

Key words: feminist performance, video art, public pedagogy, feminist lineage, queer bodies

Reclaiming the Forgotten Voices: Rediscovering Early Women Sociologists to Transform the Sociological Canon

Chiara Ferrari and Mariagrazia Santagati *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy*

Sociology has historically been presented through a selective and partial narrative, often centered on the contributions of a few white male intellectuals (Abrutyn & Lizardo, 2021). Feminist and decolonial critiques, emerging since the 1980s and 1990s, have highlighted the androcentric and Eurocentric biases embedded in the sociological canon (Hamlin, Weiss & Briton, 2023; Smith, 1974, 2007; Collins, 1990). These critiques emphasize the foundational contributions of Early Women Sociologists (EWS) during the founding years of the discipline, whose work on themes such as gender, family, and social inequalities has been long overlooked or marginalized (Deegan, 1991; Lengermann & Niebrugge-Brantley, 1997; Santagati et al., 2023).

This study (still in progress) maps researchers who have studied EWS over the past five years (2020–2025) to understand how their contributions are preserved, expanded, and shared. Using an exploratory literature review in four languages and an online survey, 156 potential respondents were identified, of whom 56 completed the questionnaire. Key findings reveal that 44.44% of respondents are associate or full professors, while 9.26% are postdoctoral or academic researchers. Geographically, the largest group of respondents comes from Europe (47.62%), and South America (16.67%).

Among the 41 EWS identified, 30 were studied for their contributions to gender, women's conditions, and family dynamics. Major research domains include intersectional feminism (Cooper, Luxemburg, Tristan), women's education and culture (Addams, Fuller, Ramabai), gender theory (Smith, Mead, Klein), and social inequalities (Cosser, Eleanor Marx, Elisa Salerno). These findings advocate for reexamining the academic canon to ensure the integration of these voices, enriching sociology with more inclusive and diverse perspectives, and changing the way the discipline is taught.

Key words: Sociological Canon; Early Women Sociologists; Feminist and Decolonial Critiques; Social Network Analysis- SNA; Expanding Sociology Teaching

Navigating Rivers of Blood: The impact on routes through academia of menstruation, pain and shame in Australasia

Reshmi Lahiri-Roy and Aimee Turner *Federation University, Australia*

This paper is a product of the emotionally reflective shared musings of two racially and culturally diverse colleagues in Australian academia. A diverse range of religious texts stress the uncleanliness of women during menstruation. People are abjured not to touch them, they cannot pray, sit or eat with others. As feminist academics we are disdainful of such obsolete hegemonies yet as women suffering dysmenorrhea we live with the quotidian 'shamefulness' of our condition while continuously striving to provide an embodied understanding of gender.

Bonding through conversations on the impact of dysmenorrhea on our lives and careers, we focus on our experiences within the medical system and our traumatising experiences of the use of IUDs to combat our condition. Mining our experiences as data and designating ourselves

as ‘missing peoples’ (Braidotti 2019) in tertiary discussion spaces, we work with narrative inquiry and conversation as a blended qualitative methodology to explore the ‘silences’ within academic feminisms.

The literature reveals excessive focus on diverse menstruation related impacts on tertiary students. Yet a vast silence encapsulates experiences of female academics undergoing these issues. Striving to shatter this silence and using feminist cultural theory we offer the provocation that globally academia needs to create ‘problem spaces’ for relevant conversations between all genders to help those such as us navigate our careers. Simultaneously, we offer recommendations for ways to navigate such spaces based on our lived experiences. Shame cannot be the albatross female academics such as us carry perennially around our necks.

Key words: Menstruation, academia, conversations on shame, cultural norms, narratives

Session 1: Group 2

Que(e)rying Leadership in an LGBTQ+ leadership development programme in UK HE

Alex Baird *University of Bedfordshire, UK*

The LGBTQ+ leadership development programme (which I accessed for my research) ran for LGBTQ+ staff between September 2022 and May 2023 in one university and consisted of three formalised classroom days and individual mentorship. I was a participating observer on the LGBTQ+ leadership development programme along with 19 attendees and 4 facilitators.

On programme day 2, LGBTQ+ attendees engaged in several communication skills sessions led by a facilitator who was not LGBTQ+. The facilitator emphasised the importance of body language and use of voice, over words spoken, as a way of achieving (higher) status and connecting with the audience. Using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) of field notes and attendees’ interview transcripts alongside thinking with queer theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), I would like to offer how power/leadership was challenged and reframed by LGBTQ+ attendees during this session. While these communication sessions allowed an opportunity for attendees to play with performance (Butler, 2007) there was a resistance from LGBTQ+ attendees to the prevailing (gendered) norms of leadership (Ferry, 2018) that were constructed by the facilitator. These norms created a sense of inauthenticity for LGBTQ+ attendees and were felt, if enacted, would lead to conflict for LGBTQ+ attendees in the wider university. Instead of assimilating or conforming to normative versions of leadership, attendees escaped this and embraced an alternative (Halberstam, 2011).

Key words: LGBTQ+ leadership, LGBTQ+ leadership development, gender, performativity, performance

Bridging the gender gap in higher education STEM: An intersectional approach to examine the pivotal role of mentoring

Jane Umutoni *University of Glasgow, UK*

This study underscores the transformative potential of mentoring, grounded in theoretical constructs, to achieve gender parity in STEM education. With a focus on Rwanda, the ongoing study will present its early findings from data collected from undergraduate students in STEM fields.

The persistent gender gap in higher education STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) necessitates innovative approaches to foster equity and inclusion. The study employs the framework of possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and intersectionality approach (Crenshaw, 1989) to examine the pivotal role of mentoring in addressing this disparity. Possible selves theory provides a lens through which individuals envision their future identities and trajectories, which is particularly significant for females who often encounter multiple barriers in STEM fields. Simultaneously, intersectionality theory reveals how overlapping identities such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status compound these barriers, necessitating tailored mentoring strategies. Effective mentoring programs leverage these theoretical insights to provide personalized support, enhancing self-efficacy and resilience among women in STEM. By cultivating a sense of belonging and professional identity, mentors can empower female students to navigate and overcome systemic challenges, thereby narrowing the gender gap in higher education STEM disciplines and beyond.

This paper fits in well with the GEA 2025 Conference main theme but more specifically the 'Knowing Routes' sub-theme, that calls for efforts ensure that gender remains relevant and high on agendas. Related to this study, it is evident that the gender gap in STEM education is still gaping and does not look like it is getting fully closed any time soon, much as we would want it to soon. A lot remains to be done and our voices as scholars must still be heard, loud and clear. For sustainable development to be realized globally, gender equity and equality must prevail.

Key words: STEM, gender, mentoring, higher education, intersectionality, possible selves

Improving attrition and retention of LGBTQ+ people in STEM in the UK and the US: Findings from the LGBTQ+ project

Jessica Gagnon and Marco Reggiani *University of Manchester and University of Strathclyde, UK*

LGBTQ+ experiences in STEM fields, in higher education and in industry, are often shaped by experiences of exclusion and discrimination, with limited availability of supportive policies or embedded inclusive practices (Bilimoria & Stuart, 2009; Cech & Waidzun, 2011; Mattheis, Arellano, & Yoder, 2019; Reggiani, Gagnon, & Lunn, 2023). Some existing studies have employed deficit framing and/or heteronormative lenses through which to examine the LGBTQ+ experiences and retention of LGBTQ+ talent in STEM disciplines. A lack of intersectional approaches within the literature has limited how challenges and experiences of oppression and privileges are understood.

In this presentation of a multi-country study, we explore findings from an RSC and SIN-funded project. The main aim of this project is to develop sector-wide, cross-disciplinary, international approaches to improving policies and practices to address the inclusion and retention of LGBTQ+ people in STEM.

We deploy elements of Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (Bourdieu, 1990) to foreground a work

whose approach to oppression, privilege, and identities is framed by intersectionality theory, feminist theories, and queer theories and methodologies (Butler, 1990; Collins, 2015; Crenshaw, 1989; Halberstam, 2020; Sedgwick, 1990). Intersectionality theory, feminist theories, and queer theories benefit from each other to develop scholarship that connects anti-essential and non-normative conceptualisations of identity and critical approaches accounting for the material consequences of intersecting oppression and privilege.

Data for this project was collected through focus groups and workshops conducted between February and December 2024 in both the UK and US. The study's 38 participants include academics, industry staff, and PhD students enrolled in higher education institutions in the UK and US, who shared their overall experiences in STEM educational and professional settings.

Data was thematically analysed to explore: i) the embodied and situated ways LGBTQ+ people deploy their agency to navigate their careers; ii) the ways LGBTQ+ people are systemically included or excluded in STEM fields; and iii) the relationships between resistance to change and innovation and inclusion in educational and professional environments.

Findings illuminate the multiple strategies of (in)visibility employed by LGBTQ+ scientists and engineers to navigate their career pathways and how these experiences contribute to increasing or reducing attrition and improving inclusion and retention. By discussing findings in the context of the complex networks that structure STEM fields, we also aim to gain a better understanding of the “field” of institutions, social actors, and power relations that shape attrition and retention for LGBTQ+ scientists in the UK and the US. The findings have implications for inclusive practices in teaching and research in education, social sciences, and STEM fields.

Key words: LGBTQ+; STEM; inclusion; feminist theories; queer theories

Session 1: Group 3

Gender-based violence (GBV) in secondary schools in England

Kirsty Cann *University of Exeter, UK*

Lingering at the end of class, she waited until the other Year 10 students had left the room. “Miss, I had sex for the first time last night. My friend filmed it and shared it with all my mates...is that OK?”

Teaching in a secondary school in England is both a privilege and a challenge. It places educators close to the lived realities of young people, where gender-based violence (GBV) is often normalised. This research is motivated by a desire to highlight the prevalence of GBV in secondary school, predominantly perpetrated on girls and gender-diverse individuals, and to demonstrate how these experiences normalised. It seeks to demonstrate how this normalisation of GBV reinforces sexist attitudes and behaviours which adversely impact students' life chances.

The aim is to provide robust evidence of the extent of GBV in school, and to examine the culture in which it operates by employing a mixed-methods approach. An online questionnaire will be administered to all students in the school, aged 7-18, who have obtained parental opt-in

consent as well as provided their own informed consent. To enable a better understanding of students' lived experiences, one to one interviews will follow on, giving students a chance to tell their own story, and be heard.

The findings of this research will be published in due course, offering critical evidence to inform policy and practice aimed at addressing GBV in educational settings.

Key words: Gender-based violence, school, education, culture

Rethinking the Construction of Gender-Based Violence in School Violence Policy and Senior High School Practice: A Reflection from Indonesia

Farieda Ilhami Zulaikha *The University of Sydney, Australia*

Indonesia has a long history of gender-based violence (GBV). For decades, GBV was handled informally and often swept under the rug in school to avoid tarnishing the school reputation. Many types of VAW were left unrecognisable especially sexual harassment. While crippled with the fear of getting harassed, victims are also suffering from victim blaming. In Early 2024, the Ministry of Education launched a new anti-violence (including GBV) policy for all school levels by demanding provincial government and schooling create a taskforce team. With this recent policy, the Indonesian government has opened the door to nationally combatting GBV. The work presented here critically analyse how GBV is represented in the new anti-violence policy and how 'subjects', 'objects', and 'places' are constructed. Drawing on Foucault, WPR offers a genealogical approach to understanding the underlying assumption showing what truth is accepted, and critically examining how it is produced and how it has become. The data were collected from published policy documents, interviews with the West Javan taskforce team, and school taskforce teams, and observation of counselling in two public high schools. The results show that 1) GBV is defined as fixed categorical entities, leaving behind the social processes impacting how GBV is responded to by schools, 2) Gender-neutral narrative silences the role of men as the perpetrators and hinders the root of the problem, 3) the problem construction of GBV weighs mostly on women 'body'(including stigmatisation and victim blaming), 4) GBV is interpreted superficially (ignoring verbal sexual harassment), 5) school practices currently produce and re-produce hegemonic masculinity through blaming girls as the victim, normalising boys' behaviours of 'policing' against girls, imposing responsibility on survivors for their own victimisation, and paying less attention to the secrecy of counselling room.

Key words: gender-based violence; problematisation; hegemonic masculinity; critical policy analysis; gender-based violence policy

Managing multiple identities: Exploring the intersecting gendered nature of violence in secondary schools in post-conflict Sierra Leone.

O'Bai Conteh *Lancaster University, UK*

This paper, which is based on my PhD research at Lancaster University, explores how school-related violence has exacerbated intersecting inequalities in secondary schools, thereby contributing to the production of differential schooling experiences and learning outcomes for

girls in post-conflict Sierra Leone. The discourse on the gendered nature of violence in secondary schooling in Sierra Leone provides a substantive insight into girls' school experiences. However, gender violence in Sierra Leone does not operate in isolation, it has always had complex ways of interacting with other social inequalities - such as social class, ethnic-traditions and location - that continue to perpetuate gender-differentiated schooling experiences and outcomes. Therefore, I use an intersectional lens to provide a more coherent understanding of social identities in school and an analytical framework to understand the interplay of these identities in sustaining and promoting school-related violence. I draw on my extensive data set, which was generated through individual interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Participant Observations in 4 secondary schools. I will illustrate the ways in which gender interacts in complex ways with other social identities to produce differentiated experiences of school-related violence in secondary schooling in Sierra Leone. I will argue that violence in school is a process to sustain gender inequalities.

Key words: Gender; Ethnic-traditions; Schooling; Intersectionality; Violence in School; Inequality, Experiences, Outcomes

Session 1: Group 4

Bridging Theory and Practice: Feminist Perspectives on Self-Care Facilitation in HE

Chi-Yen Chang *University of Bergen, Norway*

Modern societal shifts, austerity measures, and technological advancements have disrupted the balance between individuals, culture, and nature, leading to increased stress and anxiety. This challenge is particularly evident in healthcare education and professions, where professionals such as music therapists and nurses are experiencing rising levels of burnout, resulting in many leaving their careers. These challenges underscore the urgent need to explore the intersections of environment, education, and self-care.

This presentation uses music therapy as an example to address the question: How can student experiences and feminist perspectives enhance self-care facilitation in higher education? It draws from my research project, "Participatory Action Research: Fostering Self-Care Cultivation in Music Therapy Education," which involves close collaboration with students at the University of Bergen to explore self-care practices throughout their training. This project seeks to fill a significant gap in empirical research on self-care in higher education by implementing pilot self-care groups for students.

By using feminist pedagogy and therapeutic frameworks as a foundation, this study explores how these theories support self-care facilitation, addressing the gaps between theory and practice. The initial findings suggest that integrating feminist perspectives into self-care practices fosters a more inclusive and reflective approach to resilience and well-being, while also challenging traditional educational perspectives and driving social change through education—aligning with the conference themes of diversifying routes and addressing the political implications of gender in education. These findings offer empirical insights for

integrating self-care into the broader educational framework, with implications for music therapy and beyond.

Key words: Self-care, Higher Education, Pilot Group, Feminist Perspectives, Music Therapy

Unsettling and being unsettled: Feminist interventions in the (re)presentation of troubling data

Allayne Horton *The University of Melbourne, Australia*

This presentation draws on data from an affect-inflected ethnography (Stewart, 2017) undertaken in a secondary school in Victoria, Australia, to explore questions of ethical research praxis for the proliferation of difficult knowledge (Britzman, 1998; Pitt & Britzman, 2003) and intense feeling that emerged in the wake of a pedagogical ‘sticky incident’ (Ahmed, 2004) of literary trauma. Conversing with the conference theme of ‘activating routes’, it teases out the ethical and pragmatic tensions of being an insider(-teacher)-researcher in the midst of this sticky incident and its rangy affects, and how these tensions urged feminist interventions as “accountable knowledge practices” (Barad, 2013, p. 51) in the (re)presentation of troubling data (Chadwick, 2021).

Probing the contours of response-ability (Barad, 2007) and tensions immanent in a feminist ethics of care (Noddings, 2015), it speaks to the task of writing with and through an ongoing positioning (Bodeva & Annamma, 2023) that is porous and responsive to the affects of difficult knowledge in/as data.

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Key words: Affect, difficult knowledge, feminist research praxis, insider-research

(Re)thinking binaries in feminist education research: A de/colonial critique

Kelsey Benson *University of Wisconsin-Superior, US*

In this presentation, I think with de/colonial theory (Alcoff, 2020; Lugones, 2020; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2021) to make a case for education researchers in feminist spaces to [continue to] be more intentional in our use of language. It is situated in a qualitative study on U.S. classroom teachers' experiences with lactation (or pumping) upon return to full-time classroom teaching following the birth of [a] child(ren). Lactation is a salient launch point for a discussion about language use practices, as the dominant discourse around infant feeding – breastfeeding – is firmly rooted in traditional binaries (man/woman, mother/father, male/female). Leveraging this example, I first argue for explicit deconstruction of terms like 'woman' (Butler, 1995) and 'mother' in an effort to avoid the ways these terms have historically, though perhaps unintentionally, erased and/or obscured the infant feeding practices of trans, gender non-conforming, and/or non-binary parents. Additionally, I discuss how the tendency towards gender essentialism (Averett, 2021) inherent in an over-reliance on binaries is harmful even to cis het women, as it perpetuates a discursive (re)inscription of the undervalued labor of care-work (Fraser, 2017) onto the bodies of those read in the world as women. I conclude by arguing for broadly inclusive language practices when writing generally about embodied practices, like lactation, as a way to move education research that strives to balance the needs to (1) honor women's chronically understudied and endemically silenced experiences, while simultaneously (2) refusing to perpetuate the silencing and erasure of all those who do not fit neatly into the binary category of cisgender heteronormative woman.

Key words: lactation, classroom teachers, de/colonial theory, gender essentialism, feminist education research

Session 1: Group 5

Round Table: Feminist Pedagogies in Times of Neoliberalism and Surveillance

Ileana Jiménez *Stony Brook University, US*

Kali Thompson *University of Lincoln, UK*

Hanna Retallack *Institute of Education, University College London, UK*

Akane Kanai *University of Warwick, UK*

Alyssa Niccolini *Goethe Universitat, Frankfurt, Germany*

Christina Gillespie *Georgia College & State University, US*

Beth Wurzburg *University of Georgia, US*

In an age of increasing backlash against feminism in schools and universities (Elwell & Buchanan, 2019), this symposium gathers a transnational group of feminist scholars who engage in feminist pedagogies across our teaching, research, and activism. Our commitments are informed by a range of feminisms from Black feminism (Collins, 2009; Lorde, 1987) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) to Latina feminisms (Anzaldúa, 1987; Moraga, 1983); Marxist feminisms (Fraser, 2013, 2022; Vogel, 2013), poststructural feminisms (Butler, 1990, 1993; St. Pierre, 2000), and New Materialist feminisms (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Ringrose et al., 2020); as well as queer and trans pedagogies (Britzman, 2014; Keenan, 2017).

As a collective of women of color and white scholar-activists, we identify with a range of intersectional positionalities and come to these feminisms from UK, US, Australian, and European-based university spaces. In short, we all define ourselves as critical feminist pedagogues. At the core of our commitments, we assert, as bell hooks does, that the “classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy” (hooks, 1994).

During this session, we will share our personal experiences with the politics and praxis of feminist pedagogies through counter-storytelling (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). As we share these counter-narratives rooted in our various global contexts and institutions, we hope to build solidarity with each other as panelists as well as with those who choose to join this session. As such, participants will be invited to springboard from our counter-storytelling to share their own.

Each panelist comes to feminist pedagogies from across a range of fields in education: from early childhood to secondary education; curriculum studies to teacher education; social justice education to sociology of education; women’s, gender, and girls’ studies to media studies and beyond. Our stories will make visible how current neoliberal and repressive far-right structures in schools and universities have silenced and surveilled our feminist pedagogies and curricula, research and activism. Collectively, we resist the “happy narratives” (Ahmed, 2017) that the neoliberal academy creates that both extracts from our emotional, intellectual, and political labor while also repressing it simultaneously.

The structure of the session will be the following: symposium panelists will share their counter-stories followed by an invitation to participants to share their own. As we share these complex and layered stories, we hope to engage in some healing and arts-based methodologies, such as zines or collaging (Franklin-Phipps, 2019) or some other collaborative artifact to document our collective resistance.

Session 1: Group 6

Algorithmized Girlhood: Exploring how Algorithmic social media Influences the Sexual Self-Perception and Wellbeing of Teenage Girls

Chiara Fehr *University College London, UK*

In the past decade, young people have been increasingly looking to social media for information around sexuality, often to supplement insufficient formal sex-education (Van Oosten et al. 2018). This thesis explores how teenage girls’ contemporary sexual learning is influenced by algorithmic technologies. Central to this discussion is the app TikTok, widely used amongst teenagers (Ofcom, 2024). I argue that TikTok’s algorithmic design aggravates pre-existing complexities around sexual-learning, through its algorithmic prioritisation of patriarchal standards (Cheney-Lippold, 2011), omnipresent consumer functionalities (i.e. TikTok-shop), and accelerated circulation of misinformation (Fowler et al., 2021). These concerns are especially problematic for teenage girl as (post) feminist neo liberal dogmas (Gill & Orgad, 2017) dominate feminine identity construction on the app and directly feed into problematic algorithmic app design.

Conducted at a UK school over a two-month period a series of focus groups was facilitated with a group of eight girls implementing feminist new materialist, co-production, arts-based

methodologies a 'TikTok Diary.' This enabled both ethnographic access to hard-to-reach digital environments and allows participants to direct the narrative of their online and offline experience. Findings suggest that the apps algorithms often expose teenage girls to content targeted at adult women, projecting 'adult' sexuality standards onto them, as well as promoting sexual-self construction through consumerist behaviour provoked by the apps design. This research contributes to literature on algorithmically mediated affect (Petrina, 2021) and carries important implication for pedagogical interventions regarding young people's needs in navigating the complexities of sexual learning on algorithmic media. This aligns with the GEA 'Knowing' and 'Activating' Routes.

Key words: Algorithmic-Affect, TikTok, Techno-Sexual-Assemblage, teenage girls, Soft Bio-power

From the other side of the street; negotiating difference in youth activism

Harriet Rowley *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

In this paper, we look from the other side of the street to explore how difference can be negotiated to create conditions for young people, beyond the 'usual suspects' to broaden who participates in, and what constitutes as youth activism. From our research which spans nine years, we became interested in the negotiation of difference in youth activist spaces, informed by black feminist thinkers such as Audre Lorde. Across our projects, we attempted to create conditions 'for a new and possible meeting' (Lorde, 1984) by attending to the micro-politics of spaces not typically recognised as youth activism, to understand how young activists relate across human difference as equals to 'develop tools to use difference as a springboard for creative change' (Lorde 1984, 115). This paper aims to gesture towards some possibilities by identifying two practices that create conditions for young people to prefigure more egalitarian relations based on mutuality and care. Following the work of Shelia Rowbotham (1979), we characterise these practices as prefigurative, creating conditions for young people to develop consciousness of shared conditions to bridge difference and enact more egalitarian relations. Connecting this to our edited book, entitled 'Young People, Radical Democracy and Community Development' (Batsleer et al., 2023) we reflect about how such practices offer hopeful alternatives that position young people at the forefront of radical democratic practice. The paper will end with a consideration for how such attempts to do research that matters can survive in increasingly volatile times within the academy.

Key words: youth activism, radical democracy, politics of difference,

Future girl? Exploring girls' digital sexual cultures through speculative fabrications

Kate Marston *Cardiff University, UK*

Research reveals a significant gap between young people's lived experience with digital technologies and the scripted content of online safeguarding programmes that focus on young people's rational, individual decision-making regarding safe and responsible use. Rarely do online safeguarding programmes engage with the wider gender and sexual norms shaping young

people's digital cultures. This paper outlines how experimenting with speculative fiction offers generative possibilities for digital sexualities research and education. Drawing on group interviews and arts-based data produced in 2018 by five girls aged 11–12 years old, it explores the competing and contradictory demands of contemporary digitally-networked girlhood. The paper briefly outlines how girls are promoted as empowered, choice-making agents in contemporary digital culture before examining the difficulties girls encounter when expressing their frustration at enduring gender and sexual inequities at school and online. It moves to explore how experimenting with speculative fiction through arts-based methods allowed new forms of voicing to emerge which challenged the vision of girls as vanguards of a new socio-economic order. By engaging in a diffractive analysis of the cut-up poem 'Test Subject 15066' and the fabricated future girl figure produced by three girls in the study, this paper explores alternative figurations of future girlhood.

Key words: girlhood; gender; sexuality; social media; arts-based methods

Trans young people in UK youth work: exploring what it materially means for a space to be 'safe' or gender-affirming

Max Kirk *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

Existing literature examining the nuance and complexity of trans youths' lives is sparse: often, they are subsumed into broader LGBTQ+ youth studies. Even these predominantly centre formal education: there is a notable lack of research that focuses on either informal education settings like youth work or is trans-specific. Most literature on trans youth is often quantitative, pathologizing, and/or perpetuates a harmful 'at-risk' narrative of trans youth.

I will present findings from my doctorate, which explores the experiences of trans youth within the context point of an LGBTQ+ youth work service, with a focus on the meaning and impact of professional relationships between trans young people and trans youth workers. The project used a qualitative, engaged research approach: a group arts-based activity, modelled on a youth work session plan, combined with individual elicitation interviews.

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals much discussion of their youth group as a 'safe space' where they can be themselves and explore any kinds of expression that they want, with minimal fear. What this materially means for each of them fit mostly into two key themes of active celebration and/or passive affirmation, which sometimes coexisted and sometimes were in conflict. This correlates with other similar research and is affirmed by connected community and practitioner knowledge sources.

These findings from an informal education context provide valuable insight and give instructive example for formal education spaces like schools on how to facilitate a gender-affirming youth space and in this way my presentation connects to the trans*forming conference theme.

Key words: trans(gender); youth; lgbt youth work; safe space

Session 1: Group 7

Celebrating the influences of women and mothers in the growing community of Ibis School, Australia

Gabrielle Ivinson, Parlo Singh and Andrew Barnes *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

Based on our longitudinal ethnographic research in Ibis Primary School, Australia, this presentation seeks to celebrate the work of women and mothers whose subtle yet powerful influences often go unreported (Rhee, 2020). The school is located in an area of high socio-economic poverty on contested ground where the custodians of the land are the Yugambeh People who were driven out by Europeans in around 1842.

Over time, the school has been widening relationships with a range of local communities that have influenced the school's culture and values as the senior leadership team and teachers have honed a craft of deep listening. They have provided support as mothers who live in great poverty and domestic trauma strive each day to bring their children to school; they have actively sought the wisdom of women Aboriginal elders who have intergenerational knowings about land (Garba and Sorentino (2020), belonging and learning (Moreton-Robinson (2013, 2015, 2020; Lauren Tynan (2021) to influence curriculum, classrooms and outside spaces. One powerful Indigenous teacher draws on her cultural art, yarning circles, and own her lived experiences and stories of her elders, to create deep connections with children and local families. Local mothers have started to act as play workers and are growing in confidence, as their skills, care and knowings are recognised.

Women's work, and research which documents this work, are crucial given the rise of neo-conservative and market driven policy settings across countries such as Australia and England.

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Key words: women's work, mothers, Aboriginal knowledge, poverty, schooling

Classroom in the Community: Building solidarity to challenge injustice

Becky Clarke, Sarah Abdellatif and Shafia Khatun *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

Girls and women experience harm in many distinct and disproportionate ways. We know that interpersonal violence and harm, as well as forms of institutional intervention, control and punishment are deeply gendered (Clarke and Leah, 2024). Women are also often the heartbeat of justice campaigns and grassroots forms of resistance, with such labour being driven by women from working class and racialised communities (Elliot-Cooper, 2019).

Delivering Justice for Women is a final year optional module for criminology and sociology undergraduate students at MMU. Its development over recent years has sought to incorporate two distinct elements of teaching: 'Classroom in the Community' and 'Crim Gogglebox'. These approaches to learning support the growing number of students choosing the module, almost exclusively young women, to explore their own gendered journeys, alongside a critical analysis of gendered forms of (in)justice, including those layered with racism and class stigma.

By making connections to both real and fictional accounts, and to the projects and spaces engaging in these issues locally in communities of Greater Manchester, we engage viscerally and conceptually with questions of gender, power and justice. The collective experience surface and critique failures, whether social, institutional, theoretical or otherwise, as well as to move beyond critique (Hill-Collins, 1998), to build solidarity and explore resistance.

This session, co-delivered by a lecturer and alumni students from the module, will explore the potential of connecting to stories and spaces when exploring gendered injustice. By making space in a taught programme for the personal, the political and community, alongside conceptual analysis, our students reflect on their experience. One which can include, yet importantly go beyond, a 'graduate outcome', to one of deep care and consciousness raising.

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Key words: gender power justice community resistance

Conversations on Consent: teacher perspectives on consent and consent education in the Indian context

Sahana Arun Kumar *University of York, UK*

This paper presentation explores teachers' views on consent and consent education in the Indian context. Interviews were conducted with 9 teachers from two schools, on how they understood consent and consent education, and the relevance of the same to teenagers. Using a reflexive thematic analysis of their interviews, the data was classified under three themes: voluntary consent, learning consent, and teaching consent. The teacher's definitions of voluntary consent, or willing active consent, comprised of the freedom to act without any force or pressure and a recognition of one's agency and capacity for choice. They shared that in order

to learn consent, one had to engage with moments in interactions that had potential for coercion, the nature and depth of a relationship, and institutional norms (like school policy) and government laws around rape and age of consent. Their strategies for teaching consent drew on critical pedagogies and arts based methods, but were influenced and mediated by their perceptions of the stage of development of their students. Teachers' conceptions of adolescence varied between 'still children' to 'almost adults' which affected what conversations were considered appropriate in the classroom. But all teachers were keen to take forward these conversations. These interviews expose the difficulty of these conversations for teachers, in a context where school policy and the law is often overpowered by socio-cultural norms that encourage abstinence-only (or danger-driven) and heteronormative discourses. They also reveal the urgency of teaching consent in the wake of sexual harassment and sexual violence cases in the country, which very often occur within familial and close relationships.

Key words: consent, consent education, teachers, schools, students

Session 1: Group 8

School's sex-composition, teachers' accuracy and gender stereotypes: Explanations for teachers' different teachability perceptions of boys and girls.

Mieke Van Houtte *Ghent University, Belgium*

Recently, (male) influencers are complaining that boys' educational underachievement is understudied, while claiming that boys are discriminated in schools. Knowing that teachers treat boys and girls differently, this study investigated the variety in the magnitude of the difference in teacher-perceived teachability of boys and girls, and its determinants. The study aimed to respond the question whether the student sex-composition of the school and teachers' gender role attitudes determine the extent of the difference in teacher-perceived teachability of boys and girls. The analysis of 1247 teachers in 59 secondary schools in Flanders revealed that a minority of the teachers do not notice a difference between boys' and girls' teachability, while a small group perceives boys to be more teachable than girls. The majority of the teachers perceive girls as more teachable than boys to a varying extent. A multilevel analysis showed an impact of the sex-composition of the school on the difference in teacher-perceived boys' and girls' teachability and an unanticipated interaction between the sex-composition of the school and teachers' traditional gender role attitudes. The more girls there are in school the smaller the difference in teacher-perceived teachability of boys and girls and this association is weaker for teachers with traditional gender role attitudes. Or, for teachers having more traditional gender roles, the context within which they work is less important to judge students' teachability than gender norms. The study offers evidence for the importance of gender stereotypes as well as for the accuracy of teachers' perceptions.

Key words: teacher perceptions; gender stereotypes; sex-composition; expectations; teacher-student interactions

An exploration into the impact of experiences of sexism on the wellbeing of Home Economics teachers in the Irish post-primary context

Clare Hogan *Dublin City University, Ireland*

Previous research identifies many drivers of teacher wellbeing such as school climate, relationships, and school leadership. One potential driver of teacher wellbeing which is neglected in the literature is that of sexism. Sexism is a multidimensional construct which can manifest in many ways e.g. unwanted sexual attention and harassment and sexist language. Many studies conducted on teacher wellbeing explore and examine the impact of common drivers such as school climate. However, within those studies, little is referred to with regards to the prevalence of sexism in the school environment and its potential impact on teacher wellbeing.

This paper demonstrates the existence of a lacuna regarding research into the prevalence of sexism for female teachers in the Irish post-primary school context and the impact of sexist experiences on their wellbeing. The proposed research sets out to explore this gap and investigate Home Economics teachers' experiences of sexism in the Irish post-primary school context with a view to determining the impact of sexism on the wellbeing of these teachers, using a mixed-methods approach. Furthermore, the analysis provides a justification for this research, as it evinces a noticeable escalating trend of increased sexism in education, being witnessed and experienced in other jurisdictions.

Key words: sexism, teachers, wellbeing, Home Economics

Reimagining sex-segregated secondary schools in NSW.

Susanne Gannon *Western Sydney University, Australia*

NSW is the only Australian state where single-sex secondary schooling remains a key feature of state-funded education. Although no new single-sex government schools have opened since the 1960s, in 2023, there were still 43 single-sex secondary schools operating in NSW, with 36 local catchments offering only single-sex options. In response to parental pressure and moves towards coeducation in the independent school sector, in 2024 the NSW Labour government announced the desegregation of many of these secondary schools through mergers and new builds. This presentation reports on a qualitative study undertaken soon after the announcement of the merger in two neighbouring schools in a culturally conservative, highly diverse, socioeconomically disadvantaged southwest Sydney suburb at the request of the school leaders. The project aimed to document for school communities, the current feelings, thoughts, hopes, concerns and imperatives expressed by young people and their teachers as they face historically significant, externally mandated change towards coeducation. Participation comprised focus groups with students at all year levels in both schools (n=97) and individual interviews with teachers and school leaders (n=28) in both schools. Most students and many teachers had only experienced single sex secondary schooling, and faced the future with both hope and trepidation. While the move to coed schooling reflects wider societal trends, brings with it the promise of a cutting-edge new school campus, and reflects the views of many participants that coeducation best reflects the worlds of work and higher education, it also collides with deeply held cultural values and with school traditions and practices that

reinforce the separateness and opposition of binary gender, including assumed gender-based traits of learners and associated pedagogies. The research indicated how stereotypical understandings of gender and culture are reinforced and interrupted, and intersections with racism and homophobia. Our future-focused recommendations aim to help school communities navigate towards more equitable and inclusive coeducational schooling.

Keywords: single-sex schooling; Australia; gender binary

Embracing the transfeminist killjoy: New routes to inclusion in Physical Education

Lois Ferguson *University of East Anglia, UK*

This paper explores tensions that emerge in pursuit of the inclusion of gender diverse students in Physical Education (PE), paying specific attention to how competing discourses of gender shape PE teachers' practices in particular ways. Research has highlighted how teachers' fears, uncertainties and resistance to change have affected their ability to provide PE provision which acknowledges and engages gender diverse students joyfully (Drury et al., 2023; Williamson and Sandford, 2018). Indeed, the subject of PE has long been considered one which remains stagnant and resistant to change in line with societal progress (lisahunter, 2019). Nonetheless, a shift toward more gender-affirming approaches in PE has been documented in recent years, with teachers becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to address the needs of gender diverse students in PE (Ferguson, 2024; Wilkinson and Penney, 2023). But how does this materialise amid rising anti-trans and anti-gender rhetoric in educational and sporting contexts? Drawing on insights from a creative, post-qualitative doctoral study with gender diverse young people (aged 11 – 18) and PE teachers in England, this paper explores how entanglements of gender-affirming and gender critical discourses shape PE teachers' paths toward inclusive practice in complex ways. It introduces the 'transfeminist killjoy', after Sara Ahmed's (2010) framing of the 'feminist killjoy', as a potential route that PE teachers could embrace to support their journeys toward more gender-affirming practices in PE. I end by offering a space to collaboratively explore how such a route could be re-imagined in PE.

Key words: Physical Education | Gender diversity | Gender critical discourse | Gender-affirming discourse | Transfeminist killjoy

Session 1: Group 9

Symposium: Illuminating the cultural creation of gender norms in schools: perspectives from UK, India and China

Jessie Shepherd, Violet Jiang, Abby Gilsenan, and Sahana Arun Kumar *University of York, UK*

This collection of research papers explores the production and articulation of gendered norms and hierarchies across curricula, pedagogy, and school systems. Each of these studies explores the tangled relationship between gender norms, pedagogy, and student experiences in an educational context. This symposium discusses the ways that social norms around masculinity

and femininity circulate and shape boys and girls experiences of learning in the UK, India and China.

Paper 1

The first talk will explore the findings from two studies based in the UK, a mixed-methods survey and teacher interviews. Findings show that while teachers recognize how social norms around gender affect student learning, they often expressed assumptions that gender does not influence students' experiences in school. Regarding refugee girls, teachers denied how gender intersects with characteristics like ethnicity or religion, leading to a disconnect between teachers' awareness of gender norms and acknowledgement of how they shape their own practices.

Paper 2

The second talk will discuss phenomenological research with young women ages 13-14 on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) delivery in UK Catholic schools demonstrates how the intersection of religious and secular sexual values, as enabled through statutory guidance, can reinforce restrictive ideals of girlhood and heteronormative social scripts. Subsequently, young women report internalised understandings of sex as morally suspect, and feelings of ill-informedness and alienation surrounding RSE content.

Paper 3

The third talk will examine the analysis of two Chinese national guidelines which reveals a promotion of abstinence-only in current Health and Mental Health Education for all public schools. The finding indicates crucial topics such as gender, sexuality, and consent have been absent in the guidelines, while both guidelines reinforce a heteronormative framework. Through the omission of these topics as well as the lack of information on teaching support and professional training, the current guidelines potentially hinder the delivery of an inclusive and comprehensive sexuality and relationship education in all public schools.

Paper 4

The final talk will present a study examining 14-17 year old student perceptions of consent in elite schools in India highlights the intersecting role of family/social norms with gender to make sense of consent. Gender is both acknowledged and dismissed in understanding comfort in relationships and the dynamics of giving, taking, and asking for consent. Family norms create a default setting of consent/non-consent for some kinds of behaviours that often have a knock on effect on peer relationships. Familial expectations leave little room for conversations around agency and capacity when it comes to consent.

The findings from each of these studies underscore the urgent need for educators and policymakers to critically examine and address the complex interplay of gender and educational contexts. This symposium will encourage attendees to explore how gendered narratives and norms impact upon teaching, curricula, and discourses on a global scale.

Key words: Gender norms; curricula; pedagogy; teacher perspectives; student experiences;

Session 2: Group 1

Exploring 'Intra-action' of 'the Feminist' and Conceptualisation of Gender in Chinese Youth Everyday Live

Zixi Zuo *University College London, UK*

Previous research in the Anglo-Saxon contexts has documented how young people, especially young women, increasingly distance themselves from feminist identification in the postfeminist cultural contexts (Scharff, 2012; McRobbie, 2009; Kim & Ringrose, 2018). In these contexts, popular discourses often framed feminism as both abject and obsolete, suggesting women have achieved equality in the workplace, educational institutions, and the home (McRobbie, 2007; Scharff, 2010; Orgad & Gill, 2021). Meanwhile, in China, feminist movement that are distinct from Western framework, led by the state and elite, however, often criticised to disavow its more disruptive and politicized elements (Wallis, 2024; Liao, 2020; Wei, 2020). The reconfiguration of the the feminist label - as a gendered, classed, historical and global assemblage has intra-acted with Chinese gender subject-becoming (Wang, 2018; Wu & Dong, 2019; Fincher, 2018).

This research also points to the rootlessness of the conception of 'gender' that has been disengaged in transnational process of feminist theories and struggles to address the lived gendered experiences of Chinese youth (Hershatter, 2020; Li, 2016; Liao, 2020). Drawing on in-depth interviews and reflective fieldnotes with 18 Chinese college students, I employ a theoretical framework informed by Baradian and Deleuze-Guattarian concepts of 'inter-action' and 'assemblages' (Barad, 2007; Deleuze & Guattari, 2004; see also, Ringrose & Renold, 2014). This approach enables me to interrogate how gender and sexuality intersect with negotiations of feminism and how the feminist label functions as a discursive and material category with enduring affective intensity that propels the feminist research assemblage and youth gender culture. The findings reveal that the distinctive features of China's top-down gender equality movement has left young people in a dilemma – who have caught between liberal pro-egalitarian discourses and persistent micro-structural gendered discrimination in their everyday lives.

Moreover, the finding of the article contributes to the academic concerns on the feminist pedagogies in educational settings in the China (Cui, 2023; Huang et al., 2009; Liao, 2020; Wei, 2020), addressing calls to 'finding the root' of Chinese gender subjectivities and the importance of inclusive feminist pedagogies (Li, 2016; Wang & Zhang, 2010).

Key words: Intra-action, feminist movement, Chinese youth, postfeminist culture, post-socialism,

Experiences of Chinese Sexual and Gender Minority Students in UK Higher Education Institutions (HE)

Linxiao Zhang *Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, UK*

This research explores the unique academic and social experiences of Chinese sexual and gender minority (SGM) international students in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). Focusing on the intersectionality of race, culture, gender, and sexual orientation, the study investigates the challenges these students face, such as cultural conflict, identity negotiation,

and the impact of institutional support systems on their well-being and academic performance. Semi-structured interviews provide qualitative insights, shedding light on how their multiple intersecting identities shape their campus life.

Aligning with the conference's theme of Re-routing and Re-imagining Gender and Education, this research addresses key pathways:

Knowing Routes: By exploring the enduring challenges of Chinese SGM students, the study connects with historical and ongoing struggles to position gender and sexuality at the forefront of educational agendas.

Diversifying Routes: The research contributes to diversifying gender discourse by focusing on underrepresented non-Western perspectives and challenging Eurocentric frameworks.

Transforming Routes: It interrogates binaries and rigid frameworks, emphasizing the fluidity and complexity of intersectional identities in cross-cultural contexts.

Re-routing Policy: Through critical evaluation of current policies, the study provides actionable recommendations to create more inclusive and supportive environments for SGM students.

By incorporating Queer Theory, Intersectionality Theory, and Critical Race Theory, this work advances the vision of the Gender and Education Association by foregrounding marginalized voices and proposing transformative educational policies and practices. It aims to inspire dialogue and action towards more inclusive, equitable HEIs globally.

Key words: Chinese SGM students, Intersectionality, Identity, Inclusivity, Cross-cultural

The Journey of Women Leaders in Higher Education Institutions of Post-Soviet Azerbaijan: Challenges and Strategies for Success

Lala Karimova *Lancaster University, UK*

This research project aims to explore the barriers encountered by women leaders in higher education institutions in the Republic of Azerbaijan and the approaches they employ to navigate these challenges. Although contemporary Azerbaijani society is undergoing the transition from Soviet totalitarianism to democracy, and building gender relations based on democratic principles is one of the state's goals, women still remain underrepresented in leadership roles in post-Soviet Azerbaijani higher education sector.

Employing a Feminist Narrative Inquiry approach, this qualitative research seeks to reveal the personal and professional challenges faced by women in academic leadership roles and the ways they address these obstacles. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with female leaders at universities. The research will be theoretically guided by Nancy Fraser's theory of justice, which provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating various aspects of gender-based inequality. Fraser's theory, encompassing the concepts of redistribution, recognition, and representation, enables a nuanced analysis of the barriers women encounter and the strategies they adopt to navigate them.

While the research is still ongoing, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the specific barriers women experience in academia.

Key words: women leaders, higher education institutions, gender barriers, academic leadership, Feminist Narrative Inquiry

Psycho-social barriers to enrolment of girls in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria

Wakil Ajibola Asekun *University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria*

Nigeria has one of the world's highest number of out-of-school children, the female child is the worst affected in this regard, this is in spite of efforts of the Nigerian government motivated by the latest goals i.e., Sustainable Development Goal target 4.1: that by 2030 all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. Therefore the study shall examine what constitutes the psycho-social barriers among the female folks that are making this goal difficult to achieve despite the best efforts from relevant authorities and international agencies. The present study shall adopt literature review approach to profile all social and psychological factors that militate against the girl child's enrolment and retention in both primary and secondary schools. Interventions in extant literatures shall also be reviewed to highlight areas in need of modifications. The research is motivated by Prioritarian's view that priority should be given to uplift the socially most disadvantaged people because an improvement in their wellbeing and social condition is of significant value among the people of any society with a shared sense of justice (Parfit, 1997). This is based on the ecological systems theory that the decision not to attend or quit schooling is the result of interplay between individual and institutional factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The paper shall make recommendations that could foster female enrolment and retention in basic and secondary education in Nigeria.

Key words: gender, education, enrolment, girl child

Session 2: Group 2

Transforming policy and transforming schools? Or, a tale of how government commissioned, funded and then would not publish research on LGBT inclusion in English schools

Eleanor Formby *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

2016-2019 saw the largest known study on homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying and LGBT inclusion in English schools. The research (Formby et al 2024, Formby et al forthcoming) took place in 1,176 primary and secondary schools, involving survey responses from 61,708 individuals (pupils and staff), in-school observations, and qualitative data collection (individual interviews and group discussions) with 172 pupils and staff. The research explored HBT bullying prevention; HBT bullying experiences and responses; LGBT inclusion in schools (including within the curriculum and wider environment); challenges and barriers to schools becoming more LGBT-inclusive spaces; the enablers and impacts of LGBT inclusion.

The research was intended to feed into positive developments for the education and wellbeing of LGBT+ pupils and staff in schools, and for organisations working with/in schools. However,

the so-called gender ‘culture wars’, and ‘anti-trans’ politics specifically, significantly limited this potential. This paper will outline some of the research findings, and examine the subsequent years spent trying to push the government to publish what they had themselves commissioned and funded. In doing so, I trace the apparent policy shift from inclusion to suppression, and the associated (lack of) transformation in schools, and point to implications for future work in this field.

This abstract directly speaks to the conference themes of trans*forming routes and re-routing policy. It also aligns with the Association’s broader vision for gender equality within and through education.

Key words: Government, HBT, LGBT, schools, trans

Nothing neat, nothing easy, only beautiful mess: using interviews and autoethnographic reflections to explore intergenerational trans connection and trans eldership

Max Kirk *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

Many factors contribute to intergenerational exclusion in trans spaces, regardless of how we temporally define trans generations. This appears to have substantial effect for many trans people: some mourn their exclusion from support networks as they age or ‘complete’ transition, and others struggle to visualise themselves and their future.

This presentation blends two projects. First, a dedicated traditional research project of interviews with nine trans people, aged 18-66, from which five themes emerged. These findings begin to build an understanding of trans eldership as something that varies individually, though a greater trans age and wealth of trans experience proved to be an important factor. I conceptualise trans eldership as connectional: someone may be a trans elder in relation to someone else, depending on their self-positioning and beliefs, rather than being a trans elder absolutely. Second, is an autoethnographic analysis of my experience as a trans youth worker: I examine journaled reflections of working at an LGBTQ+ youth summer camp, within an LGBTQ+ staff team, and the multiple modalities of trans eldership I witnessed, encountered, and embodied. This brought up complexities of gratitude, discomfort, and in/external tensions around eldership.

My practitioner experience provides an interesting case study that expands on and feeds into my research, facilitating an iterative process of meaning-making around intergenerational trans connection. I propose that eldership is real and beautiful, but it is not simple: it is messy, ever changing. It is vital for trans communities, illustrating not just the survivability, but also the joyful possibility, of transness.

Key words: trans(gender); eldership; autoethnography; intergenerational connection; temporality

University as a Complex Space for Transgender Students

Phoebe Murphy *University of York, UK*

In a time of increasing transphobia in the UK, it is important to centre trans voices and their diverse experiences of navigating higher education in order to ensure that moves made by universities toward trans inclusion adequately meet the needs of trans people, which is a broader aim of this research project. This paper presents original quantitative and qualitative data from a 3-year doctoral thesis project that explores feelings of belonging and safety among transgender university students in the UK. Specifically, it presents novel data on the ways in which universities are complex spaces for transgender people to navigate, and the variety of ways in which that impacts their sense of belonging and safety at university.

Through a mixed methods approach, combining questionnaire and follow-up interviews, the research examined what steps universities could take to create a safer and more welcoming environment for transgender students, and trans students' understandings of their safety and belonging concerns. The findings reveal the complex ways in which university is simultaneously viewed as a somewhat progressive safe-haven for trans students to be themselves and a site of ongoing struggle where participants constantly fear transphobic harassment. This paper explores some of the apparent contradictions of university life as a trans person, while emphasising UK universities' placement within an increasingly transphobic culture and the impact this has on the lives of transgender students, providing insight into how universities can move forward to improve the lives of their trans students.

Key words: Transgender, University, Complex Spaces, Trans Inclusion, Transphobia

Session 2: Group 3

“You can take the woman out of the working class, but you can't take the working class out of the woman”: Reflections on the production of working-class feminist knowledges

Carli Ria Rowell and Jessica Gagnon *University of Sussex and University of Manchester*

This paper discusses the affective politics of working-class feminist knowledge (WCFK) production within academia thus considering a future in which working-class women are at the centre and not the periphery of knowledge production.

We adopt a collaborative, dialogic, auto-ethnographically infused approach to discuss our experiences of both privileges and marginalisations in UK academia. We are both feminist, working-class, white, cis women raised in the affluent global north who are both newly navigating identity around disabilities (ADHD, dyslexia, endometriosis, hypermobile joints and chronic fatigue). We reflect upon our identities inside and outside the academy; experiences of pursuing careers within academia; and our contributions to the production of WCFK.

We discuss the possibilities and complexities of pursuing academic careers and creating WCFK in spaces that are hostile to working-class people and working-class ways of knowing. We consider our journeys into academia and sociology reflecting on the role of working-class role

models, sociological and feminist theories and writings in helping us find our working-class academic voices and laying down our “roots” in academia, we then explore the impact this has had upon our own academic pursuits.

Focusing upon the current landscape of academia we reflect upon the experiences of producing WCFK in a space that is still unwelcoming and hostile to working-class voices. Finally, we draw upon our collective experiences to share strategies for, hopefully, not just surviving but thriving as working-class academics thus considering how we can diversify academia.

Key words: working-class, feminist knowledge production, academia, inclusion, diversity

"Within that bubble, you have to meet certain criteria that are within you, that you inherited": Working-class affective experiences of deindustrialisation and higher education in the Illawarra

Shay Greig *University of Newcastle, Australia*

This presentation draws on PhD research within the industrial communities of the Illawarra. It challenges fixed notions of HE policy based on the outmoded and homogenising categories. It seeks to disrupt the neoliberal construction of Higher education within the so-called knowledge economy, which often overlooks or mis/recognizes inequalities, resulting in an ongoing struggle to achieve authentic social justice through widening participation.

The neoliberal focus on “evidence-based” measurements of disadvantage within HE frames inequality as something that can be measured. Consequently, “if it can’t be measured, it doesn’t count” (Burke, 2020b: 83). Our histories, emotions, imaginaries, experiences, and knowledges are reduced to judgements pertaining to our worthiness as human capital, productivity, and future value as workers within the economy. Education is at the centre of the so-called knowledge economy, and the commodification of the learner as a potential worker within this discourse has created increasingly narrow policy vision, aims, and outcomes that have further entrenched systems of inequality and deficit imaginaries.

This presentation will uncover the complexity of our routes through historical accounts of the intergenerational affect of class and gender and how periods of social and economic change feels for working-class people and understandings of the role and purpose of education. It will explore the fluid and contradictory nature of emerging subjectivities and identities and how we can draw on these microhistories to engage in and co-create new spaces for transformative educational experiences, narratives, and understandings for more inclusive policy directions.

Five keywords

affect, working-class, deindustrialisation, ethnography, microhistories

Muslim women are also feminists

Uzma Asif *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

This paper contributes to debates about diversifying post-colonial feminisms, with a focus on Muslim British women teaching in secondary schools. The question of whether Islam is

compatible with Western European feminist philosophy is deeply debated, however there is a need to recognise the primacy of religion, the importance of Muslim culture and the significance of Britishness in the formation of British Muslim women's identity. The methodology drew on autoethnographic accounts of my experience as an educator and was used to develop a series of scenarios, for example one is titled 'Miss are you a Muslim?'. These scenarios depict typical incidents that arise between Muslim women and were used as prompts during semi structured interviews with four Muslim women teachers in four secondary schools. It was found that Muslim women teachers encountered colonial and Eurocentric cultures in schools. They took what could have been read as racist challenges from students and drew upon their cultural heritage to impart generative and richer understandings of Muslim culture. This enabled young people to rethink dominant stereotypes of Muslim women. There is a need to pay attention to the specific combination of inequalities encountered by British Muslim women. My argument goes beyond challenging Western discourses of feminism and conventional approaches to intersecting identities. They accessed their Muslimness with pride and confidence to navigate and transform hostile situations into learning episodes. This is an everyday feminist praxis that claims the right to be respected and moves beyond colonial western feminist discourse and which empowers Muslim women.

Key words: Islamic feminism, female Muslim teachers, teacher education, autoethnography

Session 2: Group 4

The affective experience of school buildings: plasticity, gendered assemblages and material experimentation in the cracks of bad design

Laura Trafi-Prats *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

This paper thinks with ethnographic data from a study on the spatial experience of new school buildings in Liverpool to analyse how a series of building incidents (Fuller & Weizman, 2021) revealed a multiple school building full of sticky stuff, visceral objects and circulatory affects animating material invention and body plasticity.

We focus in three building incidents involving three white working-class women; a teen in a mini skirt, an accountant in an asphyxiating office, and a theatre manager attached to a leaking roof. The incidents showed how gendered differences can be intensified and exploited in demonic material assemblages, revealing the extraordinary plasticity of bodies and spaces in moments when unexpected and unwanted vulnerability unfolds.

Thus, our analysis works in the continuum across the biopolitics of plasticity where school bodies are required to be flexible and adaptative to highly segmented spaces of surveillance, scrutiny and extraction (Mbembe, 2024), and plasticity as SF, which functions as a trans*formative force. Attending to building incidents brought us to appreciate the clash between these two enactments of plasticity, since the incident opens what appeared as a finished space to an intense flow of conflicting forces (Fuller & Weizman, 2021).

Simultaneously, the SF approach allowed us to recognise spaces and bodies with accumulated exploitation, damage and loss as being immersed in new material experimentations and affective interdependencies (Jackson, 2021). SF placed these incidents in larger stories of materiality and gender, beyond management and extraction, where loss, vulnerability and dissonance became opportunities for sensing/making-sense, breaking/revealing,

facts/speculation, gendered/engendering.

Key words: School buildings, plasticity, SF design, new materialist ethnography, gender(s)

Trans (materialising) routes: the gendered and racialised body-spatial becomings with the common room and ‘fav’ sofa in school

Shiva Zarabadi *University College London, UK*

As an act of diversifying and trans*forming routes, this paper trans*materialises the moments of gender-storying in the common room and on the ‘fav’ sofa in a secondary school in southeast London. This space and object emerged during the photo diary making and walking intra-views with Muslim British-Bangladeshi schoolgirls of my PhD research. Taking feminist posthumanist and new materialist methodology, I use the notion of trans*materialization coined from Barad’s “TRANS*/ MATTER/REALITIES” (2015) to suggest space as ‘an agential trans*materiality/ trans-matter-reality’ in assemblage with racialised and gendered bodies, can work to undo relations, feelings, knowings and becomings. In this paper, I argue how the moments of gender-storying enabled and/or constrained through the affective agency of the common room and ‘fav’ sofa, becomes vital, data, theory, method and lived when entangled with my participants’ affective and material experiences of living in the overcrowded houses. With the focus on trans*materialising routes, the aim of this paper is to enable an onto-ethico- epistemological experience through gender-storying, that uses/ draws/ understands/ takes the theory-method-body-space-object-care in trans-material relations and becomings.

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1177/15327086221146455.

Key words: Trans*materialising routes, gender-storying, gendered and racialised spatial becoming, feminist posthumanist and new materialist methodology,

How spacy is that! - Can space really constitute educational decision-making?

Anna Kristine Boulund *Aalborg University, Denmark*

As a part of a three-year PhD project, I am researching how gender, ethnicity and social class inform young people's choice of education post compulsory school in Denmark. During a yearlong field work following three 8th grade classes as they are being introduced to their future educational opportunities (i.e. during visits to schools, internships, counselling, educational fairs etc.), I have become fascinated by the spatial dimensions of young people's decision-making processes. The purpose of this contribution is to invite a shared reflection on the significance of spatiality as a constitutive factor in young people's choice of education.

Space is created. It is made, comes into being, develops and changes through social relations and material social practice (Massey, 1994). What I am particularly interested in is how educational spaces are produced through different relations, and how space produces different possibilities for different young people. In other words, I tune in to the performative element in how bodies, materials, interactions, theories, and policies produce space, and how young people's bodies and future perspectives are produced in space.

The aim is to contribute to an awareness of how and what we present to young people as their future educational opportunities, as a way of addressing the lack of diversity and marginalisation in the educational system.

Key words: Space, educational decisions-making, gender, social class, ethnicity

Navigating Ambiguities: Localized Innovations in Promoting Gender Equity in Education Systems

Yael Boim-Fein and Tanya Zion-Waldoks *The Hebrew University, Israel*

This research identifies and analyzes barriers limiting the advancement of gender equity in Israel's state educational system and the levers that promote it. Drawing on data collected from 2019–2021, including thirty interviews, twenty observations, and document analysis, the study examines interactions between individual actors, institutions, and the broader educational field as an arena for social change.

Findings reveal that at the macro level, the Ministry of Education's policies officially endorse gender equity but fails to translate this into measurable goals or provide sufficient resources. At the meso and micro levels, educators and municipalities play key roles in promoting change, but their impact is limited as gender equity initiatives are episodic, supplementary, and voluntary rather than systemic. However, educators and municipalities demonstrate localized agency, working individually and collaboratively to leverage constraints and ambiguities into

opportunities. The absence of national standards and enforcement mechanisms is a limitation, but also enables actors to craft culturally resonant, tailored strategies, fostering a dynamic space for creative, context-sensitive interventions.

The study shows how actors navigate this complex and multi-faceted landscape by forging new pathways for feminist thought and action to overcome barriers and advance equitable education. By reframing constraints as opportunities for innovative reimagination, the study contributes to dialogues on education's potential to disrupt and re-route gendered power relations. It offers insights for educators, policymakers, and communities to collaboratively navigate systemic challenges and envision equitable educational futures.

Key words: Feminist activism, School, Constraints and opportunities, Innovative reimagination

Session 2: Group 5

From “villains” to “idols”: Exploring teenage boys’ conflicting attachments to manospheric masculinities.

Betsy Milne *University College London, UK*

Andrew Tate symbolises a new iteration of male supremacists, often referred to as ‘manfluencers’ or ‘misogyny influencers’ (Haslop et al., 2024; Martin, 2023). Despite mainstream fears over the ‘Tate Effect’, marked by increased misogyny and sexual violence in schools (Regehr et al. 2023; Wescott et al., 2023), there is a gap in research that explores the extent to which boys are attaching and detaching themselves to these manospheric masculinities. Using focus groups and follow-up interviews with boys (aged 13-18) in four London schools, our research shows that many boys ‘Othered’ and villainised Andrew Tate for his ‘alpha male’ persona and misogyny. However, boys widely discussed the mainstreaming of self-improvement masculinities, including the ‘sigma’ male figure, that promote getting rich and ‘ripped’. We discuss the complex ways in which the boys made sense of these symbols of masculinity, and the role of humour, as an affective, homosocial currency (Haslop et al., 2024), in normalising misogyny and hetero-patriarchal gender relations. We advocate for school interventions that go beyond condemning Andrew Tate, and instead emphasise the need to unpack and situate manospheric masculine archetypes (among a spectrum of increasingly popular manospheric ideas) within the historic, systemic and increasingly ‘networked’ (Marwick & Caplan, 2018) subordination of women, marginalised masculinities and Queer identities (Connell, 2005). We conclude with recommendations for how teachers, schools, and education charities can better respond to the mainstreaming of the manosphere, and its ongoing and constantly evolving presence in schools.

Key words: Andrew Tate, Masculinity, Manfluencers, Boys, Misogyny

Understanding and Addressing Andrew Tate in your school: An autoethnographic reflection on delivering workshops about the manosphere.

Lucy Russell and Angharad Morgan *The Resisterhood Consultancy and Lancaster University, UK*

Initiatives to address the impact of influencers, such as Andrew Tate, have increased as concerns grow over the impact such influencers can have on young people; from misguided views of success, differing perceptions of masculinity and the normalisation of VAWG (Haslop, Ringrose, Cambazoglu and Milne, 2024).

In this paper, we use an autoethnographic approach to draw on our experiences, as feminist teacher-trainers and educators, delivering a series of eight workshops entitled “Understanding and Addressing Andrew Tate in your School”. This training reached people in the UK, Denmark and the US. We trained teachers, youth workers, academics, parents and charity workers all of whom wanted to learn about how they could address online influencers.

The training was a two-way exchange between trainers and attendees. This led to a cycle of knowledge building, where the trainers learned from the attendees, enabling them to review and update their training after each workshop. The training addressed the consequences of misogyny, such as the increase in so-called ‘rough sex’ (IFAS, 2022) and a rejection of mainstream education (Tate, 2023).

The autoethnographic approach encourages us to reflect on our positionality throughout these workshops, as feminists and women. We also explore how our own life experiences impacted the workshop's development and delivery, acknowledging how our relationship evolved from colleagues to friends over the workshop delivery.

Key words: workshops, feminist, education, influencers, autoethnographic

Collabs’, connections, and the monetisation of misogyny: What should digital literacy around the gender disinformation ecosystem look like?

Craig Haslop *University of Liverpool, UK*

There is now little doubt that young people are navigating social media spaces where they regularly encounter discourses of far-right politics and gendered disinformation. While for some time the focus for academics has been concerns around the popularity of Andrew Tate among boys and young men (Haslop et al, 2024; Westcott et al, 2024), there has been less attention paid to the growing social media ecosystem of influencers who promote gendered disinformation and their increasing overlap with far-right agendas. In this paper, I map out some of the other ‘misogyny influencers’ who are gaining a following among young people and ask how we can conceptualise their networks to understand how they support each other. Given that digital literacy training in schools often only amounts to a few lessons (Phippen et al, 2021), I consider how we could develop digital critical literacy among young people in ways that can help them understand and ‘hack’ the growing misogyny influencer ecosystem.

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Five keywords

Gendered disinformation, influencers, social media ecosystem, far-right, digital literacy

Session 2: Group 6

Men and affects in universities: moving to or against gender and sexual violences

Diego De Santiago Delfin *Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad De Mexico, Mexico*

In collaboration with colleagues, we have developed and delivered workshops featuring systematized didactic proposals aimed at male students (those identifying as male, whether cisgender or transgender and regardless of sexual orientation). These workshops encourage participants to reflect on their own identities as gendered subjects, recognizing that gender is a dimension that also shapes their lives. The workshops further help them acknowledge how gender violence affects them while creating a space to express their emotions about the broader context of violence and crisis. Still, the challenge is to connect with more men looking at how that desire for the will to change could emerge.

With the consolidation of the "we" that unites women identifying as feminists in Latin America since 2016 (Gil, 2021), the recognition and acknowledgement of gender and sexual inequalities within educational institutions have become a significant policy focus in higher education in Mexico (Cerva Cerna, 2017). However, these policies and their associated content often feel disconnected and irrelevant to many of men (Cerva Cerna, 2016).

This issue has been highlighted by protests within Mexican universities since 2016, which have brought attention to the violence experienced by women in universities (Pacheco Ladrón de Guevara, 2024). These actions have provoked various emotional reactions among male students, ranging from fear, sadness, and anxiety due to uncertainty about how to respond, to anger and hatred against feminism.

This raises questions about the role men play concerning gender violence and inequalities and how to identify what moves them to identify it.

Key words: Men, Gender Violence, University, workshops, affects

Fear and hope in the academy: emotional labour and equity work

Andrea Abbas, Penny Jane Burke, Randa Abdel Karim and Nevine El Soufi *University of Bath, UK*

This paper draws on a collaborative, praxis-based, feminist project that opened time, space and resources to think with STEM-situated students and staff about the meanings, emotions and resources that constitute equity work. Participation in the project facilitated collaborative exploration of the structures of feeling that are often ignored in measurement-centric equity ecosystems. The work forms a UNESCO Chair collaboration, supported by British Council funding, and brings together three diverse STEM faculties across England, Australia and Egypt. The project involved in-depth interviews (126), surveys (596) and workshops (11) with student and staff participants. Analysis of the data illuminates the highly emotionally charged dynamic of equity in diverse STEM contexts in higher education. Our work finds that students and staff who engage with equity dedicate a large amount of emotional labour, care and identity and generate a sense of hope for change and improved conditions for themselves and others. Yet, fear, resentment and anger also emerged as significant in people's (sense of) their relationship to institutional equity agendas. Our analysis is framed by a feminist, intersectional and multidimensional lens to bring to light the otherwise ignored emotional dimensions of equity work. Our aim is to generate an understanding of the complex structures of emotion that emerge from perceived iniquitous relationships in different national contexts that produce insidious inequities and can sabotage or advance efforts to advance equity in STEM fields.

It will further the aims of the Association and Conference by providing insights into the transforming emotional dimensions of intersectional gendering processes.

Key words: Emotion, Praxis, Comparative, Collaborative, Feminist.

From 'it was safer to be dress in drag' to 'my body was commonly discussed': women teachers intersectional experiences of bodily (un)safety in the classroom.

Elizabeth Little *Deakin University, UK*

The safety of women teachers in the classroom has again come under close scrutiny in Australia, with research showing that women are leaving the profession due to negative gendered experiences (Wescott et al. 2024). Much of contemporary research, however, has not explored diverse experiences. In my the research project "Women's Work: The experiences and challenges of being a woman teacher in the 21st century" (DUHREC: 2024-104), 38 women shared testimonies of the success and hardships they faced and how their gender shaped these experiences. Amongst the participants, three women shared how their diverse identities impacted their safety in the classroom: a trans women, teaching at an all boys school, a teacher who identified as an Asian woman in an inner-city public school, and a queer woman teaching at a progressive co-education school. While their experiences were very different, each woman spoke of the ways their intersectional identities complicated their jobs. This paper uses the concept of Deleuze and Guttari's "refrain" to analyse how these women make sense of their identities, drawing attention to the way their bodies are formed and constrained by the classroom and its expectations. Across the transcripts the women 'return' to their bodies and

how identity is shaping their bodies continuously. These women noted: it was safer to ‘dress in drag’ each day rather than present as her true gender identity; it was safer to avoid topics in the curriculum so her body did not become a topic for debate; the additional labour expected as a queer women in a progressive school added to an already overfull workload. While their individual experiences are different, looking across refrain as a whole demonstrates that greater attention to intersectional experiences is vital to ensure the safety of teachers.

Key words: intersectionality, women teachers, testimonies, safety, classroom

The Overwhelmed Dance

Diego De Santiago Delfin *Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad De Mexico, Mexico*

Under the heteropatriarchal matrix (Butler, 2004) that we inhabit, the power relations structure how we are positioned and interact. These relations also define the boundaries of our identity and subjectivity in relation to others (Carlson & Rodríguez, 2020; Foucault, 1980). Recognizing them plays a crucial role in the learning process of transforming the reproduction of gender-based violence. In alignment with Paulo Freire’s concept of critical pedagogy (Freire, 2005), which advocates for education as a means of liberation through awareness and transformative action, this perspective also resonates with the contra-pedagogies of cruelty proposed by feminist anthropologist Rita Segato.

This performance, inspired by therapeutic didactics applied by anarchist groups and collectives in Mexico to address gender violence within their communities, seeks to reveal how power relations are mediated by gender and sexuality. Changing these violent behaviours requires acknowledging that everyone is embedded within these gendered power relations, necessitating both self-reflection and empathy among those involved.

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Key words: Dance, Gender Violence, Heteropatriarchal Matrix, self-reflection, learning

Session 2: Group 7

Symposium: Feminist Successes on Tackling Gender-Related Violence in Universities or Tick Box Exercise?

Pam Alldred and Gabby Mutale *Nottingham Trent University, UK*

This Symposium echoes each of the conference themes, but especially the Activating Routes and Re-Routing Policy.

As of August 2025, universities and colleges in the UK will be required to provide training for

their staff and students in order to improve understanding of what constitutes harassment and sexual misconduct. In addition, they must publish and maintain a single comprehensive source of information which explains to students:

- How their institution is preventing harassment and sexual misconduct.
- How incidents that do happen can be reported.
- What students should expect – and how they will be supported – during any subsequent investigation.

Education on sexual harassment and sexual violence is what feminists have been calling for, and feminist projects have created training that offers staff preparation to be able to respond well to disclosures of sexual violence in universities (www.Usvreact/eu) including specific training for heads of department who may need to consider their support of staff who support students (www..

However projects such as these also stressed the need for equalities interventions and feminist campaigns alongside these to tackle misogyny, misogynoir and rape culture (Jackson and Sundaram 2020; Sundaram et al, 2022; Alldred and Phipps 2018). Have any of these calls been heard or is this Office for Students (OfS) requirement a hollow, bureaucratic exercise? How will success be measured by the OfS, and how will we assess the policy and the specific interventions to meet it as researchers of education and gender?

[Paper 1: Feminist Strategies and Research on Tackling Sexual Misconduct](#)

Pam Alldred

While holding transformative justice aspirations, we continue to act pragmatically in our university settings. But how can we ensure this is done effectively and holds the HE sector to the highest of standards and not a mere tick box exercise? This symposium will be a chance to discuss how we evaluate the success of interventions to improve sexual consent or to reduce sexual harassment and violence. How can the feminist experience of supporting survivors (of any gender) and of researching sexual violence and critiques of consent education or of ‘training’ (as opposed to education) on equalities issues inform this work?

What better place than GEA to discuss our aspirations for university practice? And what better place to share our strategies for holding universities accountable for their action on culture, equalities and safety?

How do we address sexual misconduct adequately without falling back on binary and essentialising understandings of gender, and preconceptions of what counts as sexual?

[Paper 2: Consent Education Interventions: Staff and Student Views](#)

Gabby Mutale

This paper will summarise the intervention and the findings from a six study evaluation of an intervention on consent education in one university. It will draw out the methodological issues for evaluating such work and argue for feminist academic involvement in evaluation of such interventions.

Key words: universities, policy, sexual misconduct, consent education

Session 3: Group 1

The emergence of transgender children as an educational category and bottom-up policymaking

Einat Gilboa-Oppenheim, Galia Plotkin Amrami and Amal Ziv *Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel*

The education system in Israel, as in many other countries, faces the challenge of addressing students' gender transition within the school arena. This challenge has been further complicated by the lack until recently of an official educational policy regarding transgender students, as well as the increasing politicization and contested status of the category of transgender children.

Based on in-depth interviews with mothers and other social actors, we will illustrate that policy on transgender children develops from multiple directions and comprises unexpected alliances. Contrary to the common perception of bottom-up politics as driven by grassroots movements, the processes we have identified encompass not only family members and activists but also officials from the Ministry of Education and professionals from therapeutic fields with recognized expertise.

We propose that this analysis paves the way for theorizing the development of educational policy in relation to newly emerging or contested categories. We contend that the emergence of transgender as an educational category serves as a platform for the formulation of policies that integrate both traditional and novel practices. This evolution has facilitated the rise of new key actors, such as the organization "Brit Haleviot," which represents mothers of transgender children. In collaboration with other stakeholders, this organization has implemented various initiatives to establish transgender and gender-diverse children in Israel as new 'objects of educational policy' (Ball, 1994) and as a focus of educational discourse.

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Key words: bottom-up policymaking ; transgender children; educational category

What does a trans positive approach in schools look like to LGBTQ+ young people?

Claire, L. Fox, Eleanor Grace, and Lily Skourides *University of Bristol, UK*

In December 2023, the UK government published non-statutory guidance for schools which states that schools have no duty to allow students to socially transition. Concerns have been raised that there has been no attempt to understand the perspectives and lived experiences of trans children in developing this guidance. To inform the production of a Trans Inclusion Toolkit, online surveys were launched for LGBTQ+ young people, parents, and professionals. This paper focuses on the responses from the young people. In total, 274 young people completed the online survey which included a mixture of open and closed questions. The responses indicate that there is a need for a trans-inclusion toolkit. Although there were clear examples of

affirmative practice in schools, there were also examples of poor practice, and variations across schools and professionals were noted. There were examples of transphobia and bullying that were reported, as well as a lack of confidence on the part of teachers. There were many comments that show the need for trans young people to be better supported in schools, especially when they transition. The young people pointed to the lack of trans visibility in schools and that trans-positive education is poor or non-existent. They also highlighted problems with trans-inclusive policies, facilities, and procedures. Based on these needs, there were many useful suggestions for what should be included in a toolkit. It is hoped that the experiences and perceptions of the LGBTQ+ young people will contribute to broader discussions about how schools can become more trans positive.

Key words: trans*, inclusion, school*, LGBT*

Say Gay! Educator (in)action under state policy requiring LGBTQ+ student support

Elizabethe Payne and Melissa J. Smith *Queering Education Research Institute (QuERI), US*

Underlying the wave of “Don’t Say Gay” education bills in the US is a conviction that educators are indoctrinating children with liberal ideas about social justice, and forcing them to include gender and sexual minority students as peers and equals. Swirling in these accusations is a fear of contagion and belief that discussing diverse sexualities or non-cis gender identity in an affirming way could influence vulnerable youth to see these as acceptable choices for themselves and others. The gross number of these bills throughout the country implies that educators everywhere are likely to “say gay” or use LGBTQ+-inclusive pedagogy and curricula if there are not laws in place to prevent it. This fear is unfounded. Even in states where there are explicit laws requiring educators to affirm and include LGBTQ students in school life or to teach LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that LGBTQ-inclusive education laws have led to widespread uptake of inclusive classroom practices. In fact, research continues to show that LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum work is contentious, risky, uncomfortable, and likely to be avoided, regardless of state policies. The research for this paper explores relationships between education policy and educator support for LGBTQ+ students in a state context where legislation requires school support for LGBTQ+ students—where educators are expected to “say gay.” While this is a counter to the conservative rhetoric around teachers advocating for queerness and teaching children to disrupt gender norms, more broadly we see this research as a step toward greater understanding of how educators internalize and act upon LGBTQ+-affirming policies.

Key words: Gender, sexuality, policy, teachers, culture wars

“I don’t want another kid to be stuck in this right-wing loop”: How Transgender and Gender Diverse Educators Challenge Online Misogyny in the Classroom

Kayden J. Schumacher *Coventry University, UK*

Building on Westcott et al.'s (2024) exploration of the manosphere's influence in Australian schools, this study investigates how transgender and gender-diverse educators in England confront manosphere-inspired rhetoric in their classrooms. Drawing on narrative interviews with trans men and nonbinary teachers, the research highlights the unique challenges and opportunities these educators face in countering misogyny and extremist ideologies propagated by figures such as Andrew Tate and related online communities.

By embodying identities that challenge binary notions of gender, transgender and gender-diverse educators are uniquely positioned to disrupt the restrictive narratives of the manosphere. These educators engage students in critical discussions that dismantle misogyny and promote more nuanced understandings of gender and power. Methodologically, the research employs Elliott and Roberts' (2022) in-depth case studies approach, centering the lived experiences of educators to illuminate their transformative potential within educational settings.

This paper aligns with the Gender and Education Association's commitment to advancing equity and inclusion by illustrating the critical role of diverse representation in education. It argues that transgender and gender-diverse educators contribute significantly to fostering equitable and inclusive learning environments, directly countering the manosphere's influence on boys and young men. By amplifying these educators' voices, this research emphasises the urgent need to support and protect them within a socio-political climate often hostile to gender diversity. The findings underscore the power of education to challenge and transform harmful gender ideologies, furthering the conference's goal of envisioning inclusive futures in education.

Key words: manosphere; transgender; educators; masculinity; Challenging

Session 3: Group 2

Who gets to be human?: Dehumanisation and moral panics in the print media coverage of LGBTQIA+ Relationship and Sex Education

Kay Paterson-Bassett *Lancaster University, UK*

There is an ongoing moral panic about trans people happening in the UK (and globally) and LGBTQIA+ Relationship and Sex Education played a key role in this moral panic in 2023. In this talk I look at how print news media articles about LGBTQIA+ Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) in English and Welsh schools formed a crucial part of a moral panic about RSE, especially over trans inclusion in schools. Looking at print media articles in March and April 2023, along with the political response, I used discourse analysis, to identify the mechanisms used by the media to stoke this moral panic. The discursive dehumanisation of LGBTQIA+ people, and especially of children, are key to the unfolding of this panic. Dehumanisation of both groups worked to open legislative doors for the promotion of 'parents' rights' over established children's rights in the new guidance for 'gender questioning children' and updated statutory guidance for Relationship and Sex Education proposed by the then UK government.

Under Trans*forming Routes we need to understand the mechanisms by which the dehumanisation is occurring to better support people to create new routes of understanding and praxis.

Key words: LGBTQIA+, Trans, media, policy, sex education

Roots of and new routes for a specialist graduate programme for Irish post-primary teachers of Social Personal and Health Education SPHE and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Kay Maunsell *Institute of Education, Dublin City University, Ireland*

Roots of and new routes for a specialist graduate programme for Irish post-primary teachers of Social Personal and Health Education SPHE and Relationships and Sexuality Education RSE.

This presentation seeks to contribute to discussions in the theme of Knowing Routes. In January 2023, a pioneering Level 9 Graduate Diploma in SPHE and RSE began with its inaugural cohort of thirty-four post-primary teachers at the Institute of Education, Dublin City University DCU with the support of the Department of Education (DoE). The programme is the first of its kind in the context of teacher professional learning and development for SPHE and RSE in Ireland.

This presentation will focus on the experiences of the teacher educators who, as members of the programme team, contribute to the programme's ideation, development and delivery. In so doing we will, in part, draw on the findings of a mixed methods design evaluation study where members of the programme team were interviewed either individually or as part of a focus group, at two time points, early in and again at end of the first year of the programme.

While the timeline of the programme is recent, its roots are extensive and entangled with the social and cultural history of Ireland and our education system. During the presentation, we will grapple with the histories which continue to impact on the present. In imagining possibilities for this 'new time', we hope to explore together, with fellow conference attendees, routes for teacher professional learning in SPHE and RSE into the future.

Key words: Teacher Educators; Teacher Professional Development; Social, Personal and Health Education; Relationships and Sexuality Education; Ireland

Is all publicity good publicity? Addressing Public Harassment in LGBT+ Research Impact

Charlotte Jones, Joe Jukes, Rosie Nelson, Amy Ryall and Tig Slater *Swansea University, University of the West of England, Bristol, Royal Central School of Speech & Drama and Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

Research impact has become integral to academic roles, e.g. part of the evaluation of applications for doctoral studentships, lectureships, promotion, research funding. Yet, amidst rising public queerphobia and transphobia, creating impact comes with potential harassment for those doing LGBT+ research. LGBT+ researchers face disparaging news stories and become victims of online and offline harassment, including doxxing and calls for their dismissal, in some cases requiring new security measures. Yet, the potential for harassment is rarely recognised at institutional or sector levels; academics doing LGBT+ research are left to make their own safety protocols, weighing-up the benefits and perils of dissemination.

This presentation will address the ‘Re-routing Policy’ conference theme: exploring what higher education institutions should and could be doing to mitigate the harassment experienced by LGBT+ researchers. The data stems from a study which includes policy analysis, focus groups and interviews to query how we might respond to the tensions implicit in researchers’ positions (<https://lgbtharassment.wordpress.com/>). Early findings indicate that: 1) LGBT+ researchers have little space through which to discuss their worries about and experiences of harassment; 2) there is scant policy and guidance within HE to guide LGBT+ researchers or those in research support roles; 3) the worry of harassment can limit knowledge production through, for example, leading to withdrawal from public space, or avoiding researching particular topics (e.g. around children). We will explore these findings, their theoretical implications, and make preliminary suggestions on how institutions might better support academics working on LGBT+ topics.

Key words: Impact, public engagement, LGBT+, harassment

Sexual Freedom and its Relationship to Trans Oppression: Intersections and Collaborations

Sharon Lamb *University of Massachusetts Boston, US*

This presentation discusses what is understood as freedom and how sexual freedom and gender liberation are connected. I have been thinking quite a bit about how to integrate my trans-allyship into my work on sex education and against sexual violence. They are related but in specific ways and not simply because all struggles are connected. For example, as Lola Olufemi writes, ciswomen are made out to be oppressed by Transwomen; this formulation depends on an old essentialism regarding what it means to be a woman that I thought we had escaped. Some of this divide between feminists has to do with femininity and the place of that within feminism and within ideas of what it means to be free, “liberated,” that is, in denying stereotypical signs of gender associated with the male gaze and patriarchy. Another concern is the way conservatives weaponize a real threat of sexual harm to girls and women in order to deny trans individuals bathroom rights. In this presentation I move back and forth between sexual violence and anti-trans violence to find larger systemic ways in which they are connected. I also discuss what is meant by sexual freedom as well as gender liberation and how ideas of freedom are now burdened by neoliberal notions of autonomy and choice. I propose a care ethic applied to sexual freedom and gender liberation may bring diverse groups together towards a much-needed humanism.

Key words: Sexual Violence Transphobia Liberation Gender

Session 3: Group 3

“This is What We Need to Do: Change the World!”: Activating Feminist Transformation Through Academic Gender Studies

Tanya Zion-Waldoks and Gisele Charak *Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel*

This qualitative study explores the transformative impact of an MA in Gender Studies on Israeli graduates’ personal, social, and professional lives. Based on in-depth interviews with

graduates and faculty, it examines how graduates perceive their academic studies as fostering shifts in identity, relationships, and agency. We trace a transformative “Inner Journey” that leads from learning, through critical reflection and affect, to new ways of seeing, feeling, living, and doing. This emphasizes how personal growth connects to broader societal change, as graduates transition from learners to agents of change. It also reflects on how intersectionality shapes the diverse journeys of graduates. Their trajectories vary, yet the process is inherently relational rather than individualistic, shaped by interactions within educational communities and broader contexts.

The study demonstrates such routes of transformation are often complex and painful, and graduates experience tensions between an idealized feminist “cultural script” of empowerment and their diverse realities, during and after graduation. Overall, students move from passive learning to active engagement, embodying feminist values in everyday actions and relations. They develop a sense of responsibility, shifting from learners to educators - charged with carrying forward feminist knowledge, and activists - fostering meaningful change in their environments.

This study underscores the role of feminist pedagogy and critical gender studies in activating social change, revealing the interplay between learning and praxis. It offers insights into the potential and challenges of feminist education in advancing equity and justice, particularly within the constraints of neo-liberal academic institutions and increasingly illiberal and polarized societies.

Key words: Gender Studies; academia; transformation; activism; praxis

Pages Unfolding: Transnational Feminist Pedagogies through Zines

Kika W. L. Van Robays *Chinese University of Hong Kong, China*

This paper examines the integration of zines into educational settings through a transnational feminist pedagogical framework. Zines, as DIY and countercultural media, challenge dominant knowledge systems and create space for participatory learning, critical thinking, and embodied engagement. Rooted in feminist and queer theories, zine pedagogy offers a praxis-oriented approach that enables students to explore alternative ways of knowing and resist systemic inequalities.

Drawing from a proposed course, “Zines in the Classroom,” and informed by zine-making workshops and archival practices, I situate zines within global and historical contexts. It highlights how zines empower individuals, amplify marginalized voices, and provide tools for reimagining learning spaces. Special attention is given to alternative publishing traditions in East and Southeast Asia, foregrounding the ethical and transnational dimensions of zine pedagogy.

This paper addresses the challenges of introducing an anti-institutional medium into academic spaces while addressing the care, collaboration, and reflection required to sustain zines’ radical potential. By engaging with feminist concepts such as the “pedagogy of imagination” and the “pedagogy of attention,” it explores how zines disrupt hierarchical power structures in classrooms, offering students creative means to engage with theoretical concepts.

Zines serve as powerful tools of cultural critique and resistance, bridging grassroots

activism with academic inquiry. This presentation argues that zine pedagogy fosters transformative, intersectional learning environments that empower students to imagine and create alternative futures while challenging the normative constraints of institutional education.

Key words: zines; transnational feminism; scholactivism; underground publishing; pedagogy of resistance

Mapping Praxis in Zine-ic Research: Co-creating sex ed materials with young people in Aruba.

Elizabeth Ascroft *The Open University, UK*

Drawing from a project to co-create arts-based sexuality education materials with young people in Aruba, this paper demonstrates the affordances for praxis when working with zine-ic research. Zine-ic approaches are substantiated by the shapeshifting wheels of an evolving methodology driven by curiosity and intra-activism (Renold & Ivinson, 2022) for transformative change. This paper explores how zine-ic ways of working can spark lines of flight and support young people to defy dominant norms and redefine their own territories for learning about gender and sexuality education.

Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) assemblage theory, this paper first outlines how sexuality education meaning is made for young people in Aruba through mapping their rhizome of territories. This includes social norms and structures that restrict spaces for safe discussion of sex and sexuality, enacted through the importance of maintaining reputation and fear of gossip that is prominent in small island spaces (see Ascroft, 2021). Next, this paper identifies moments in the research where lines of flight emerged, escaped and defied the status quo, producing new meanings and, in some cases, enabling bodies with new capacities to resist and re-define the norm. It concludes by advocating for zine-ic ways of working to help stimulate praxis for transformative change by mapping the lines of flight that emerged across this research. This contributes to the GEA vision to re-imagine and take responsibility for how research comes to matter and re-route our future practices accordingly as we navigate the extreme politicisation of gender and sexuality education worldwide.

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Key words: sexuality education; co-creation; young people; zine-ic research; praxis;

Participatory Research Praxis: Empowering Students and Educators to Shape School Sexting Policy and Practice.

Jodie McGoldrick *University of Portsmouth, UK*

Despite the widespread prevalence of sexting among young people, school policy and practice remain largely outdated, failing to address students' current experiences and needs. While researchers have sought to spotlight students' experiences, acknowledging them as experts in their own lives, they have rarely included educators' perspectives, despite the pivotal pedagogical role they play in delivering sexting curricula. As such, a participatory research design with students and educators was utilised to re-imagine sexting policy and practice at an international school in the Netherlands. The interviews revealed broad consensus between students' and educators' understandings of sexting, such as it being a natural part of sexual exploration that needs diverse teaching strategies when addressed in the classroom. However, divergences emerged in areas, including how sexting is defined, how lessons are experienced, and how concerns around confidentiality can be negotiated. These findings suggest that schools must ground their approaches to sexting from all stakeholders' perspectives to effectively address the complexities of sexting in schools. As a researcher and educator at the school under study, critical reflection on the impact of the dual role on the research design and findings will contextualise a discussion on the further potential of participatory research to affect change in schools.

Key words: Participatory research, sexting, school policy, students, educators

Session 3: Group 4

Symposium: The Im/possibilities of Being and Becoming a Gender and Sexualities Researcher in Education

Leanne Coll, Kate Marston, Aoife Neary and Kayden Schumacher *Dublin University, Cardiff University, University College Cork, Coventry University, UK and Ireland*

Working in gender and sexualities (G&S) focused educational research can be a meaningful, impactful and ultimately uplifting experience (Jones et al., 2019). However, efforts at stymying this type of research and research careers are long enduring (Ringrose & Regehr, 2023; Ferfolja & Ullman, 2020; Mayo & Blackburn, 2020; Jones et al, 2019). The Irish Educational Studies (ESAI) and British Educational Research Association (BERA) Gender and Sexualities Special Interest Groups (SIGs) offer important platforms for collaboration, connection and capacity building. Working in collaboration, co-convenors and members across both SIGs will come together to showcase and explore more affirmative and imaginative career roots and routes whilst also acknowledging the backlash and context specific barriers people face in this area.

This proposed symposium will begin with a 'knowing routes' roundtable with established scholars who will share their necessary imagination, care, critical strategies, and important relationships that have kept successful careers in the field in motion. The symposium will also

incorporate an ‘activating routes’ focused workshop in which co-convenors and panel members will work to guide those in attendance through an exploration of what more careers in G&S in education might be and become. This workshop element will focus on how gender’s increasingly contested and politicised status in educational research, policy and practice impacts upon scholar-activists in the field. Educational research into gender and sexualities is increasingly harnessing the power of arts-based methodologies which can allow for often difficult experiences to be expressed through embodied, affective and creative modalities (Tumanyan and Huuki 2020). In this workshop we will foreground two key modalities: speculative fiction and poetry (Truman 2021; Renold and Timperley 2022) and the visual arts (Ringrose et al. 2019; Marston 2022). By engaging in these different creative practices, we aim to facilitate a space where feelings and ideas can flow, from the conception of a question or problem to the communication of a project or process (Renold forthcoming 2024).

In the face of a financial crisis for Universities in the UK and internationally, this symposium will consider spaces of collective action, connection and creativity that might enable gender and sexualities researchers in education across all career stages to flourish and thrive in the cracks of the neo-liberal university.

Key words: Careers in Gender & Sexualities Research in Education; Arts-based methodologies; Collective Action; Community

Session 3: Group 5

Symposium: From Slime Trails to Queer Pride-opus: attuning to the more-than of gender and sexuality life worlds

Jayne Osgood, Huw Berry-Downs and Anna Hickey-Moody,

Middlesex University Cardiff University and Maynooth University, UK

Exploring possibilities for gender to become otherwise: what do child-snail relations make possible?

Jayne Osgood

Through a series of tentacular provocations this presentation contemplates how gender might be reimagined from child-snail relationalities. It invites attunement to how else gender coalesces through a young child’s non-verbal, not-quite-literate, bodily encounters through the everyday. Tracing the slime trails of a four-year-old child’s encounters with snails, this paper wonders whether making-odd-kin might hold the potential to dwell upon often unnoticed and unappreciated capacities for deep immersion in now-time, and with that a persistent refusal to be contained and bound by normative ideas about what it is to be(come) gendered. Making odd-kin refuses the limits, codifications and meanings about gender and childhood that are imposed by adults on the developing child bodymind. Ultimately, with the help of Haraway’s SF praxis, capacious possibilities inherent in being open to un/re-learning how to be in the world – always in relation, are explored.

Swimming with the Pride-opus: embodying the tentacular with arts, crafts, and propositional methods in Relationships and Sexuality Education

Huw Berry-Downs

This presentation is inspired by tentacular theory (Haraway 2016) and watery assemblages (Zarabadi 2022), emphasising the messy, fluid interconnectedness of the human and more-than-human in research. This presentation draws on my doctoral research to explore multi-modal moments with two groups of young people who took the proposition of arts and crafts research creation in different but intra-connected directions: a tissue-paper swimming pool, and a plasticine rainbow octopus. This entanglement begs Zarabadi's (2022:453) question, "why does water matter?". I will explore the emergence of arts and crafts as a method in the project, before arguing that embracing and embodying the watery and tentacular opens space for the emergence of new understandings and becomings of young people's experience of relationships, gender, and sexuality.

Collaging LGBTQ+ lives online across religious and cultural difference.

Anna Hickey-Moody

Religion and sex are subjects about which people feel emotional and passionate, uncomfortable and unsettled. Life after death, spirits, ghosts, passion, desire, love - the many forms in which these subjects come into our worlds - create excitement. Our research on queer youth in religious communities is designed to understand young people's entanglements of religion and sexuality: areas of passionate attachment. Our approach has been designed from the perspective of affect: *feelings and acts of being moved are at the centre of how we work*. We employ affective digital ethnography to map entanglements of emotion, desire, faith, and feeling, in young lives and catalogue the practices of care and of judgement developed by religious youth. The research embodies an ethical research praxis, allowing for a becoming-with the affective nature of the project.

Session 3: Group 6

Symposium: Trans*forming feminist, queer, and trans routes in education

Ileana Jiménez *Stony Brook University, US*

Sandra Schmidt *Teachers College, Columbia University, US*

Hanna Retallack *Institute of Education, UCL, UK*

This symposium offers papers on trans*forming the politics and praxis of how young people and teachers engage with feminism(s), gender and sexual identities, as well as queer and trans pedagogies and curricula in a range of transnational school contexts.

Paper 1: The past I did not learn: Curriculum writers as activists

Dr. Sandra Schmidt

In a moment with so much focus in the U.S. on “don’t say gay,” this presentation explores the practices of teachers who do say gay. The presentation focuses on gender and sexuality diverse and expansive (GSDE) teachers from a qualitative study designed to explore LGBTQ+ history teaching. The study involved interviews and curriculum reviews with seven history teachers and found that teachers used queering to interrupt chronological assumptions and wrestle with the boundedness of language. In their queering, the teachers invoked activists and activism from the US and across the globe to interrupt the victimization and passivity often inscribed onto queer lives in the past. This presentation re-examines the data with an iterative analysis of these GSDE teachers and their curriculum. As such, I will explore how the teachers discussed activism while applying these designations to the teachers. The parallel analysis considers how the destabilization of GSDE figures created history curriculum that centers queer genders and sexualities rather than labels and categories. The purpose of the new analysis is to contribute to an understanding of radical curricular decision-making as activism. While we often connote activism as protest, these teachers are creating social change through their refusals and resignifications. In the interplay of past-present-future, the teachers’ excavations of the past situated within a complex terrain of gender and sexuality re-inscribe how young people understand themselves, their localities, and the world. The analyses contribute to the transformative potential of research and teaching.

[Paper 2: Reading Black feminism to read ourselves: AfroLatinx trans-femmes and resistance in schools](#)

Dr. Ileana Jiménez

This paper offers a muxerista portrait (Flores, 2017) of a former high school student, an AfroLatinx trans-femme who reads Black feminist theory to inform her oppositional online writing, trans identity work, and healing activism. Framed by Black feminism (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Lorde, 1984); Black trans-feminism (Green & Bey, 2017); and queer of color critique (Brockenbrough, 2015), this portrait illustrates her resistance against transphobic notions of “pretty privilege” (Mock, 2017). Centering my student’s experiences, I explore how she applies “theory in the flesh” (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1981) to her body, her writing, and her activism as she critiques transphobia in schools and beyond. Ultimately, her digital Black feminism (Steele, 2021) and public pedagogies embrace an erotic, self-loving recognition of her identity, as she rejects outdated norms while also calling for Black trans-feminist curricula in schools.

[Paper 3: Feminist boys? Constituting feminisms and navigating defensive masculinities in boys’ elite schools](#)

Dr. Hanna Retallack

This paper questions how teenage boys constitute feminisms in two elite schools in England. The settings comprise of student-led feminism societies at Key Boys, an urban fee-paying school, and at Regency School, a suburban ultra-elite school. The boys’ constitutions of feminisms are interpreted through psychosocial notions of the defended subject and how the participants are subjected by masculinist discourses. This supports an understanding of how the participants’ engagement with feminism, even when appearing most progressive, ultimately defends against appearing feminine or queer. Despite taking part in feminism societies, the participants are unable to take up both a feminist and acceptably masculine position. Considering the evidence for the reproductive power of elite all boys’ institutions in the UK political system, these findings point towards the need to challenge and transform gender binaries in these schools.

Session 3: Group 7

Symposium: Gender and Sexuality in Chinese Contexts

Weiyuan Wu, Catherine Atkinson-Ross, Wei Wei, Yuhan Wu, Hao Wu and Yuwei Xu

University of Manchester, UK

This symposium brings together four papers that examine the multifaceted ways gender and sexuality are constructed, negotiated, and resisted within Chinese educational contexts. These papers offer new insights into the gendered educational experiences of students, parents, and teachers, as well as the broader social structures that shape and regulate gender and sexual norms in China.

Paper 1

Weiyuan Wu and Catherine Atkinson-Ross

The first paper, by Weiyuan Wu and Catherine Atkinson-Ross, explores the experiences of Mei, a lesbian teacher-leader in a private school in Southern China. Drawing on De Certeau's concepts of tactical and strategic power, the paper illustrates how Mei uses small, subversive actions—such as introducing LGBT+ themes and leveraging the flexibility of the Chinese language curriculum—to challenge gender and sexuality norms while avoiding overt scrutiny. The study highlights these "tactical resistances" as acts of transformative leadership in a context where institutional change may not be feasible or safe.

Paper 2

Wei Wei

Wei Wei's paper shifts focus to LGBT+ parent families in China. Through interviews with parents from 28 lesbian and gay families, Wei introduces the concept of "adaptive heteronormativity" to describe how heteronormative structures in Chinese society evolve in response to changing gender, sexuality, and family dynamics. The study explores the challenges LGBT+ parents face in navigating the heteronormative school system and the coping strategies employed. Wei's research provides a critical lens for understanding how heteronormativity continues to shape educational experiences and the strategies that can promote inclusivity and acceptance within Chinese schools.

Paper 3

Yuhan Wu

Yuhan Wu's paper examines the "Boy Crisis" discourse in Chinese secondary education, which has become central to discussions about gender and academic achievement. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with high school teachers in Beijing, Wu applies Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to explore how gender stereotypes surrounding boys' underachievement permeate teacher perceptions and interactions. Despite claims of advocating for gender equality, many teachers continue to perpetuate traditional gender norms in their practices. This paper calls for a reevaluation of how gender is addressed in teacher training and curriculum design in China.

Paper 4

Hao Wu and Yuwei Xu

Finally, Hao Wu and Yuwei Xu's paper presents the memories of 20 Chinese queer males, aged 19 to 28, reflecting on their secondary school experiences and their efforts to negotiate queer identities in a context of hegemonic masculinity and state-enforced heteronormativity. Through biographical interviews, the authors identify strategies employed by these individuals to navigate the restrictive educational environment, including the formation of supportive networks, the use of academic achievement as a form of empowerment, and the careful separation of school and family spaces. The study emphasizes the importance of a person-centered approach to supporting queer students, focusing on both individual agency and collective solidarity.

Regarding the conference themes, this symposium seeks to diversify existing routes of gender and sexuality research by centering the Chinese context, in line with the *Gender and Education* journal's broader reorientation in focus to the Asia Pacific. Further, it seeks to trans*form and activate routes by both challenging oversimplified analyses of gender and sexuality in China, and identifying opportunities for activism and resistance in the Chinese educational context (and beyond).

Key words: Gender, Sexuality, China, Heteronormativity, LGBT+

Session 4: Group 1

Engendering Fear in Education

Carolyn Jackson *Lancaster University, UK*

In 2009 the Mental Health Foundation, a leading UK charity, proclaimed that 'we are becoming more fearful as a nation'. Since then, a series of world events, including the Covid-19 pandemic, have further contributed to what has been referred to as a 'culture of fear'. Gender and fear intersect – gender is a source of fear (Butler, 2024) and fear is gendered.

Fear is a feature of nearly all mental health problems and is contributing to what has been referred to as a 'mental health crisis' in British schools and universities (Mental Health Foundation, 2009; Glazzard, 2024; Sanders, 2023). In schools, NHS statistics suggest that in 2023 20% of children aged 8-16 years in England had a 'probable mental disorder', up from 12.5% in 2017 (Glazzard, 2024). There is a similar trend in universities, where the proportion of undergraduate students reporting mental health difficulties rose from 6% to 16% between the 2016/17 and 2022/23 academic years (Sanders, 2023). Patterns are gendered: in school and university contexts, girls/women are more likely to report poor mental health than boys/men, and rates are higher for LGBTQ+ young people. Staff are impacted too, for example, the Chief Inspector of the education inspectorate, Ofsted, noted that a 'culture of fear' had built up around Ofsted ratings (BBC News, 23/04/23).

Drawing on a range of sources, I will explore how and why fears operate in educational contexts and the effects they have, with a focus on gender and its intersections.

Key words: Fear, affect, emotion, mental health

Knowing: Associations of shame with feminist's consequences for education

Birgit Althans *Art Academy Duesseldorf, Germany*

Ever since Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Emile or On Education* - perhaps even since the Old Testament narrative of Adam and Eve's expulsion from or Samuel Richardson's bestseller *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* - gestures and strategies of shame have been read as a specifically female attribute of gender. Early advocates of women's rights before, during and after the Enlightenment, and contemporary feminist research, particularly in education, have pointed out that shame as part of the definition of gender difference or gender equality shaped state systems (Federici 2017, Nagy 2017) and education (Kuster 2010, Althans 2000). Current regimes that prohibit women from appearing unveiled in public and deny them access to education and work - continue to be shaped by them.

Feminist research in education shows that shame and shaming gestures are still part of pedagogy, including art education, like Andrea Büttner shows in *Shame* (2023). Youth culture, gender research and media studies show, how authoritative political stagings of toxic masculinity and their demonstrative shamelessness are becoming increasingly relevant in social media and in political decisions (elections).

This article will discuss the efficacies of feminist scholarship in analyzing shaming gestures and attitudes. How effective has gender-sensitive pedagogy been? The question is particularly relevant regarding the problematic handling of sexualised violence in family and education, culture and sport and political demands such as 'shame must change sides' by rape victim Gisele Pelicot.

Key words: Shame, gestures, education, Gender, shamelessness

Activating Collective Feminist Praxis: A Multidimensional Reframing of Higher Education for Equity

Penny Jane Burke and Matt Lumb *University of Newcastle, Australia*

Aiming to ignite feminist, anti-colonial re/imaginaries of the purpose of higher education, this paper troubles hegemonic discourses of equity by interrogating agendas driven by measurement and datafication technologies. This paper positions equity agendas as embroiled in pernicious cycles of monodimensional deficit imaginaries, helping to sustain insidious inequalities and narrowly transform cultures and practices on the value frameworks of the already authorised. This paper asks how higher education can instead generate routes for equity via praxis-based, pedagogical methodologies, engaging a multidimensional reframing of higher education for equity.

Drawing from a new book, *Equity in Higher Education: Time for Social Justice Praxis*, we share three empirical contexts of collaboration to show how particular conceptual threads have offered a multidimensional tapestry for transformative equity. Using these case studies, we argue for movement, exploring the often-ignored e-motion-al layers of equity work, and moving

towards praxis-based, pedagogical methodologies in equity research, programmatic practice, evaluation, and policymaking. We advocate resisting the quick jump to method as has become part of the institutional machinery of producing evidence to measure the impact of equity interventions through utilitarian “what works” logics. Instead, we articulate a framework for developing communities of praxis where what matters from different positions and perspectives animates methods and measures. Drawing on programmatic collaborations at the intersection of higher education equity and Gender-Based Violence, Refugee Youth Advocacy, and experiences of Out Of Home Care, we articulate contexts of collective interrogation, building response-abilities within relational re-orientations, and acting with a decolonial, feminist ethics of care.

Key words: collective feminist praxis, pedagogical methodologies, higher education equity, multidimensional reframing, transformation

‘Beyond Educator-Targeted Bullying: Taking a Gendered Lens to Understanding and Addressing Women Teachers’ Experiences of Sexual Harassment’

Abby Gilsean & Vanita Sundaram *University of York, UK*

Sexual violence is increasingly recognised as an entrenched problem within education settings. To date, policy and research interest in this area has primarily focused on young women and girls’ experiences of sexual harassment and misogyny within schools. However, recent evidence produced by teaching trade unions in the UK demonstrates that this endemic issue also profoundly impacts women teachers (Weale, 2022). Despite this, the global research base surrounding this issue remains sparse. Whilst limited research has addressed teachers experiences of sexual harassment within the context of educator-targeted bullying (ETB) more broadly (De Wet, 2010), this approach tends to adopt an incidence-based lens, which may homogenise women’s experiences with other forms of non-gendered violence. A smaller body of existing work suggests that the sexual harassment of women teachers, by both colleagues and students, speaks to a patriarchal ‘gender regime’ within schools (Connell, 2006), in which women’s authority is pervasively undermined (Robinson, 2000; Bailey, 1996; Keddie, 2007). This paper aims to further develop this theoretical framework, drawing on the work of Kelly (2016) to conceptualise schools as uniquely fertile environments for gender inequality, and subsequently, violence. Little work has explored prevention and intervention strategies that address women teachers’ experiences, specifically as a gendered, systemic issue. In turn, this paper also critically examines whole-school approaches to gender-based violence prevention as a mean to address the sexual harassment of women staff, and students, at a systemic level.

Key words: women teachers, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, whole-school approach, conducive contexts

Session 4: Group 2

‘Gender is not an issue’: girls’ exclusion from mathematics classrooms in the context of Norwegian claims to equal opportunities

Yvette Solomon *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

Scandinavia has for many years been widely perceived as a beacon of gender equality. Hence it comes as a surprise to find that in Norway it is difficult to raise the issue of gender and the possibility that girls may not have equal opportunities in mathematics education as is widely assumed. Further inspection reveals that while Valerie Walkerdine’s (1998) *Counting Girls Out*, originally published in 1989, can be seen as a major inspiration for subsequent research in the UK, it appeared to have little impact in Norway, despite being showcased at an international conference there in 1991 (Wedegge, 2007). This seems significant in the context of this conference’s Knowing Routes thread: Wedegge’s plea for the development of research which takes gender seriously has been met by only a handful of studies which question the issue of equity for girls in mathematics classrooms. This is exacerbated by the fact that girls have begun to outperform boys, leading to a familiar moral panic over under-performing boys. In this paper I discuss results from studies in Norway over the last ten years, arguing that gender needs to remain on the mathematics education, policy and research agendas, despite claims that ‘it is not an issue’.

Walkerdine, V. (1998). *Counting girls out: Girls and mathematics*. London: Falmer Press.

Wedegge, T. (2007). Gender perspectives in mathematics education: Intentions for research in Denmark and Norway. *ZDM – The International Journal on Mathematics Education*, 39(3), 251–260

Key words: Mathematics; classroom cultures; equity and equality; Norway

Questioning ‘truths’ in the gender -and – mathematics identity literature

Laura Black *University of Manchester, UK*

The Nonbinary Maths project seeks to challenge the dominance of cis-binary gender constructs in mathematics education and better understand how gender and mathematics might relate to one another (if at all). We report on interview data with 18 university students who self-identified as trans*, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, or gender-nonconforming - the majority of whom described themselves as having relatively positive relationships with mathematics. We present findings that offer some alternative ‘truths’ about the relationship between gender and mathematics which add to (rather than negate) existing critiques of mathematics as enacting white patriarchal heteronormativity. Firstly, whilst some students experienced mathematics classrooms as oppressive in ways that align with patriarchal, cis-hetronormative power dynamics, others regarded mathematics as providing spaces perceived as ‘safe’ (relative to ‘unsafe’ spaces elsewhere) from these same dynamics. Secondly, some students regarded the transition from home to university as a key moment in their development of gender, and in some cases this invoked a new freedom to play with mathematical identities also. Lastly, some students expressed a sense of ‘creativity’ in doing mathematics which they connected to their

creativity in learning gender. These findings provide an alternative perspective to the widely documented connection between doing mathematics (as an objective, neutral pursuit) and doing masculinity. Contributing to both the ‘diversifying’ and the ‘trans*forming’ routes at the GEA conference, this paper seeks to diversify how gender is conceptualised in mathematics education and examine how these ‘trans*formed’ routes (i.e. routes made by trans people!) tell us new things about power-relations in mathematics.

Key words: Mathematics, gender, LGBTQI+, creativity, power

Becoming aware of the subtle dynamics of gender and education in Norway

Trine Foyn *University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway*

This presentation focuses on the emergence of a subtle pattern of gender dynamics embedded within the everyday happenings of a lower secondary school mathematics classroom in Norway, revealed in an ethnographic study spanning three years (Foyn, 2021). Using the theoretical lens of Holland et al. (1998), I identified different alternatives for girls and boys in this class, giving a group of boys – called ‘the smart boys’ by both the teacher and students - the power to control different aspects of the mathematics teaching. Girls were excluded from occupying similar privileged positions. This issue went unaddressed due to a strange kind of logic: the students argued against gender differences in mathematics, but at the same time there was a common truth that the boys in this classroom were the smart ones. The gender dynamics were hidden, refracted through acts of smartness maintained by the ‘smart boys’: the power of ‘effortless’ work is not an option for all actors. Following the conference theme of knowing routes, I argue that gender exclusion in mathematics can easily be overlooked or dismissed, but no-one is to blame. I argue, rather, that we need to look at the structures of education to become aware of how exclusion might happen within plain sight.

Foyn, T. (2021) No heroes, no villains: uncovering the mundanity of gender in the mathematics classroom Ph.D. Thesis, Oslo Metropolitan

University <https://skriftserien.oslomet.no/index.php/skriftserien/article/view/774>

Holland, D., Lachicotte Jr., W., Skinner, D. & Cain, C. (1998). Identity and agency in cultural worlds. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Key words: Gender dynamics, mathematics classroom, Norway

Transforming mathematics through an ungrounded locality: Imagining mathematical ‘abclusion’

Charlotte Mégrouèche *University of Manchester / Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

In the dizzying context of post-Brexit isolationism and global climate apocalypse, the Union Jacks adorning UK-sourced supermarket produce conflate the “local” and the “national”, invoking, in one iconic gesture, both climate consciousness and national pride. This conflation reflects the ways mathematics is too often positioned as neutral and universal while simultaneously reinforcing fixed, exclusionary and monocultural notions of locality. The Manchester-based Very Local Maths project (VLM) challenges the assumption that

mathematics is apolitical, culturally neutral and universally accessible by mobilising the concept of ‘locality’ to rethink mathematical practices as both grounded in and ungrounded by “very local” activities.

Framing our work as a feminist intervention, this paper examines how locality can operate as a site of pluralistic potential that unsettles boundaries of (in/ex)clusion, disrupting colonial logics and fostering new mathematical imaginaries. Inspired by Massey’s (2005) reframing of space as dynamic, relational, and always under construction, we propose the concept of mathematical “abclusion” as a perspective that resists both exclusionary gatekeeping and enclosing assimilation. Our abclusive approach reimagines the local as fluid, generative, and permeable, using it to “intensify the possible” (Debaise & Stengers, 2017), in ways that challenge its historically gendered, racialised and classed mathematical marginalisation. Telling the story from the perspective of our youth-led and arts-engaged workshops at the Moss Side Millenium Powerhouse, we explore how the project’s “locus” serves as a catalyst for new forms of mathematical engagement and possibilities.

Key words: Abclusion, Feminist Mathematics, Spatiality, Locality, Decolonial

Session 4: Group 3

Feminist roots and precarious routes: Gendered experiences of precarity in everyday space-places of academia, learning and teaching

Carli Rowell and Charlotte Morris *University of Sussex and University of Portsmouth, UK*

In exploring our roots to and through feminist academia this paper explores gendered experiences of (relatively) marginalised teaching-only academic staff on insecure contracts (at the time of this research) through the lens of space and place (space-place), considering the implications of this for feminist knowledge production. Our paper stems from a collaborative auto-ethnography focusing on the experience of two UK early-career academics on temporary contracts (at the time of this research) who occupy contrasting positionalities. In doing so, it explores gendered lived experiences of precariously employed teaching-only staff through joint walking interviews and auto-biographical reflections, illuminating ways in which our sense of non-belonging was spatialised and reinforced in academic spaces, with a particular focus on learning and teaching spaces. We share insights into multidimensional aspects of precarity, encompassing material, social, epistemic and affective experiential domains, with a particular emphasis on the pains and pleasures of learning and teaching. We consider some of the wider implications of precarity for feminist learning, teaching and knowledge creation, and also signal possibilities and potentialities for creating moments and space-places for resistance and solidarity. Finally, we reflect back on how far (if at all) we have travelled in the neoliberal university, asking what has changed or could change? What forces hold us back in our pursuit of feminist knowledge production within the confines of contemporary western academic institutions?

Key words: Precarity, feminist knowlage production, early-career academics, gender

Dressing Up Misogyny: Gendered and Sexist Standards in School Uniform Policies

Emma Chan *School of Sexuality Education, UK*

There is a link between the objectification of women and girls' bodies and sexual violence. As a relationships and sexuality education (RSE) practitioner working in schools across the UK, this is certainly something I explore with students.

An long-used example is asking students to critically reflect on 'victim blaming' - for example focusing on what a victim of sexual violence was wearing, rather than the actions of the perpetrator.

Whilst school institutions can be ostensibly and vocally supportive of such measures to combat misogyny, they can be extremely resistant to addressing these issues as they relate to problematic and historic institutional structures. This principle is illustrated by school uniform policies. Uniform policies can promote inequalities (Bragg et al., 2021). For example, standards can focus on boys looking 'professional' and girls not looking 'sexual' - reinforcing ideas that girls' bodies (alone) should be policed by others and that unwanted sexualisation is solely the responsibility of the individual experiencing it.

We will explore these attitudes and standards through a case study. I will present a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the uniform policies of the 12 secondary schools in my local community. We will examine common features and themes and consider how they might contribute to gender based and sexual harms. We will use interactive technology to gauge trends in these views and practices amongst the audience. In doing so, we can then reflect and co-create strategies for how we, as educators and academics, can challenge and change these gender-based harms in the future.

Key words: Uniforms, Misogyny, Schools, Sexual Violence.

How do school uniforms, dress codes and their enforcement perpetuate harms and inequalities for young people?

Dolly Padalia and Alison Wiggins *School of Sexuality Education*

Our extensive experience as Relationships and Sex education facilitators working in a broad range of schools across the UK, has revealed clear and worrying relationships between the harms and inequalities, (e.g. racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexual violence), experienced by young people in schools and the role that school uniforms play in enacting and perpetuating these.

Our concerns around this led us to collaborate with UCL, through a community-engaged learning project (2021), which focused on interrogating these relationships with the intention of raising awareness and igniting activism among key stakeholders and young people to facilitate change.

School spaces should be inclusive and safe for all young people and any uniform policy should

aim to meet the needs of all young people, enabling them to thrive at school. Unfortunately, our research found that these policies were often at odds with the safeguarding, and inclusivity principles of schools, but also undermined young people's bodily autonomy. School policies and the ways in which they were enforced and policed by staff, often reproduced existing inequalities, and harmed young people in enduring ways leaving them disempowered and feeling like they did not belong in their school communities.

The guidelines we created and published as part of this project, implore school staff, key stakeholders and young people themselves to critically assess their own policies and guidelines using intersectional and rights-based lens, in order to centre the well-being of young people.

Key words: uniform, sexual violence, school, inequity

Sexualities Education in 'Modern Britain'

James Sutton *University of Birmingham*

This paper asks how the policy discourse of 'Modern Britain' influences the co-constitution of gender, sexuality, religion and race in the sexualities education classroom. This question has become increasingly urgent in the context of the 'new age of extremes' to which the themes of this conference respond, including intensified anti-(trans)gender and anti-Islam political rhetoric in the UK and transnationally.

Through analyses of interview and classroom observation data from secondary schools in Birmingham, UK, the paper explores the ways in which teachers' promotion of Fundamental British Values – and those of 'respect' and 'tolerance' in particular – offers young people recognition in terms of essentialised identity categories, but fails to account for the embodied and relational realities of young people's lives. The paper argues that an intense focus on identity categories and their position in 'Modern Britain' does little to help trans and queer youth thrive, and yet it reproduces the assumption that racialised, religiously inflected subjects are a threat to that 'Modern Britain', reproducing ideas about Muslim subjects as the 'other' of an allegedly progressive British state.

Key words: Sexualities education; anti-racism; anti-Islamophobia; democratic education; identity politics

Session 4: Group 4

The space in-between: situating the Taking Boys Seriously research within the contested field of gender and education

Susan Morgan and Andy Hamilton *Ulster University*

Following decades of gender-based practice, research, and activism with girls and young women, Susan Morgan took action to implement a decisively feminist lens as the new Principal Investigator of the Taking Boys Seriously (TBS) participatory action research project. Since 2017 TBS has engaged hundreds of adolescent boys and educators across diverse formal and

informal educational settings. Key to TBS is addressing compounded educational disadvantage, a reality that fosters systemic inequalities for boys faced with poverty, conflict legacies, normative masculinities, and selective education. Whilst TBS has made very successful challenges to the education system there have been many dilemmas along the way, not least, how we navigate the wide spectrum of ideology, pedagogy, and activism in gender work with boys and young men. In this paper empirical data is presented from a Q methodology study mapping a range of perspectives in contemporary gender-based work with young people across the UK and Ireland. The study is conducted with educators representing perspectives from radical feminist to more conservative outlooks. It invites critical discussion on the ethos and purpose of work with boys and young men from a gender lens. We present a critique of the perspectives uncovered, alongside a rearticulation of the aim and contribution of the TBS project. We envisage that the typology of perspectives presented in this paper will stimulate critical discussion and offer a reference point for all who grapple with the dilemmas of clearly communicating purpose, positionality, and contribution in the diverse and contested field of gender and education.

Key words: Taking Boys Seriously, gender-based education, dilemmas, Q methodology, adolescent boys

Whose Rainbow? The gap between symbols and action for LGBTQIA+ staff and students in HE

Drew Simms, Tig Slater and Eleanor Formby *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

Over the past decade, the context of LGB, and particularly trans rights, has been fraught, with both heightened trans visibility and backlash. Universities have been positioned as places of 'woke' liberalism, and become a key culture war battle ground (Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Riley, 2021). 'Whose Rainbow?' - the research project which we share today - emerged in this context. In the research we have interviewed LGBT+ staff and students in HE, as well as self-identified allies, who weren't LGBT+, but were involved in some form of university LGBT+ inclusion scheme. Interviews asked participants about: 1) their relationships to the Pride rainbow and other forms of LGBT+ symbolism; 2) their experiences in HE as LGBT+ people/allies; and 3) their thoughts on the use of symbols of LGBT+ inclusion in their universities. In this paper we will interrogate a tension brought up by many participants: although it was widely highlighted that universities using rainbow symbolism could feel tokenistic, participants were also very aware that a rightward political shift made even inadequate forms of inclusion feel precarious, and in threat of disappearing altogether. Feeding into the 'activist routes' conference theme, we end the paper by suggesting that achieving social justice for LGBTQIA+ people in HE, will need to involve paying attention to wider workplace struggles and solidarity building.

Key words: EDI; LGBT+; Higher Education; Solidarities; Culture Wars

#Tradwives as pedagogical figures: affective pedagogies of femininity

Alyssa Niccolini *Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany*

In an "age of new extremes," tradwives have taken on a central role. Combining "traditional" and "housewife," the term tradwife describes cross-platform online influencers who embody an aestheticized and romanticized housewife lifestyle. Frequently taking up discourses of "choice

feminism” (Sykes, 2024), tradwives are part of a larger conservative and sometimes extreme right-wing online ecosystem that promotes ‘traditional’ heteronormative families and gender roles (Sykes & Hopner 2024; Schnabel & Berendsen, 2024; Love 2020). Rather than fringe subcultures, tradwives like Nara Smith and Hannah Neeleman have become mainstream reaching millions of viewers.

In this presentation, I use social media ethnography (Posthill & Pink, 2012) to consider tradwives specifically as pedagogical figures. Through the intimate invitation into their private spheres (Rösch, 2022), tradwives become trusted pedagogical figures that form affective ties with their viewers (see Haslop et al, 2024 on the manosphere). From rage bait to parody, social media users are taking up—and I argue learning from--tradwife content in interesting and at times contradictory ways. Rather than stabilizing the ‘gender order’ as they intend, tradwives may be revealing the tenuousness and performativity (Butler, 1989; 1993; 1994) of the housewife role. Through their highly stylized and curated content, they enact what I term ‘housewife drag.’ This produces a complex affective pedagogy (Hickey-Moody, 2013; Niccolini, 2016) wherein contradictory affects (fascination, aspiration, guilt, humor, rage) are evoked around the housewife role. This form of pedagogy assails the naturalness not only of the tradwife identity, but potentially “(re)routes” and “(re)imagines” what are deemed ‘traditional’ forms of femininity.

Key words: tradwives, social media, affect, femininity, TikTok

Session 4: Group 5

Looking through a Feminist Lens: Body Politics and the Dynamics of Commercial Surrogacy in India Today

Pratyasha Sahoo *University of Delhi, India*

The politics of a woman’s body revolves around understanding pregnancy as a highly commercialized and marketized concept in a neo-liberal and post-modern globalized society. Research studies and dominant discourses have viewed how a woman’s wombs, eggs and ovaries become her potential capital in the labour market. Prior to 2021, surrogates entered into a contract with intended couples via medical agencies and India was leading the world market as a “rent –a-womb” industry or commercial surrogacy. However, with the Surrogacy Regulation Act of 2021 in place, the running theme within the discourse of surrogacy is altruism. Altruism has become the ‘new normal’ rendering commercial surrogacy as illegal and a criminal offense in India. The rhetoric of a surrogate mother’s gift involves birthing and gifting a child to an infertile couple and romanticizing the image of a nurturing mother who never indulges in the reproductive market for money. The Act intends to protect the exploitation of surrogate mothers while ensuring safe and ethical practices. In the light of the ambiguity surrounding commercial surrogacy, this paper attempts to explore women’s reproductive rights, their bodies, agency, choice, power and resistance while navigating through and adhering to the new legal regulations. Nonetheless, the paper also addresses the language of ‘waste’ and ‘bio-resources’ as powerful means to alleviate the low socio-economic status of women in Third World countries. Voices in the form of narratives of two surrogate mothers were also captured. I believe the unheard voices of surrogate mothers from Third World countries should be heard, highlighting their perceptions. Also, the rhetoric between policy and practice needs to be presented and discussed in the forum of gender and education in order to understand policy

documents and public discourses better.

Key words: Feminist lens, Commercial Surrogacy, body politics, women, reproductive rights

Gu(s)temology: Activations through the Alimentary

Dagmar Lorenz-Meyer *Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Czechia*

This paper (re)turns to the arts of nourishment, more specifically to communal cooking, eating and digesting as an under-explored method of new materialist research creation. While food is famously ‘good to think (with)’ (Levi-Strauss), research with food is often a pathway to researching other things. Even activist protocols for dinners as public engagement rarely explore the link between an issue and the corporeal process of eating together. Following the call to trace routes and activations of earlier feminist educational work on cooking-eating-thinking (Heldke), the paper starts from cooking workshops where Czech Romani women in Northern Bohemia taught us to cook Romani dishes with what is at hand. Inspired by Luce Giard’s (1980) thinking through mouth and mucous membranes, the activating pleasure of swallowing and speaking, and renewed attention to the gut and ‘gustemic ways of knowing’ (Sutton), I pay attention to how we listened – and failed to listen – with our hands, ears and guts, contended with differential metabolic inheritances and ingested histories that sit heavy in the stomach.

Key words: eating, cooking, new materialism, gut, metabolism

“Slaking educational desire”: Sifting through my connections with the educational roots and routes of my foremothers

Reshmi Lahiri-Roy *Federation University, Australia*

Maya Angelou reminds us that we have been paid for, each one of us, by those that came before us (2016). I remain eternally indebted to all women who struggled so that I could avail of both educare (to train or mould) and educere (to lead out) through Education. My second doctoral journey is rooted in the scholastic endeavours of my foremothers, the desire to recount their stories and interlace them with mine. Progressing my argument using an intersectional feminist framework and storytelling as a qualitative methodology I contend such stories are the foundations of many female migrant educational journeys.

Neoliberal academia’s devaluation of Arts and Social sciences and moving from a service to a consumer driven industry (Blackmore 2023) stifles female narratives, devalues gendered histories while dismantling safe spaces for intersectional feminist dialogues and cooperations. A foremother wished to be reborn in the West and attend university; in imagined conversations I demolish her dreams of academic liberation. Self-propelled by educational desire, I assert that these stories prevent us from forgetting our roots, help us remember why the battles originated. I offer Santayana’s (1905) provocation that those who forget history are condemned to repeat it. As female scholars we must ceaselessly advocate for the creation of educational and research agendas within Arts and Humanities thus ensuring that we too become ‘empowering foremothers’.

Key words: Educational desire, empowering foremothers, intersectional feminism, neoliberal academia, gendered histories

Hegemonic masculinity and street sexual harassment. A qualitative study with university students from northern Mexico

Julio Ernesto Guerrero Mondaca *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, US*

This paper will present the results of a research project aimed at identifying how hegemonic masculinity is linked to street sexual harassment by men towards women. To do so, a qualitative study was conducted using 4 focus groups with students from the Autonomous University of Baja California, a higher education institution in northern Mexico. During the focus group sessions, questions were asked about different aspects involved in street sexual harassment, such as their knowledge of the term, motivations, behaviors and attitudes that are considered forms of sexual harassment, the spaces in which street sexual harassment most frequently occurs, personal direct or indirect experiences of street sexual harassment, perceptions about the seriousness of the act, and the perception about the gender that they consider most vulnerable to street sexual harassment. The focus group technique, although focused on generating data from the senses and meanings that men and women had about street sexual harassment, had as its main focus the observation and analysis of the opinions and stories of men, as well as their reactions to the opinions and stories of women. Among the results, it was identified that the participants show a certain degree of awareness that street harassment is a form of violence that violates the dignity of the victims. The word consent has been incorporated into their vocabulary to point out street sexual harassment as an attack on the autonomy and freedom of the person who receives it. In addition, the participants also showed clarity about the acts and attitudes through which harassment is manifested.

On the other hand, some men still hold beliefs that make invisible the exercise of domination involved in street sexual harassment, such as stating that harassment is only sexual if it is motivated by obtaining pleasure and not by the assertion of power, without taking into account the experience of the victim. The belief that the person who sexually harasses has a mental health problem also persists. There is even a position regarding the victim as the causal agent of street sexual harassment in which men assume themselves as passive agents in the face of the provocations of the person who receives the harassment. It was also identified that street sexual harassment functions as a performative act of hegemonic masculinity since men gain social status in their relationships with other men by acting as a seducer or reckless joker who interrupts the use of public space by unknown women through heterosexualized interactions. This shows the process of alliance, complicity and surveillance that exists among men in which it is required to compulsively corroborate heterosexuality to the detriment of women's rights and health.

Key words: Hegemonic masculinity, Street sexual harassment, Gender violence, Men in higher education, Male homosociality

Session 4: Group 6

Symposium: Troubling how gender and sexuality matters in primary schools: principles, practices and possibilities

Tuija Huuki *University of Oulu, Finland*

Suvi Pihkala *University of Oulu, Finland*

EJ Renold *Cardiff University, UK*

Aoife Neary *University College Cork, Ireland*

This panel critically explores matters of gender and sexual diversity, inclusion and equity with children and practitioners in primary schools across Finland, Wales and Ireland.

Paper 1: Glitching Power – Animating More Capacious Gender, selfhood, and relationality with Pre-Teens

Tuija Huuki and Suvi Pihkala

This presentation draws on feminist new materialist educational research and stems from the authors' long-term effort in developing creative praxis for addressing gender, sexuality, and power in peer cultures with preteen children. The authors focus on two-day creative workshops for children engaging these themes with diverse arts-based activities. As part of the process, children articulated their hopes, desires, and demands, challenging normative gender expectations in digital-embodied activity of 'Glitching Power'. The short digital animations were collected into a video called Kinetic Visions – Glitching Power. We map how children's knowledge comes to matter in digital statements, body movements, and postures during the making and becoming of the glitch animations. The importance of care-fully composed conditions is highlighted to enable children to trouble and glitch experiences arising from gendered 'currents' and to communicate their visions for more capacious gender relations in affirmative ways.

Ruler-skirts, Rights-kites and Rainbow Ribbons: making gender equality matter with pre-teens in arts-activist research and practice

EJ Renold

In dialogue with feminist and queer post-qualitative educational praxis, this presentation explores the making and mattering of a Welsh-government funded engagement project with over 70 children (age 9-11) in rural, urban and suburban schools across Wales (UK). The first phase used a range of participatory arts-based methods in friendship group interviews to explore the everyday gender assemblages in which children are entangled. The second phase invited children to make a range of arts-activist objects, graffitied with ideas for how to make the world more gender-safe, gender-inclusive and gender-fair. Through fieldnotes, images, vignettes and film, we progressively unfold the transformative power of the visual arts to attune to and activate the diversity of how 'gender matters' in the lives of preteens, and how 'what matters' can be further amplified with policymakers and practitioners.

“All are welcome”: Interrogating the Concept of Inclusivity in Primary Schools

Aoife Neary

Principles of inclusivity are widely espoused to be core values in Education. Yet, education contexts are not impermeable to widespread human rights failures across the globe. In such turbulent times, it is unclear what concepts like inclusivity can do, particularly in primary schools where cis-heteronormative logics abound. Drawing on a study conducted with primary school staff (n=1031) and families (n=24) in Ireland in 2023, this paper interrogates the concept of inclusivity with respect to LGBTQ+ lives. This paper yields novel insight into the variety of ways that primary school staff understand LGBTQ+ inclusivity and reveals significant incongruities between commitments to inclusivity in principle, and the everyday realities of practice. Ultimately, this paper underlines the necessity to interrogate the ‘common-sense’ logics of baggy concepts like inclusivity, so that they might not provide cover for the workings of injustice and exclusion.

Session 4: Group 7

Pornography and Adolescent Sexual Socialization: Contrasting Sexual Diversity Across Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

Teresa Fernandez Langa *Universidad de Granada, Spain*

This study examines how adolescents construct meanings, practices, and relationships around pornography as a formative element of their affective and sexual socialization. As the first objective of my PhD research, it is embedded within the ROMANCE SUCCEED project, which investigates the relationship between youth romance culture and adolescents’ (12–16 years old) educational trajectories through a longitudinal, intersectional lens, with particular attention to gender and sexuality dynamics.

Adopting a critical perspective, it analyses how pornographic consumption and interpretation shape imaginaries and experiences, explicitly contrasting these processes across sex, gender, and sexual orientation. By foregrounding sexual diversity, the study interrogates pornography’s role in reinforcing or challenging normative expectations, offering insights into its impact on intersectional experiences of sexuality. Moving beyond binary interpretations, it expands the analytical horizon by examining pornography’s power structures alongside its affective dimensions and adolescent agency. It thus provides a nuanced perspective on youth sexual and cultural practices in digitalized societies.

Methodologically, the study integrates qualitative content analysis of pornographic materials with semi-structured interviews with adolescents, revealing how pornography informs desire, pleasure, and consent beyond heteronormative and cisnormative frameworks.

By centering horizontal and non-binary perspectives, this study reinforces the Gender and Education Association’s commitment to critical, intersectional, and transformative feminist research on gender, education, and sexuality. It aligns with *Knowing Routes* by situating pornography within historical debates on gender, sexuality, and media representation and contributes to *Diversifying Routes* by challenging normative assumptions about adolescent sexual socialization, particularly among LGBTQ+ youth. In *Transforming Routes*, it examines pornography’s role in reinforcing or subverting power asymmetries. Through *Activating Routes*, it

advocates for critical media literacy and non-hierarchical sexual education models that empower youth. Finally, in Re-routing Policy, it problematizes moral panic and the politicization of pornography, calling for evidence-based pedagogical responses beyond punitive frameworks.

Key words: pornography, affective and sexual socialization, adolescents, sexual diversity

Groomed with cis heteronormativity: Navigating online risk by making young people's voices matter to educational policy and practice

Scott Kerpen *Bath Spa University*

This paper builds on a recently published chapter that extended longstanding calls for LGBTQIA+ inclusive education against an increasingly hostile cultural and political landscape. The chapter challenged re-surfacing moral panics around childhood innocence, demonstrating how efforts to 'protect' both marginalize LGBTQIA+ youths and make them vulnerable to risky online practices and sexual exploitation. Drawing on two case studies from a participatory ESRC funded research project in the UK—a trans female youth and a gay male youth—it demonstrated how attempts to contain young people's desires can lead them to seek validation wherever they can find it. The key question was not whether but how young people explore gender and sexuality, re-affirming calls for experience-near, youth-centred education to reduce harm and promote safer practices. Nevertheless, the chapter identified several issues left open for further exploration. While recognising advancements in RSE policies across England and Wales, it raised concerns around the fragile ground on which such policies rest. Additionally, it considered scholarship on the challenges of implementing such policies against parental backlash, contested 'age-appropriateness,' and inadequate support for educators. While building on efforts to make young people's voices matter to policy and practice, ongoing debates persist around how to achieve this—particularly in navigating institutional gatekeeping, parental influence, and broader social-cultural-material constraints. As such, this paper serves to present the aforementioned research but also further explore preliminary strategies to navigate such challenges. It invites discussion and future collaborations to carve out new directions for research and transforming policy and practice.

Key words: Cisheteronormativity; online risk and exploitation; LGBTQIA+ youth; gender and sexuality education

Where research roots itself: the importance of doing gender research in complex contexts

Kate Carpenter *Birmingham City University, UK*

Reflecting on the themes of roots, pathways and navigating research, this presentation reflects on the value of gender research being carried out within complex contexts and communities. The presentation roots itself in my own PhD research, which involves exploring the stories children in a primary school context tell, through their writing, drawing and talking, looking at how they construct and negotiate gender norms and identity within their complex contexts. Underpinning the research is the significance of its diverse context – Birmingham. Birmingham's children are diverse both socioeconomically and

ethnically, the latter of which has led the city to be labelled one of the most diverse cities in the UK (Birmingham City Council, 2022). It not only looks at gender as a topic, within a local context, but also explores local cultures through the lens of gender. Acknowledging the ways in which gender has been discussed in educational contexts before, from an early focus on patriarchal school structures and sexist practices in the 1970s, the ‘crisis of masculinity’ in the 1990s, to a shift towards more philosophical questions about nature and development of gender socially and psychologically (which has led to a rise in qualitative work with children), this presentation reflects on how carrying out research in contexts where perspectives and worldviews are different in kind, can offer insight into how different people living alongside each other navigate changing gender norms.

Key words: diversity, complex contexts, gender, children

Session 4: Group 8

Schools’ parental engagement with RSE: a study with primary schools in England

Naomi Rudoe and Ruth Ponsford *University of Westminster and The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK*

Schools in England (particularly primary schools) are having to tread a careful line with regard to Relationships and Sex Education. They are largely unhappy with the 2024 Conservative government’s publication of revised draft RSE guidance, which proposes introducing age limits on the teaching of some topics, and prohibiting teaching about the concept of gender identity. Drawing on data from our BA/Leverhulme-funded project with the Sex Education Forum which examines the challenges English primary schools are facing with parental engagement around RSE, we demonstrate the extensive work that many are doing with parents to dispel myths and misinformation around, and explain the rationale for, what is being delivered. Many schools are holding meetings to engage and educate parents and some that are experiencing parental withdrawal are working hard to reduce the numbers of children being withdrawn from sex education. Our previous research (Rudoe and Ponsford, 2023) found that the majority of parents support statutory RSE in schools and aspire to have an open and honest relationship with their children, but they do not always find this easy. We suggest, drawing inspiration from the Trans*forming Routes theme of the conference, that schools need to be well resourced and supported by policy-makers – in particular by LGBTQ-inclusive and timely-for-safeguarding RSE guidance – in order to deliver a comprehensive RSE curriculum and to engage parents in partnership with this.

Key words: relationships and sex education; primary schools; parents

Beyond (normative) order: understanding disorder as a power relation in Finnish primary school

Veera Tervo *University of Helsinki, Finland*

I argue that, in the context of primary school and the school institution, the persistent pursuit of order is an actively made practice that operates in unjust ways. Based on my first ongoing PhD article, I aim to demonstrate how.

Historically, order and disorder have been some of the most central imperatives arranging schooling in Finland. Previous research suggests that the prevailing perceptions of order in school renew normative, hierarchical, gendered and ableist governance that categorizes teachers and students. Hence, order has been studied extensively in the (Finnish) educational context yet the understanding of disorder remains ambiguous. I understand disorder as a power relation related to differences, such as power to act as a primary subject, to demonstrate and designate order, and classify into different categories (gender, body orders, social class etc.) My starting point is that the purpose of schooling and education is to produce and maintain order. I examine the demand for order as a practice that reinforces inequality and is actively carried out. Underlying the maintenance and pursuit of order is the broader goal of sustaining and reproducing societal order, transmitting values and norms, and fostering a form of citizenship that draws from these principles.

To conceptualize (dis)order, I draw from Medina's not-knowing (also O'Neill), Ahmed's killjoy feminism, Halberstam's low theory and Foucauldian theories on power.

Engaging feminist and Foucauldian theories, I will unsettle fixed educational pathways, advocating for transformative routes that resist hierarchy and classification, aligning with the conference's call to trans*form and diversify educational futures.

Key words: disorder, order, feminist theory, power, not-knowing

Embodied Teaching: Affective, emotional and atmospheric intensities through/with/in the body in the primary classroom

Michaela Jane Harrison *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

This presentation joins the call to re-route what we think we know about teaching by focusing on the teacher's body in the primary school classroom. Teaching and learning have, up until recently, been conceptualised as acts of the mind, with the body largely or completely ignored. Scholars working in the field of embodiment call on (new)-material feminisms and posthuman philosophies, identifying the roots of this 'bodily ignorance' in the legacy of humanism and the Cartesian mind-body divide. This divide associates 'corporeal bodies with physical entities that need to be tamed, managed, and controlled by the superior mind' (Varelas et al., 2022:494-495), and epitomises the dominant white, western, patriarchal and colonial cultures in education.

This presentation reports on a small-scale posthuman ethnographic study which sought to explore embodiment in teaching, and contributes to a growing 'body' of research which seeks to upend the mind-body binary, rendering the body visible so we might appreciate its affective power. The field work for the project was conducted in a two-form primary school in the northwest of England. In the presentation, I analyse empirical materials from the project drawing on concepts from critical posthuman theory and Deleuzian philosophy to demonstrate the power and productive force of the teacher's body in the teaching event. I focus specifically on how affect, emotion and atmosphere are produced through embodied teaching practices. This work helps to re-route what we think we know about teaching through/with/in the body, so teachers can be supported to develop their embodied teaching practice.

Key words: embodiment, primary teaching, posthuman, Deleuze

Session 4: Group 9

Bridging Theory and Practice: Feminist Perspectives on Self-Care Facilitation in Higher Education– Insights from a Pilot Group

Chi-Yen Chang *University of Bergen*

Modern societal shifts, austerity measures, and technological advancements have disrupted the balance between individuals, culture, and nature, leading to increased stress and anxiety. This challenge is particularly evident in healthcare education and professions, where professionals such as music therapists and nurses are experiencing rising levels of burnout, resulting in many leaving their careers. These challenges underscore the urgent need to explore the intersections of environment, education, and self-care.

This presentation uses music therapy as an example to address the question: How can student experiences and feminist perspectives enhance self-care facilitation in higher education? It draws from my research project, "Participatory Action Research: Fostering Self-Care Cultivation in Music Therapy Education," which involves close collaboration with students at the University of Bergen to explore self-care practices throughout their training. This project seeks to fill a significant gap in empirical research on self-care in higher education by implementing pilot self-care groups for students.

By using feminist pedagogy and therapeutic frameworks as a foundation, this study explores how these theories support self-care facilitation, addressing the gaps between theory and practice. The initial findings suggest that integrating feminist perspectives into self-care practices fosters a more inclusive and reflective approach to resilience and well-being, while also challenging traditional educational perspectives and driving social change through education—aligning with the conference themes of diversifying routes and addressing the political implications of gender in education. These findings offer empirical insights for integrating self-care into the broader educational framework, with implications for music therapy and beyond.

Key words: Self-care, Higher Education, Pilot Group, Feminist Perspectives, Music Therapy

Chinese female university teachers' emotional vulnerability in the era of hyper-performativity

Amy Jie Bao *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China*

In the current global higher education climate characterized by hyper-performativity, university teachers face intense pressure from high performance expectations and relentless audits from their institutions. This pressure is particularly acute for female teachers, who often bear the dual burden of professional demands and traditional caregiving roles prescribed by societal expectations (Amsler & Motta, 2019). As the academic profession becomes increasingly

demanding, female teachers have to navigate a challenging work-family balance while demonstrating their value within their institutions. Against this backdrop, this study uses emotional vulnerability as a lens to examine the professional development and wellbeing of Chinese female university teachers amidst the ramifications of hyper-performativity. Drawing upon a post-structuralist and feminist perspective (Weedon, 1997; Zembylas, 2003), we conceptualise emotional vulnerability as complex reactions to institutional and sociocultural impositions, which can lead to further actions and transformations (Her & De Costa, 2022). Guided by this theoretical frame, the study answers two research questions: 1) How do Chinese female university teachers experience emotional vulnerability in the era of hyper-performativity; and 2) How do they cope with their emotional vulnerability and negotiate their identities? The study adopts a narrative case study design and collects data through narrative frames and interviews. By focusing on both the dominant discourses that shape teachers' emotional vulnerability and teachers' agentic actions towards their vulnerability, the study is expected to uncover the hidden norms and micropolitics in female teachers' situating contexts and chart the path for empowering female teachers in China and beyond.

Key words: female academics, emotional vulnerability, identity negotiations, post-structuralist and feminist perspective, China

Silenced Sisters: Incredulity and Integrity in the Reception of Black British Women's Testimony

Clare Williams *University of Westminster, UK*

My research questions emerge from reports concerning the 2022 strip-search of Child Q, a black schoolgirl, by two police officers in a London school. The strip-search went ahead, exacerbated by the fact she was menstruating, despite her denial of possessing drugs. No drugs were found. Child Q was not believed by police officers. This incredulity around her truth-telling – her testimony – is what I explore. I argue that when black women's testimony is heard or received within elite and everyday British institutions, a pernicious incredulity exists to undermine it.

Child Q's testimony forms the centrepiece of my conceptualisation of black British women's testimony. I necessarily presuppose not only the truth but the validity of her words, both in response to the police officers who violated her and the team who carried out the incident review. Child Q's moving response, officially recorded in the 2022 Hackney Safeguarding report, are sobering words. They are the linchpin to my curation of black British women's testimony as a multi-modal, polyvocal truth-telling praxis.

Centring Child Q is deliberate; it is an act of defiance against the way in which she was not believed, abused and ultimately silenced. She embodies multiple, intersecting identities – black, British, female, child – that leave her vulnerable to a complex network of systemic oppression comprising state policy, policing and education.

I employ Black Feminist epistemologies alongside counter-story telling in Critical Race Theory, and varieties of epistemic injustice within Social Epistemology to form the theoretical foundations for my work.

Key words: black, British, women, testimony, counter-story

Session 5: Group 1

Activating Change: Participatory Workshops on Gender, Education, and Mental Health in Rural Peruvian Communities

María del Rosario *University of Sussex, UK*

This paper presents a practical experience of participatory workshops conducted in rural Peruvian communities, aimed at integrating gender perspectives into local education while addressing their impact on the mental health of children and adolescents. Using an action-research approach, the initiative bridges academic knowledge and community activism, fostering safe spaces to reflect on gender inequalities and their emotional and psychological repercussions.

The workshops employ participatory methodologies tailored to rural contexts, incorporating interactive dynamics and local narratives to address topics such as gender equity, violence prevention, and emotional well-being. Additionally, they include specific mental health components, such as practical tools for stress management, the development of support networks, and socio-emotional skills for teachers and students.

Preliminary results show a positive impact in raising awareness among community leaders, families, and educators about the connection between gender equality and mental health. Participants demonstrated a stronger commitment to creating inclusive school environments that prioritize emotional well-being and violence prevention.

This proposal aligns with the Activating Routes thematic strand by linking feminist research with concrete actions that drive change in marginalized communities. It underscores the role of academics as facilitators of social transformations, addressing the intersections of gender, education, and mental health in a comprehensive manner.

Key words: mental health, gender, education, Peru, violence

Trauma-informed agency: Students activating new routes to gender justice against gender-based violence

Penny Jane Burke & Stephanie Hardacre *University of Newcastle, Australia*

This paper reframes trauma in higher education by bringing sociological and psychological perspectives in dialogue with feminist critiques. We draw from our in-depth, mixed-methods study of the impact of gender-based violence (GBV) on higher education access and participation, which engaged 303 student victim-survivor participants in an Australian university. The study reveals how student victim-survivors actively channel GBV-related trauma into potential for meaningful action and change as future practitioners, professionals and leaders in their chosen fields. Despite the profound inequities they navigate, producing feelings of shame and unworthiness, they articulate a strong commitment to harnessing GBV

experiences as change agents for gender justice to help eradicate GBV. We reconceptualise ‘post-traumatic growth’ as ‘trauma-informed agency’, whereby student victim-survivors are uniquely positioned to drive social justice transformation through higher education participation, not only by continuing their studies alongside and despite adversity, but by using their GBV experiences as a catalyst for collective advocacy to generate new knowledge, directions and capacity. By embracing their studies as a pathway to prevent and mitigate similar harms befalling others, student victim-survivors reclaim trauma as a resource and motivator to counter stigmatising discourses that unfairly individualise and privatise what is a sociopolitical issue of massive proportions. In line with GEA's vision and the conference themes, the students’ insights have provided valuable, comprehensive recommendations leading to the development of the Gender Justice Hub, which forms a collective project of the UNESCO Chair in Equity, Social Justice and Higher Education.

Key words: gender justice, gender-based violence, trauma-informed agency, higher education participation, student-driven transformation

Radical roots and trans*formative routes: Celebrating and reimagining gender pedagogies in contemporary higher education

Charlotte Morris and Asan Mohammed *University of Portsmouth*

This paper shares reflections, insights and strategies from a qualitative study on teaching and learning about gender in higher education (HE), contextualised against the backdrop of what have been described as ‘gender wars’ in the UK. Staff and student perceptions and experiences of navigating this climate in contemporary HE learning spaces are captured. It addresses complex challenges in managing and responding care-fully to this intensive environment through curricula and pedagogies, potentially risking backlash, whilst simultaneously keeping students as safe as possible amid a tide of disinformation, polarisation and hate. Despite myriad challenges, their accounts offer a note of hope and inspiration, rooted in the radical potentials of gender, feminist, queer, decolonial and critical pedagogies.

‘Anti-gender’ discourses and global backlash against LGBTQIA+, women’s and interrelated rights form part of anti-liberal discursive underminings of social justice movements (Giraldo, 2022). HE is frequently a target of media hostility (Read, 2018) with particular impacts for those involved in teaching gender (Burke et al., 2022; Morris et al., 2022). Media distortions surrounding ‘wokeism’ and equalities, in tandem with cultural shifts towards bio-essentialisms (Phipps, 2015), can create a hostile environment for many academics and students; indeed, many have been subject to threats, intimidation and abuse online (Xie et al., 2022). Solidarity, care, openness, intersectionality, dialogue, responsiveness and activism are therefore crucial in this moment. Here we celebrate the survivals, subversions, vulnerabilities, inspiration, rage and joy that are generated in such learning spaces, hoping to spark further sharing of practices, perspectives, experiences, imaginings and routes to trans*formation.

Key words: gender, pedagogies, higher education, spaces, transformation

Session 5: Group 2

Bodies of Knowledge: Performing Leadership Identity through Embodied Practice

Melinda Davis Swinburne *University of Technology, Australia*

The enduring suppression of women's voices necessitates alternative modes of communicating resistance. This paper explores how women leaders in boys' schools perform identity and authority through embodied practice to navigate binary structures of institutional power. Drawing upon Butler's theory of performativity (1990) and Code's work on feminist epistemologies (1991) this research presents findings from a qualitative study of nine female educational leaders in Australian boys' schools. Through in-depth interviews, participants reflected on their own lived experience of Code's 'epistemic responsibility' as leaders in boys' schools. The findings reveal a highly developed epistemic understanding of navigating male spaces which may tacitly resist or ignore their presence. This informs an embodied practice of leadership identity through performances of voice, strategic silence, symbolic clothing and spatial navigation, in response to gendered power dynamics. Further findings indicate women are more critical of female colleagues than male, and women's conformity to and deviation from hegemonic or binary expectations of gender draws significant criticism. Findings show women to be similarly self-critical of their own performativity and leadership impact. Analysis indicates women's performances of their leadership identity in boys' schools to be embodied responses to complex internal and interpersonal power negotiations. Additionally, challenging relationships with other women reflect the tensions of negotiating spatial and temporal power, and this conflict embodies hegemonic practices intended to encourage conflict between women.

This research advances the vision of GEA by continuing the legacy of scholarship into women's knowing and educational epistemologies, and offers strategies for institutional transformation to support women's leadership.

Key words: epistemology, performativity, gender, power, identity

Unsolicited dick pics, coercive sexting and social media influencers: The generational normalisation of sexism in secondary schools

Constance Copley *University of Sheffield, UK*

Exploring the normalisation of digitised violence within the younger generation, this study examined the connections between sexism and lad cultures within secondary school, and how they manifest in digital spaces, enacted through technology-facilitated abuse (TFA). Using qualitative methods integrating two work packages (WP), in-depth interviews were conducted with eleven participants: WP1 included women aged 18-21 years (n=6), and WP2 included men aged 18-21 (n=5). Thematic analysis of interviews highlighted the interplay of sexism and lad cultures in secondary schools, and how lived experiences of laddism operate to minimise harms of coercive sexting and unsolicited dick pics (forms of TFA). A key issue which emerged from the research was the use of slut-shaming and the trope 'boys will be boys' as mechanisms that minimised the harms created by unsolicited dick pics and coercive sexting. Overall, the study highlighted the generational normalisation of TFA and raises important concerns around

attitudes and tropes which continue to excuse and embed sexism in secondary school environments.

This contribution will further the vision and themes of this conference, notably diversifying routes and re-routing policy, calling for a reformed sex education in secondary schools. This reform would need updated policy and practice changes within school environments, addressing multiple issues, particularly the impact of TFA, enabling an awareness of the intricacies of the harms caused. Training for educators and relevant support staff would mean improved awareness, enabling preventative measures or early help that are victim-centred and led, not victim-blaming.

Key words: alpha male, cyberflashing, influencers, lad cultures, non-consensual sexting

Is navigating discrimination a Key Teaching Task?: Student teachers' experiences of discrimination during school practicum placements

Eunice Gaerlan and Yael Cameron *Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand*

In Aotearoa New Zealand, tertiary education institutions work within the Teaching Council of New Zealand's requirements for teacher education and professional registration. These requirements include student teachers working towards demonstrating what the Council terms Key Teaching Tasks (Education Council, 2017). Ideally, teacher education and in-school support provide a seamless pathway for student teachers to become prepared for the responsibility of independently teaching a class as provisionally-certified teachers upon graduation. However, this pathway is not uniform for all student teachers. For those who identify as LGBTQIA+, or come from non-white ethnic backgrounds, or are neurodiverse, the journey to achieving these Key Teaching Tasks often involves additional challenges and barriers.

Navigating these challenges and barriers profoundly impacts student teachers' well-being, as they balance core teaching tasks with the emotional labour of negotiating discriminatory spaces. While international studies highlight these issues (e.g., Benson, Smith & Flanagan, 2014; Berry et al., 2021; Kohli, 2009; Toledo & Maher, 2021), there is limited research in Aotearoa New Zealand examining whether the inclusive practices emphasised for children are also extended to pre-service teachers. This study investigates whether and how schools enact inclusion as a whole-school practice and the extent to which student teachers experience discrimination and inclusion during practicum placements.

In this presentation, we will offer preliminary findings from the first phase of the study, focusing on the ways practicum placements serve as both sites of struggle and growth for student teachers of minoritised identities. These findings contribute to conference themes by diversifying how we understand gender and its intersections with race, sexuality, and neurodiversity in educational contexts, activating routes for feminist and inclusive practice in teacher education. In doing so, this work furthers the Gender and Education Association's vision of challenging injustice and advocating for equity within education.

Key words: teacher education, discrimination, inclusion, practicum, student teacher

Everyday Life - Sexuality and Gender-based Education Interventions with Adolescents

Sivan Lotan and Menny Malka *Ben Gurion University, Isreal*

Background: Traditional social work often prioritizes addressing risk behaviors over acknowledging the positive dimensions of everyday sexuality. Integrating everyday sexuality into social work practice, research, and education is essential, especially concerning human rights and diverse gender identities. Within the field of sexuality education research, there is a growing demand for intervention programs grounded in critical pedagogy that also address gender issues and promote healthy sexuality.

Methodology: The Photovoice Working Model for Healthy Sexuality (PVWMHS) was used as a critical-pedagogical tool in a intervention conducted by the NGO, ODHS. This intervention targeted 15 adolescents, aged 16-18, who participated in the Ambassadors Group Intervention Program. The PVWMHS intervention incorporated transformative learning theory, photovoice methodology, and the PLISSIT model, emphasizing the role of gender in healthy sexuality.

Results: The implementation of PVWMHS highlighted four key areas: 1) Gender constructions; 2) Personal boundaries; 3) Broadening the discourse beyond risk; and 4) Moving from personal to public spheres. These areas underscore the importance of understanding and addressing gender dynamics in sexuality education.

Conclusions and Implications: The development and implementation of PVWMHS demonstrate the proactive engagement in employing innovative methods to promote healthy sexuality education among adolescents. These initiatives meet the demands of the field by integrating critical pedagogy and addressing gender issues. The PVWMHS implementation has several implications: 1) Inclusion of everyday sexuality and gender dynamics in adolescents education; 2) Adoption of the model in school settings through collaboration between multidisciplinary educational staff (NGO & Public educational system); and 3) Training education workers in the model to broaden the focus on everyday sexuality and gender beyond risk behaviors or at-risk populations.

Key words: Healthy- sexuality, gender, adolescent, intervention, beyond-risk

Session 5: Group 3

Trajectories and narratives of Postdoctoral women's precarious academic work in Chilean universities: challenges for gender equality in the Global South

Paulina Bronfman *Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso, Chile*

This study examines the academic trajectories of postdoctoral women researchers in Chile within the context of gender inequalities and neoliberal productivity pressures. Despite advancements in promoting gender equality in higher education, Chilean universities still face challenges in ensuring women's full participation and removing structural barriers. The research aims to contribute to existing literature by exploring both the structural working conditions and

subjective experiences of postdoctoral women researchers, a period not extensively studied before in Chile. The methodology involved in-depth interviews with women researchers from various disciplines covering meanings and themes, focusing on academic formation, transition to postdoctoral research, work-life balance, integration into academia, and gender equality policies. Findings reveal non-linear trajectories influenced by factors such as motherhood, caregiving responsibilities, and challenges in reconciling personal and professional life. Structural conditions, such as the pressure to produce quantifiable results and adhere to neoliberal productivity standards, intersect with subjective experiences. Conflicts derived from the gender order highlight challenges faced by women in academia, including lack of institutional support for motherhood and symbolic violence. Also, conflicts arising from the knowledge accumulation pattern in the neoliberal university underscore issues of productivity, success, and meritocracy, leading to job precariousness and inequalities.

Key words: Gender equality, Decent work and economic growth, Women scientists, Universities, Labour productivity, Women's employment

Rethinking critical and affective pedagogies: masculinities and resistance in university spaces

Manuel Lopez Pereyra *Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico*

Universities have historically been sites of hegemonic knowledge production, shaping and sustaining patriarchal structures that normalize gender-based inequalities. Thus, the increasing visibility of gender-based violence and the emergence of feminist movements have disrupted these structures, fostering critical debates on the role of higher education institutions in perpetuating exclusion and discrimination. While universities are often perceived as spaces of progress and enlightenment, they simultaneously function as arenas where hegemonic masculinities are reproduced, reinforcing hierarchies of power and dominance. Drawing from the work of Connell (2000) and Bourdieu (2007), this paper critically examines how masculinities are socially and historically constructed within university spaces. In this sense, student activism has played an essential role in exposing discriminatory practices and advocating for structural changes in higher education (Salazar Mendiola et al., 2023). Also, by employing critical and affective pedagogies, educators can create spaces that encourage reflection, dialogue, and transformative learning, ultimately contributing to deconstructing violent gender norms (Freire, 1997; hooks, 2003). Queer pedagogies and feminist perspectives provide valuable insights into the ways education can serve as a site of both oppression and liberation. However, meaningful change requires the implementation of concrete pedagogical strategies that question and disrupt normalized patterns of violence and exclusion. This involves fostering a pedagogy that interrogates masculinities and promotes co-responsibility and ethical engagement. Universities can become spaces of genuine transformation by denaturalizing violence and cultivating political affectivity.

Key words: masculinities; critical pedagogy; queer education; affective pedagogies; feminist research

Narratives around migration, health and gender: Ukrainian migrant mothers caring for their disabled children in Poland

Eva Duda *University of Wrocław, Poland*

Due to the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine and the full-scale Russian aggression, Poland has welcomed/received many new forced migrants in the last few years (since the 22nd February 2022 which marks the start of the war). Most of those recent war migrants comprise women and children (and older people which falls outside the scope of this paper).

This paper is a result of a new research project funded by the National Science Centre in Poland (2022/47/D/HS6/00519). This is a three-year, qualitative empirical research entitled Intersectionality of migration, disability and gender in contemporary Poland.

This paper focuses on Ukrainian migrant mothers who arrived in Poland with their disabled children. Their pathways to integration as well as struggles navigating a new country setting are explored. Due to their circumstances, they remain at the mercy of two national systems - health and immigration. These two systems remain largely separate and complicate their settlement. though it is the third sector that appears their main port of call for support. Issues of work-life balance, care practices and physical as well as mental health are considered.

Key words: Narratives, communication, migration, health, gender, disability

Session 5: Group 4

Decoding Power: A Feminist Approach to Young Activism Shaping AI Ethics

Rosario Abara

This research, developed as my dissertation for my MSc in Gender, Sexuality at LSE (UK), examines the construction of ethical discourses by youth-led organisations advocating for AI ethics and digital rights. Amid inconsistencies in AI regulation and ethical frameworks, the innovation race has exacerbated risks and social injustices, disproportionately affecting marginalised communities. The study critically examines the influence of power relations within ethical debates on AI, exposing strategies that individualise responsibility by placing it on users and parents, while advocating for redistributing accountability to corporations, developers, and governments to create safer, more equitable technologies.

By recognising young activists as political agents in the digital environment, the research highlights their role as legitimate stakeholders in addressing AI's social impacts. Instagram, as a pivotal platform for youth activism and digital engagement, is employed as a site for empowerment, knowledge-sharing, and community building. These activists develop strategies to raise awareness and influence policy transformation, challenging techno-solutionism and the ideological neutrality of technology, exposing how these narratives obscure inequalities embedded in AI systems.

Using a qualitative methodology rooted in Critical Discourse Analysis, this study explores the ethical digital discourses and activist interventions of youth-led organisations. By applying feminist AI and socio-technical perspectives, including intersectionality, design justice, and a critique of scientific objectivity, the research highlights the potential of these frameworks to

address issues of responsibility, safety, and discrimination.

This study contributes to the congress as activist-driven feminist research by positioning youth-led activism as a vital site for knowledge production and political engagement. It challenges traditional narratives that portray young people as passive consumers, instead rerouting power to position them as central agents in shaping equitable and inclusive technological futures. Young activists construct alternative narratives of ethical AI grounded in social justice, highlighting the connections with feminist theory.

Key words: AI ethics, Youth Agency, Social Media activism, Technology and Power, Feminist AI, Intersectionality, Design Justice.

Defining Cyberbullying. The evolution of the concept over 20 years.

Emily Sinclair *Nottingham Trent University, UK*

My overall research is exploring the intersection between cyberbullying and gender-based violence. I began by reading literature defining cyberbullying. It became increasingly apparent that defining cyberbullying proves significantly problematic.

The term cyberbullying first appeared in academic literature in 2003, since then, there have been significant advancements in technology and how we interact with it. These technological advancements have had a substantial impact on how we define and characterize cyberbullying.

Due to the significant implications of inconsistencies in definitions of cyberbullying on research, policy and educational interventions, the overarching aim of this research is to highlight the necessity of a common definition.

To begin, I completed a narrative review of existing literature concerning over two hundred definitions of cyberbullying from 2003 to 2018. By considering word frequency in a percentage of key words such as bullying and online, I explore how fundamental these words are in our evolving understanding of the definition. This process was repeated with literature post-2018 to consider further advancements in our understanding in the concept.

Having completed this analysis, the outcome was significant disparities of the definition of cyberbullying. The impact of different definitions is not to be underestimated. In the context of research, outcomes such as prevalence rates vary considerably. Moreover, another significant implication this has in terms of legislation, educational programs and school policies.

The recommendation I have following this research is to have an inclusive and fluid definition to withstand the ongoing evolution of technology.

Key words: Cyberbullying, Definitions, Understandings, Characteristics, Technology

Activating: Shameful gestures: Queer interventions in the media

Birgit Althans *Art Academy Duesseldorf, Germany*

Women were not only the addressees of the attributions of moral-social shame; they also attempted to generate shame: the three war photographers Marguerite Bourke-White, Lee Miller, and Martha Gelhorn they attempted their own emotions (anger, hatred, pity) when faced with the piles of corpses resulting from the Nazi killing machinery they encountered in German concentrations camps. Their goals were to re-educate the German population through specific aesthetic composition of their images. In the 1960s feminist artist Yoko Ono provoked with her 'Cut Pieces' and through their 'Breast Protest' female students exposed the covetous glances of Theodor W. Adorno during his lectures.

In the 21st century, the Pussy Riot art group has provoked the sexism of the Russian regime, and artist Sarah Lucas has drawn attention to the everyday provocations of territorial masculinity with her artistic framing of 'Men Sitting'. In the 2020s, there is a mass shame of American police racism in 'Black Lives Matter' movement and of the sexism of American film industry through the MeToo movement. In 'Shame' (2023), artist Andrea Büttner draws attention to the continuity of shameful feelings in the presentation of her own art. While writers such as Annie Ernaux and Eduard Louis' autofiction deals with the feelings of shame regarding their class and gender affiliations and sexual orientation in the provinces, the political campaigning of shame to fade away in the face of the demonstrative shamelessness of authoritative politics. Can such appeals to feelings of shame and empathy still be useful in these political arenas?

Key words: Shame, gestures, education, Gender, shamelessness

Session 5: Group 5

Symposium: Things of the Least: routes of objects, families and dust in exhibition making

Liz Mitchell, Becky Shaw, Jackie Haynes, Ruth Boycott-Garnett, Ami-jo Horrocks, Naomi Kendrick, Christina MacRae, Katy McCall and Rachel Holmes, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Art Gallery and Birmingham City University, UK

Background

Things of the Least (Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Art Gallery and Sure Start) is an AHRC-funded project that considers the material encounters of very young children in exhibition making. By 'treasuring the things of the least' our exhibition will draw on the least considered in gallery practices: 1. The youngest children's wisdom, so often overlooked in knowledge production. 2. The thoughts and ideas of families typically absent from the sector, and 3. The challenge of exhibiting an idiosyncratic collection with a distinct curiosity, but little 'art' value.

6 artists have created objects based on the Mary Greg collection which have been the centre of play sessions with families living in a home office hotel. Working within this space foregrounds the often-silenced narratives of recently arrived young families, having left perilous circumstances in home countries to seek sanctuary under the politically hostile conditions of the UK.

The project holds a tangle of routes of people, objects and histories. Duchamp's concept of the 'infra-thin' helps us open up how exhibition-making can keep different roots and routes visible: firstly, attempting to touch what remains elusive but nonetheless can be felt in the collection's

re-animation and aliveness; and secondly, recognising how enslavement, imperialism and racism are embedded into the material landscape of the MG collection.

Paper 1: The roots of collecting and collections

Liz Mitchell and Becky Shaw

The collection has over 4000 objects that were once part of daily life with signs of use and wear. This contrasts with the pristine and orderly objects that would usually be found in an historic collection.

Mary Greg was born into a large and wealthy family of bankers and UK landowners, with her early life rooted in the industrial North West (Mitchell, nd). This paper will trace the routes of wealth, the role of women in 19th century Britain and the global position that brought these objects together now nestled in the darkness of drawers, boxes and tissue paper.

Paper 2: The routes/voices of mothers, babies and toddlers in temporary accommodation

Jackie Haynes and Ruth Boycott-Garnett

The home office hotel is positioned somewhere between formality and informality, mobility and immobility, permanence and transience (Meier, 2023). It is a paradoxical space, located on the margins of the city and of society, confining movement, controlling freedoms, and filtering citizenship, yet also a space in which the identities of babies and young children are actively formed. This paper focuses on how feminist fugitivity finds a life in the hotel as a ‘space of exception’ where small, embodied, and everyday political practices of dis/engagement emerge as fugitive practices. We focus on how the project’s artists took their lead from the hotel community’s alternative socialities and practices of collaboration and care as “loopholes of retreat” (Jacobs 2009:26) and the quiet activism of the families and hotel staff as they played together in fugitive forms of commonality (Harney and Moten 2013).

Paper 3: The routes of play objects

Ami-jo Horrocks, Naomi Kendrick and Christina MacRae

During the play sessions objects create their own routes as they are transported across the space in different ways creating a space in constant movement. We ask how we might keep this sense of movement in a fixed exhibition space.

Emerging from our sustained work with young children, we want to create playful forms that unsettle the controlling spatial architectural frame set by Manchester Art Gallery, seeking to express more intuitive, unselfconscious relationships with space and with each other (Unwin, 2019, p.5).

We set out with families and artists to examine how bodies and spaces co-produce one another through practices, gestures, movements and events.

Paper 4: Rooting through dust

Rachel Holmes

“Matter is not destroyed. It is recombined” (Mershon, 2016, p. 466). This paper draws on the concept of dust to explore the rummaging and non-representational role of the artists and their different modes of perception. Turning to a rehabilitation of the minimal (Parlati, 2011), we recognise the presence of dusty cabinets, drawers and loft spaces that house the collection, but also put the concept of dust to work to gesture at the artists’ ways of working through

obscurity and opacity, as Amato suggests, dust is a “screen between what is empirically knowable and pure imagination” (2001, p. 20, cited in Parlati, 2011, p. 76).

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Session 5: Group 6

Symposium: Student Voice: Spaces of Resistance and Transformation for Gender Justice

Elizabeth Little, Claire Charles, Alice Elwell, Christine Shannon, Amanda Keddie, Julianne Moss Deakin University, Australia

This symposium engages with the conference theme, “Imagining new futures and directions as we recontextualise our work in a new age of extremes,” by exploring the transformative potential of student voice in advancing gender justice. In an era marked by intensifying global debates about gender equity, this collection of papers foregrounds the experiences, critiques, and agency of students as they resist and reimagine gendered power dynamics across diverse educational spaces. Together, the papers illuminate how schools, classrooms, and digital environments can become spaces of resistance and transformation, offering pathways for more equitable futures.

Paper 1: 'Gender equality, hurrah!' and other student perspectives on transforming and resisting misogyny in classroom spaces

The first paper, "Gender equality, hurrah!' and other student perspectives on transforming and resisting misogyny in classroom spaces," draws on Bob Pease's "pillars of patriarchy" to examine student responses to gender inequality within secondary English literature classrooms. Through focus group data, this paper reveals how young people are critically engaging with sexism and misogyny, offering insights into the transformative possibilities of classroom discussions. Highlighting the importance of incorporating student voices into gender equity debates, the paper emphasises the classroom's potential as a site for critical engagement and action against patriarchal norms.

Paper 2: The Cave of Misogyny: High School Girls' Responses to Violence in Canonical Literature

The second paper, "The Cave of Misogyny: High School Girls' Responses to Violence in Canonical Literature," investigates the affective experiences of high school girls grappling with misogyny in canonical texts. Using phematerialist methods and word-image-affect maps, the paper explores the emotional and intellectual toll of engaging with a curriculum that venerates literature steeped in violence against women. The metaphor of "The Cave of Misogyny" captures students' disillusionment as they navigate these texts, amplifying their critiques of prescribed reading lists. This paper calls for a reimagined literary curriculum that considers the cumulative impact of misogynistic content and centres gender justice in literary education.

Paper 3: Encountering and negotiating gender in an all-boys Catholic high school

The third paper, "Encountering and negotiating gender in an all-boys Catholic high school," situates its analysis within the broader context of global disruptions and heightened interest in gender relations. This paper explores how the specific context of an all-boys Catholic school shapes students' understandings and enactments of gender. Drawing on the belief in the dynamism of social structures and the transformative power of human agency, this paper advocates for schools as critical sites for co-designing gender-just futures. It emphasises the role of educators and students in collaboratively reshaping unequal gender relations through reflection and action.

Paper 4: Young men's navigation of online pornography: fostering a feminist-informed critical digital literacy

The fourth paper, "Young men's navigation of online pornography: fostering a feminist-informed critical digital literacy," addresses the pressing need for critical engagement with digital cultures amid growing concerns about young men's online behaviours and the influence of the manosphere. Based on a qualitative study with 117 young men, this paper foregrounds their thoughtful critiques of online pornography, including its impacts on consent, intimacy, and desensitisation. Resonating with feminist critiques, the paper advocates for a feminist-informed critical digital literacy that fosters critical dialogue about the gendered dynamics of pornography, empowering young men to navigate these spaces with reflexivity and agency.

Key words: student voice, gender justice, critical literacy, resisting sexism and misogyny

Session 5: Group 7

Symposium: Queer Kids and Social Violence: The Limits of Bullying

Elizabeth Payne

Dorte Marie Søndergaard

Jackie Ullman

EJ Renold

Jessica Ringrose

Jen Gilbert

Jessica Fields

Bullying is not separate from everyday life and society but rather reflects the norms, values, expectations for a life governed by social hierarchies. How bullying is addressed in policy and intervention is limited by the exclusion of social dynamics, a focus on individual behavior, preference for a universal victim and a failure to address systems of peer targeting, and discourses about appropriate school topics and parental beliefs. Authors in this symposium confront mainstream bullying discourse and illustrate the problems of reductive approaches to creating safer schools for gender and sexual minority youth.

Papers in this symposium will be released in an edited volume, *Queer Kids and Social Violence: The Limits of Bullying*, University of Minnesota Press, 2025.

[Bullying and LGBTQ Students: A Call to Redefine the Problem](#)

Elizabeth Payne and Melissa J. Smith

The core message of our paper is that practitioners and policy makers need to think beyond individualized, behaviorist definitions of bullying and understand the problem of LGBTQ youth marginalization as a manifestation of ideological and institutional systems that are discriminatory. Peer-to-peer aggression that targets queerness is a micro-level consequence of these systems.

[Disrupting the conservative parent discourse: Parents' considerations of school-based bullying of gender/sexuality diverse students](#)

Jackie Ullman and Tania Ferfolja

The current 'apolitical' Australian bullying framework removes the social drivers and consequences of peer-to-peer, bias-based harassment, depoliticising homo/transphobic bullying in schools. This leads to educators' positioning individual students as at fault and obstructs educator and educative interventions. Our nationally-representative research found parents overwhelmingly supportive of gender and sexuality diversity-inclusive education to counter these narratives.

[Policing gender via bullying and humour](#)

Dorte Marie Søndergaard

Ridicule and humor are effective means in the policing of social norms, not least those

regulating performativity of gender and sexuality. The subtle and ongoing maintenance of normativity and social order is often effectively performed by means of humor, which simultaneously entail a magic ability to erase any affordances related to responsibility for social and personal effects by means of the widespread ‘just joking’ claim.

[Queer Cwttch: a phEmaterialist research and engagement arts-praxis](#)

EJ Renold and Jessica Ringrose

This paper offers research strategies for engaging with what matters to queer youth through arts-based methodologies. We introduce a phEmaterialist, intra-activist praxis to welcome Other ways of being-knowing-responding in the field of gender and sexual ‘bullying’ and ‘harassment’. Focusing on research conducted with one school’s LGBTQ+ youth group (age 13-15) in semi-rural Wales (UK), we explore how interview and arts-based data generated throughout the day became lively and resource-full within and beyond the fieldwork encounter.

[Beyond Schooling: Intimate Possibilities and the Limits of Bullying](#)

Jessica Fields and Jen Gilbert

Fields and Gilbert revisit their afterward in which they tried simultaneously to advance and interrogate researchers’ and reformers’ preoccupation with anti-gay bullying. Drawing on data from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, Fields and Gilbert trace the emergence of bullying as a concern, identifying the discursive and intellectual grounds on which Canadian researchers sought support to study and interrupt the violence in and of schooling.

Key words: queer bullying, research, policy

Session 5: Group 8

Gender Matters for gender justice in Australian secondary schooling

Susanne Gannon *Western Sydney University, Australia*

This presentation draws on findings from the Gender Matters research project, funded by the Australian Research Council (2019-2023), which investigates how gender is understood, experienced, and represented in Australian secondary schools. In contrast to earlier policy eras where gender equity had been a focus for national educational policy, current policy is fragmented, devolved and reactive, ranging from overt resistance on some issues to disinterest and neglect in others.

Our study took place in two jurisdictions with markedly different policy contexts. In NSW, an agenda hostile to gender diversity dominated the political arena through the research period, impacting school practices and policies, including their willingness to participate in research; and in the progressive jurisdiction of the ACT, gender inclusion was prioritised in policy and practice and research was welcomed.

Our research engaged over 100 participants, comprising recent school leavers in NSW (n=49), and current students (n=34), teachers, and school leaders (n=20) in ACT senior colleges. Through focus groups, interviews, and arts-based responses, the research revealed significant divides on gender justice, with young people demonstrating robust and wide-ranging commitments to gender justice. The spectrum of responses from teachers spanned those expressing ambivalence about contemporary gender perspectives through to teachers and

school leaders working in partnership with students to create inclusive spaces and address systemic gender inequities.

Theoretically informed by feminist poststructuralist, queer, and new materialist perspectives, the study highlights how misogynistic, cisnormative and heterosexist assumptions persist within curriculum, policies and school spaces. Our findings indicate an urgent need for sustained and coherent commitments to gender justice in schools. While the research is situated in Australia, it resonates globally as neofascist gender normativities threaten to reach across borders and extend into our institutions. Our research argues that education systems must address gender equity, resist cultural backlash, and foster inclusive, democratic school environments where all young people can thrive and be themselves.

Key words: gender justice; gender equity; secondary schooling

Proof of Plurisexuality: Experiences of Monosexist Stigma in LGBTQIA+ Individuals

Tonya Callaghan and Lindsay Bayer *University of Calgary, Canada*

Within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, plurisexual individuals face a unique form of discrimination against their attraction to multiple genders, known as monosexism. The dominant explanation for this trend lies in the societally imposed heterosexual/homosexual binary, one that plurisexual-identifying people lie outside of. Monosexual identities that fall within this binary are aligned in their single-gender attraction basis, whereas plurisexual identities (such as bisexual and pansexual) are outliers, facing discrimination from heterosexual and homosexual individuals alike. Previous research has primarily relied upon aggregated, single-gender cisgender samples, thereby invalidating the unique lived experiences of different plurisexual identities. This project utilizes data collected from a myriad of empirical sources such as literature reviews, semi-structured interviews, and online surveys. These were scrutinized in order to understand the impacts of monosexist discrimination on plurisexual individuals in the contexts of mental and physical health. Monosexism produces a variety of adverse effects on plurisexual individuals, including but not limited to pressure to prove identity, accusations of ‘faking’ their identities, and assumptions of romantic/sexual greed. Our findings suggest that monosexism is harmful to plurisexual individuals and their identities, thereby invalidating a vital component of their sense of self. These findings indicate a necessity for increased research into the mental/physical health impacts of monosexism on plurisexual individuals, both short and long term. We hope that this presentation will allow for critical reflection on positionality and power dynamics within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community; our aim through this research is to diversify and transform gender discussions through actionable, rerouted change.

Key words: Transformative, intersectional, inclusive, diversifying, innovative

Beyond Melancholia? Re-thinking Narratives of Sexuality and Resistance in a Secondary School Feminism Group

Hanna Retallack *Institute of Education, University College London, UK*

This paper explores an aspect of my doctoral research into feminism groups in schools in which my interpretations emphasise the participants' sense of loss and pain around sexual encounters. Drawing on a section of data from a focus group with 15-year olds from a London school-based feminism club, my PhD thesis argued that the participants' discussion suggests a hetero-sexualised-feminist melancholia in which the intersection of the participants' new-found feminist consciousness, alongside a continued sense of disempowerment around their heterosexual encounters formed acute feelings of loss. Drawing on a psychosocial framework, I proposed that this loss was of an idealized image of feminism as an omnipotent tool to make things better, as well as a loss of the possibility of a pleasurable feminist sexual experience since these girls can see the promise of feminism's gains on their lives, but are unable to bring this to their sexual encounters. In this paper, I present but also question these melancholic interpretations that, through their emphasis on loss, leave little room for change. To do this, I draw upon Braidotti's (2019) notion of an affirmative ethics to propose a more active interpretation of painful affects. Through re-reading the girls' narratives through a lens of affirmative politics, I question how melancholic interpretations might be re-thought to both stay with the trouble (Haraway, 2016) of sexual violence, whilst also holding onto the capacity for feminist activist- resistance in schools.

Key words: sexuality, loss, feminism, school, teenagers

Relationships and Sex Education in English Primary Schools: Difficulties and Dilemmas

Melanie Riley *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

LGBTQ+ inclusive Relationships and Sex(uality) Education (RSE) is possibly the most controversial and politicised aspect of the primary school curriculum in England; policies are highly contested and draw much attention from different publics. RSE is essential for supporting the health and safety of children and young people (UNESCO, 2018). In 2020, compulsory Relationships Education required primary schools to teach LGBTQ+ content (DfE, 2019). However, guidance is deliberately non-prescriptive which gives schools significant power to decide which topics will be covered, how it will be taught and at what age.

This literature review will present the state of the field to reveal a complicated, uneven, volatile and sensitive landscape of LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE in English primary schools. Dominant discourses of childhood innocence remain prevalent. Yet, some literature suggests that children and young people are speaking back to gender and sexuality injustices (Renold et. al., 2020) as they call for quality RSE that connects, reflects, and matters to their realities and not just be dictated to by adults (Jarpe-Ratner and Marshall, 2021; Cameron-Lewis and Allen, 2013; Phillips et. al 2023). Current policy direction does not prioritise what matters to children and young people but instead is focused on adults' rights to police access to knowledge and participation (Neary, 2023; Atkinson et al., 2023).

There is little research into LGBTQ+ RSE provision in primary schools due to access issues and backlash for researchers in the field. Navigating the gulf between children's and adults' priorities will be complicated. Given the ongoing tensions, the scope for experimentation and future imaginaries will be challenging. This literature review will inform my PhD research, which will aim to make space for a LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE that matters to children in primary school.

Key words: Relationships and Sex Education, LGBTQ+, Primary School, England, Literature Review

Session 5: Group 9

Symposium: How to Respond to Anti-Gender Ideology?

Aoife Neary, Karl Kitching, Mary Lou Rasmussen, Audrey Bryan and Seán Henry *University College Cork, Ireland*

In recent times, gender has become a topic of intense contestation. As trans lives have been subject to increased public scrutiny, bio-essentialist, supremacist and de-humanising discourses have mingled to produce gender as a threat to the natural order, with affect being mobilised to advance ‘gender critical’ thinking. These narratives, whilst not new, have travelled swiftly in recent times, and gained renewed purchase and notoriety through high profile characters and cases that have appealed to ‘common-sense’ logics around topics such as ‘womanhood’, public bathrooms, sport, and ‘freedom of speech’. In education, the figure of the child is strategically mobilised as ‘at risk’ of what has been termed ‘gender ideology’. Children have been emotively and sensationally positioned as easily-influenced victims — and therefore in need of protection from — ‘woke’ ideas about gender. There have been attacks on libraries that stock LGBTQ+ inclusive children’s books or host drag queen story times. The development of ‘comprehensive’ sexuality education curricula and programmes have been met with resistance from some education stakeholders and gender inclusive practices and initiatives in schools have seen on-going protests. Academics and activists have been subject to individualised smearing campaigns across Hard Right and social media platforms. In this symposium, we seek to inquire productively into a range of potential responses to the workings of anti-gender ideology in education.

Paper 1: Turning away from anti-gender ideology

Karl Kitching and May Lou Rasmussen

In *Who's Afraid of Gender?*, Butler points to the cultivation of a gender phantasm which both collects and incites fears and “keeps us from thinking more clearly about what there is to fear” (2024:9). While researchers agree gender ‘debates’ are increasingly unhinged, there is uncertainty about how to respond. Informed by Currah and Long Chu’s responses to *Who's Afraid of Gender*, we focus on the transactional nature of gender debates – the platforms they use, and what finances their circulation. We argue that turning away from the phantasm constitutes a political act of care and solidarity.

Paper 2: Ambivalent Affective Responses to Anti-Gender Ideology

Audrey Bryan and Aoife Neary

We explore the affective modalities of ridicule, snark, shame, and vulnerability as affective responses to ‘anti-gender ideology’. Combining personal reflections and analyses of meme culture, we interrogate the ambivalent role that affective modalities play in the politicisation of debates to advance and/or counter particular views on gender. We underline the need for

educators to be attuned to the affective intensities that characterise the new media ecosystem within which young people are embedded.

Paper 3: Queer joy as a reparative response to anti-gender ideology in education

Seán Henry

I toy with notions of queer joy (Torres, 2024), thriving (Greteman, 2018) and failure (Halberstam, 2011) to forward potentially reparative responses to anti-gender ideology in education. Such responses can expose 'additive' (Sedgwick, 1997) practices of solidarity for queer and trans communities amid the failures that can arise when resisting anti-gender hate. I illustrate by exploring recent encounters I have had in the academy where I tried (and perhaps failed) to respond to transphobia. I suggest queer joy can rework such encounters in more affirming directions.

Key words: Gender Ideology; Anti-gender; Butler; Sex Education; LGBTQ+

Session 6: Group 1

Revolution in teaching methodology according to feminist pedagogy principles.

Lucie Jarkovská *Masaryk University. Czechia*

Imagine teaching research methodology to 140 special education students. This course is often disliked, as students see little relevance to their professions. You believe methodology courses should be minimized in the Faculty of Education, as future teachers should focus on teaching rather than researching. Additionally, you find large groups challenging due to limited interaction. You can either feel frustrated or reimagine and reroute your approach.

As teachers rooted in feminist pedagogy, we emphasize that learning must be meaningful, rooted in experience, and provide practical tools. Rather than fostering the dominant frame of, we choose the second option. We use journaling, a method of personal writing, to achieve these goals. This approach allows for experiential learning and explores overlooked qualitative research aspects, such as emotionality and positionality. In just 90 minutes, students develop observational and analytical skills, even in large classes.

Utilizing tailored assignments and paper-and-pencil activities, we focus on topics relevant to students' lives, yielding data that resonates personally. This experiential learning introduces methodological concepts like conceptualization and triangulation, guiding students through analysis and connecting theory with methodology.

Short journaling exercises facilitate sharing and help identify systemic challenges, such as barriers to writing a thesis. This approach reframes issues as systemic, encouraging collective solutions. In our paper, we will introduce an innovative curriculum based entirely on journaling, creating space for knowledge construction that is accessible and equips professionally oriented students with practical social science tools.

Key words: methodology, journaling, feminist pedagogy, teacher education

Feminist pedagogies as resistance to manosphere ideologies in classrooms

Stephanie Wescott and Alice Elwell *Monash University and Deakin University, Australia*

A growing body of research has captured the presence of manosphere-inspired sexism and misogyny in schools around the world (Haslop et al., 2024; Wescott et al., 2024). This has presented a challenge to teachers and schools who are grappling with widespread resurgent male supremacy while exploring pathways to de-radicalising young people who have acquired the manosphere's anti-feminist rhetoric.

While schools often consider the potential for external program providers and existing curricula to counter the manosphere's influence, what remains largely unrecognised and undervalued is the expertise of teachers who deploy feminist pedagogies in their classrooms. Feminist pedagogies reconceptualise the classroom as a space for change, activism and social justice; are underpinned by theoretical perspectives of women; and offer ways of challenging patriarchal paradigms in education. These pedagogies are shaped by knowing routes of feminist educators and provide hopeful activating routes for feminist researchers and activists in their practice.

In this paper, using data drawn from a larger study of teachers' encounters with misogyny and sexism in their classrooms, we present accounts of teachers challenging, undoing and dismantling manosphere ideologies by drawing on their expertise in feminist pedagogies. We argue that these pedagogies, central to the skills and expertise of many teachers, are powerful and yet overlooked practices of resistance and transformation for teachers working with young people influenced by the manosphere.

Key words: feminist pedagogies; manosphere; feminist educators

The Unruly Infertile Body in the Neoliberal Academy: An Autoethnographic Account of 'Matter out of Place'

Samantha Wilkinson *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

Through autoethnographic vignettes, this paper tells my corporeal story of undergoing fertility treatment whilst working as an academic. Theoretically, I operate at the intersection of Longhurst's (2001) work on embodiment, and Goffman's (1959) theory of dramaturgical performance, to bring to the fore my emotional and embodied experiences of undergoing fertility treatment whilst working in higher education, and how I performed my academic identity whilst undergoing fertility treatment. Whilst Longhurst (2001) considers a range of bodies, including the breastfeeding body, infertile bodies, or bodies undergoing fertility treatment, are not considered. Likewise, in the existing literature, the space of the higher education institution is underexplored as an arena for unbounded bodies. Arguably, the infertile body undergoing infertility treatment also disturbs identity; it threatens to expel matter from inside, and leaks and seeps. The infertile woman undergoing fertility treatment may cry (from hormones pumped into the body, and the grief of infertility); may have progesterone pessaries leaking from her vagina or rectum; and may bleed from injection sites. To draw attention to hitherto stigmatised infertile

bodies in the context of Higher Education, and in doing so aligning with the conference theme of diversifying routes, this account brings to the fore the unruly materiality of my body that was ‘out of place’. Through this candid and vulnerable account, I show the value of an autoethnographic methodological approach, used in conjunction with the conceptual lens of ‘leaky bodies’, to draw attention to hitherto hidden infertile bodies in the context of the neoliberal academy.

Key words: Infertility; Higher Education; Leaky Body; Embodiment; Performance.

Session 6: Group 2

“It’s Not My Vibe Over There”: Educational Choice, Affect and Intersectional Gender

Lise Ulrik Andreassen *Aarhus University, Denmark*

Education in Denmark is considered a cornerstone of equality, and equal access has been prioritized politically. Yet, social mobility has stagnated (OECD, 2020), and educational access remains uneven. This paper examines 8th and 9th graders’ educational choice-making processes within an educational landscape shaped by gendered, racialized, and classed imaginaries and builds on fieldwork in two Danish schools.

The paper departs in lower secondary school students’ repeated invoking of a desire for the right “vibe” when imagining future education, and analyzes how “vibes” are tied to affective imaginaries of gender, race, and “tiny dis/advantages” (Fox & Alldred, 2022). Drawing on theoretical frameworks of affective orientations (Ahmed, 2006, 2010, 2014) and intersectional assemblages (Puar, 2021), it challenges the notion of choice as individual and rational (Boholm et al., 2013), instead highlighting how choice is a social and ongoing process.

The analysis demonstrates that educational choices are not fixed decisions, but emergent events shaped by affective assemblages that orient young people toward specific educational routes while simultaneously steering them away from others, while (re)configuring their social identities. Through these choice-making processes, young people emerge as distinct “types,” attuned to their surroundings through ideals and practices of sameness. By examining how these orientations shape and constrain opportunities, the study sheds light on the iterative and contingent production of educational pathways and the inequalities they perpetuate.

Ultimately, it argues that to diversify the educational landscape, pedagogies of difference hold possibilities for change.

Key words: Educational Choice, Affective Orientations, Intersectional Gender, Social Inequality, Pedagogies of Difference

Shifting Patterns: Gender Gaps in Non-Formal Education Engagement

Ofir Sheffer *Kaye Academic College of Education, Ono Academic College, Israel*

Despite the well-documented benefits of after-school programs, data from Israel indicates there are disparities in the regularity and persistence of participation between boys and girls. Boys are increasingly less inclined to join and remain in non-formal education (NFE) organizations, even as program options expand. This development stands in contradistinction

to the growing public and academic interest in such frameworks throughout the world, owing to their potential to support youth in poverty and traditional communities. Consistent participation in NFE has proven positive impacts across various domains, particularly when engagement is regular and sustained.

While this phenomenon is global, unique dynamics within the Bedouin-Muslim society in Israel motivated this study. A decade ago, boys dominated after-school activities; today, in 2024, girls and young women comprise the majority of participants, while boys' attendance continues to decline. A qualitative analysis of participant data from the largest educational organization in Bedouin communities identified three primary factors driving this shift: (1) The Bedouin-Muslim community's low socioeconomic status (1 on the socioeconomic scale) often pressures boys to prioritize earning income over extracurricular activities.

(2) Increasing numbers of young Bedouin women are pursuing higher education, with parents viewing NFE participation as a pathway to academic success.

(3) Youth organizations demonstrate limited gender awareness, with management favoring girls' participation due to perceived advantages.

This paper highlights the socio-cultural and institutional factors shaping NFE participation in traditional communities and emphasizes the need for targeted strategies to address gender and age-related disparities.

Key words: non-formal education, youth, after-school programs

At risk' youth, gender, and pathways to school exclusion School Exclusion, 'At Risk' Youth, Trajectories, Marginalisation and Gender

Lisa Russell *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

This paper critically engages with contemporary notions of 'at risk' youth, using 'gender' as an analytical lens to focus attention to how the young people's investments in, and performances of, masculinity and femininity were implicated in their marginalisation and in some instances exclusion from secondary school and thus speaks to the 'diversifying routes' conference theme. Data is drawn from a Leverhulme Trust funded project that explores the trajectories of eighty-one young people aged 14-16 years deemed 'at risk' of being excluded from school. We discuss how gender identity; gender performance and the structural aspects of 'gender' shaped the young people's experiences of school exclusion. Issues of substance misuse, crime involvement, mental health, and anxiety, as well as bullying, gender identity transformation and (mis)diagnosis of SEND inter-relate in complex ways with 'gender' to shape how teachers and peers interact with young people and how young people view themselves to structure their relationships with education and schooling. We argue that the patriarchal societal system as enacted at the meso school level sculpts young people's pathways to school exclusion. We reflect on the young people's lack of voice in policy and research on school exclusion, and how this has continued to exacerbate the detrimental experiences of their exclusion since it affects the services and support available to them, as well as the schools' responses to their behaviour. We note too, that the current challenges around school-based funding, teacher recruitment and attrition, performativity and accountability have all impacted these young people's pathways to exclusion.

Key words: School Exclusion, 'At Risk' Youth, Trajectories, Marginalisation and Gender

Hedging the Alternative, Provisioning the Alternative: Tying the colonial threads between past and present educational forms

Claire Kinsella *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

In this paper, I engage in a multi-layered analysis, bringing past and present forms of alternative education together in an effort to consider how educators and researchers operating in highly contested educational contexts can position and reposition themselves in relation to young learners in alternative educational contexts by adopting a critical stance that is more historically informed. To start, I return to a doctoral case study of a group of excluded learners in an Alternative Provision (AP) in the North-West of England to consider a series of interview exchanges marked by a sense of ambivalence. The “cracks” and “fissures” in the young people’s accounts (Kolikant & Pollack, 2012) create openings that allow me to loop back to themes in the history of schooling and thread through a colonial legacy that continues to affect practice in AP today. Overall, it is argued that “thickening” the young people’s accounts of their education with its colonial resonances, is a commitment to multi-level listening and nurturing a greater recognition of the role of place, and displacement, in everyday educational encounters. By centring the seemingly peripheral, and approaching space and time in non-linear ways, educators are offered a decolonial feminist praxis for countering the deficit discourses and limiting assumptions that are so often attributed to groups deemed as “at risk of school exclusion” from places in need of “regeneration”.

Key words: Alternative Education, Decolonial Feminist Praxis

Session 6: Group 3

Gender contested? How the politicisation of gender affirming practices impedes pupil and teacher agency.

Kate Russell *University of East Anglia, UK*

When did gender affirming become a dirty word? When did teachers have to become the ‘watchful’ arbiters of children’s knowledge and lived experiences around their gender identity? The CASS review (2024) situated a clear protectionist framing over the physical and psychological lives of gender diverse young people, limiting opportunities for expression and life affirming interventions for many. Situated within a ‘we know best’ framework with limited engagement with those whose lives will be directly impacted by its implementation, the review seemingly led the way for the government’s intended gender questioning guidance. While the guidance is non-statutory (and yet to be published), teachers are at the forefront of how to negotiate the often toxic space of our gender diverse children who simply want to be heard and have their lives validated rather than monitored and moderated by educational structures. This paper explores how different policies, educational systems, plus rhetoric from public discourse and sporting restrictions on trans* and non-binary participation, intersect in shaping the contest that is gender in our schools and the challenges teachers face to have agency in enacting gender affirming approaches. It also offers opportunities to trans*form the way in which academic and practitioners can work together to provide the space for all children to be recognised and supported and find ways to ultimately challenge the anti-gender culture of many

educational spaces.

Key words: Gender contested, teacher and pupil agency, gender affirming

Gender diversity in Early childhood education

Katrine Giaever *Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway*

Norwegian early childhood education is experiencing upheaval concerning gender. During the last decade, the student group has changed from mainly consisting of females, to increasingly include male students and students who define themselves within LGBTQ. Meanwhile, practitioners in kindergartens are experiencing conflicts between staff and parents when focusing on gender diversity and challenging established rules about gender normativity, especially concerning LGBTQ. The media reflect the conflicts, but there is very little research concerning gender diversity in Norwegian kindergartens. The students call for theory, and following Butler (2002), we see a need to develop language that can embrace the new gender reality in ECEC.

We are conducting an action research project to explore gender diversity in kindergarten, starting in January 2025. The project involves five kindergartens who will explore gender diversity from different perspectives. To support the multiple dimensions of children's social identities (jf. Guittar and Guittar, 2015), the kindergarten staff will try out actions concerning gender diversity in dialogue with parents and children. The actions will be discussed in the light of Bakhtin's (2013) theory of carnivalesque, where destabilization or reversal of power structures is emphasized. Bakhtin's theory can help us to challenge normativity and find ways to upend traditional social order to develop new practices.

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Key words: Early childhood education, gender diversity, LGBTQ students, parents, carnivalesque

Everyday intimacies of early years practitioners: the role of talk and bodies in women's affinities

Ruby Brooks *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

Women's interests tend to be trivialised, and their labour (emotional and paid) unrecognised. Meanwhile, the sociology of personal life has highlighted the importance of friendship in everyday life in terms of support and the intensity of such binds which are significant for women's political, cultural and intimate citizenship (Roseneil, 2004; 2014). Early years settings present an opportunity for exploring women's everyday intimacies in an environment where practices are simultaneously remarkable and mundane. Remarkable in the sense their professional role in the care and development of other people's children; mundane due to the

domestic tasks their roles entail. This paper is the first in its field to elaborate on women's relationships and intimacies within this context, positioning the body as central to the intimacies women forge and the intergenerational nature of these relationships. As the early childhood workforce is a female dominated, and predominantly working-class space, this perpetuates the traditional woman-as-caregiver role, reinforcing societal marginalisation. A critical feminist exploration of the embodied intimacies of this sector is an important sociological contribution. Data illuminate experiences of women who spend their working lives in close proximity in the routine of early years settings, and thus the enactment and embodiment of everyday intimacies. Women utilise these intimacies to resist neoliberal, managerial oppression and regulation through the development of their relationships with each other. The paper explores women's intimacies and how they can be embodied as a form of cultural capital in a working class, female dominated space, drawing on Bourdieusian conceptualisations of habitus.

Key words: Gender, Intimacy, Relationships, Bodies, Feminism

Diffractioning a tiny dance of diverging, multigendered bodies using a ball of red wool and three words that are changing worlds.

Ruth Churchill Dower *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

In rethinking the gendering of different bodies, I dance with diffraction (Barad, 2007) and invite delegates to sense what it means to matter through the touching, teasing tangles of wool-dancing. I share a curious research event of a little girl tugging, unwrapping and tangling a ball of red wool, trying to find the start of a single thread amongst its knotty webs. I consider the dynamic response of woolly webs whose orderly patterns once diffracted through a wool-winder fast become endemic of the messy knottiness unravelling in standardised early education systems that cannot account for divergent dancing. Rather than a single thread, a multiplicity of speculative middles emerge (Springgay & Truman, 2018) whose knotty relations are 'never closed, never finished' (Barad, 2014). To exemplify the complexities of gendered middlings, I draw attention to the tiny-text, 'Always Be Kind!', embroidered on the little girl's dress pocket, housing her fluffy guinea-pig. Through a series of improvised movements between wool, tiny-texts and delegates, I will explore the intense political, social and gendered forces exerted on a small dress-wearer. Whilst our thinking-in-motion (Manning, 2016) becomes caught up with global economic policies, workforce conditions, distribution networks and other ecologies that collaborate in this oddkin assemblage (Haraway, 2016), I also consider how movement might invite an openness to its transformative potential, making kind that stretches the imagination and changes worlds. As a girl and her guinea-pig create new forms of response, new languages of being and alternative expressions of what matters to them, the intensities of these three small words are unthreaded and re-routed into a dynamic process through which response-abilities for staying with the trouble and for tracing threads in the dark enable the cultivation of multigendered, multispecies activisms.

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Key words: diffraction, dance, gendering oddkin, early education, speculative middles

Session 6: Group 4

The burden and impossibility of ‘being included’ in English literary Education

Sarah E Truman *University of Melbourne, Australia*

This paper investigates the ongoing production of whiteness and cis heteronormativity within English literary education despite decades of ‘diversity and inclusion’ initiatives. I revisit Deborah Britzman’s influential essay “Is there a queer pedagogy? Or stop reading straight” (1995) to consider Britzman’s propositions for a queer pedagogy in conversation with other critical theories in education (Mishra Tarc, 2015; Smith & Wargo, 2024; Truman, 2019) and literary scholarship (Luciano & Chen, 2015; Parmar, 2020; Singh, 2018) to assess how it is that we’re still ‘reading straight’ after all these years. Data includes focus group conversations with English literature students at a Girls’ high school in London, UK, and the analysis of two literary texts raised by the students: one a “diversity and inclusion” poem that all students felt should not have been included in the curriculum, and a novel that a trans male student believed could never be included in the curriculum. These literary texts, alongside the students’ reflections, underscore the contradictions and limitations within ‘inclusive’ literary curricula, which continue to reinforce norms around gender, class, sexuality, and race. Further I discuss how examination and school cultures cultivate reading practices that reproduce norms even when diverse narratives, characters, or authors are ‘included.’

Key words: English literary education, gender, race, sexuality, queer theory

Alarming books, censorship and inconvenient pedagogies of gender

Alyssa Niccolini and Bessie Dernikos *Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany and Florida Atlantic University, US*

Debates around gender and education have become, following Butler (2024), a “matter of extraordinary alarm” (p.1). These affective panics have found a curious anchoring point in a mattered/-ing object: books. In an increasingly networked world where bodies are globally entangled in complex more-than-human material and digital spacetime matters (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 1988; 2008; 2016), the book as a charged object becomes a materially stable point to affectively dump (Brennan, 2004) anxieties about the dissolution of the self-

contained heteronormative binary-cis-gendered humanist subject.

Robinson (2013) shows how the censorship of young peoples' reading materials has historically been mobilized within western liberal traditions to stabilize humanist notions of childhood innocence, police the boundaries between child and adult, and position young people as (gendered) citizens in potentia (Robinson, 2013). Young readers, however, are creatively resisting. In 2024, U.S. high school student Annabelle Jenkins used precisely a book's affective-material power to protest censorship at her school. After smuggling the feminist classic *The Handmaid's Tale* within her robe at graduation, Jenkins revealed it to the crowd then attempted to hand it off to her superintendent. A 12-second TikTok video of the event garnered 25 million views overnight. We theorize the book's use here as an "inconvenient object" (Berlant, 2023) that "spark blocks" (p. 22) to the reproduction of cisheteropatriarchy. We conclude by thinking through the inconvenient pedagogies banned books bring into schools and how young people are using them to respond to the "alarming" state of (anti-)gender and education.

Key words: censorship, gender, affect, literacy, resistance

Gender representation in teaching materials: a comparative study of two Chinese as foreign language Textbooks in England and their impact on teaching strategy

Stefany Wang *The University of Cambridge, UK*

This research explores how gender values are represented in two Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) textbooks: the Edexcel GCSE Chinese (GCSE Chinese) and Happy Chinese (Volume 3) (Happy Chinese). A comparative analysis is conducted to examine both textual and visual gender depictions and investigate teachers' perceptions of these representations and their teaching strategies. A mixed methodology is employed: in the quantitative phase, data on gender representation across five dimensions are collected and analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis, while the qualitative phase employs Thematic Analysis to examine semi-structured interviews with three teachers from a Chinese supplementary school in England. Results show persistent gender inequality and underrepresentation of females. Furthermore, the study suggests that gender representation in textbooks is influenced by regional gender awareness. Teachers acknowledge that gender imbalance in textbooks can negatively affect students and recognise their role in addressing these issues. Challenges in implementing strategies to rectify gender inequality in textbooks are identified, alongside recommendations for revisions and improved teaching approaches. Ultimately, the study highlights the continued presence of gender inequality in CFL textbooks and calls for greater attention from both publishers and educators to this issue.

Key words: Gender Representation, Gender Equality, CFL Textbooks, Teacher Perceptions, Teaching Strategies

Revisiting the "Good Enough Woman Teacher": Progressive Neoliberalism, Postfeminism and Teacher Education

Beth Wurzburg *The University of Georgia, US*

This paper builds upon work first presented at the Gender and Education conference 10 years ago (Author, 2015) and subsequently published in my dissertation that same year (Author, 2015) where I theorised my work and life experiences as a teacher against the backdrop of neoliberalism and gender normativity. Specifically, the "good enough woman teacher" is an "impossible fiction" constantly held up as possible for women and is grounded in Valerie Walkerdine's theorizations of the feminization of labor in the neoliberal economy (Walkerdine, 2003). In this iteration, I consider the sociopolitical shifts over the past decade as we accelerate further into this makeover paradigm (Ringrose & Walkerdine, 2008) against the backdrop of progressive neoliberalism (Brenner & Fraser, 2017; Author, 2023) and how these shifts continue to intensify the work of teaching, specifically for the predominantly women who do this work. Finally, I discuss implications for teacher education within these contexts. This paper contributes to the "Knowing Routes" theme, as we must remember the struggles we have historically faced and how these same struggles continue to evolve and persistently show up in our work and lives as we continue to press forward in our work.

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Key words: teacher education, neoliberalism, feminism, postfeminism

Session 6: Group 5

Gender Inequality and Aspirations of Migrant Girls on the Outskirts of Beijing

Linyao Wang *University of Reading, UK*

This study critically examines the persistent gender disparities in educational and career aspirations among migrant children from lower socio-economic backgrounds (SES) in Beijing, against the backdrop of China's rapid urbanisation and socio-economic transformation. These children, lacking Beijing Household registration, face restricted access to quality education and have to attend lower-quality schools only for migrants. Employing ethnographic methods and case studies, this research engaged with Year 9 students (21 total; 10 boys and 11 girls) from a migrant children school on the outskirts of Beijing. Through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with children, the study explored their experiences of parental expectations, social-gender roles, and educational aspirations.

Adopting Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'gendered habitus', the study illustrates how gender roles

are socially constructed and reinforced through familial and social interactions. Despite China's legal frameworks aimed at promoting educational equality, actual practices reveal an obvious gender divide, intensified by a blend of traditional values and contemporary socio-economic pressures.

The findings illuminate significant differences in the career paths available to migrant boys and girls, deeply influenced by social norms and economic conditions. While migrant parents, often engaged in labour-intensive and low-income work, show no bias in educational opportunities between genders, they hold higher educational aspirations for their daughters, hoping for their university education - a stark distinction to the more practical, vocational expectations set for migrant boys. However, the career planning for daughters remains vague and indeterminate, with over half of the parents lacking concrete guidance or discussions about potential economic roles for girls. Contrastly, migrant boys are frequently directed towards stable, well-paying jobs, aligned with social expectations for them to be economic providers. This discrepancy highlights the rooted gender norms that favour practical vocational training for boys, while promoting ambitious yet unclear educational or occupational goals for girls.

Despite few migrant parents encouraging their daughters to enter traditionally male-dominated fields like computing, the tendency remains for migrant girls to pursue towards lower-status, lower-paid jobs traditionally associated with females. This situation is exacerbated by limited resources and exposure, where migrant peers with lower SES and social media play an essential role in reinforcing gender stereotypes more strongly than parental influence. The findings challenge the effectiveness of symbolic violence as conceptualised by Bourdieu in fully capturing the phenomenon of gender role reinforcement or transformation in China.

This research contributes to the GEA2025 theme of 'Diversifying Routes' by highlighting the need for more comprehensive educational pathways that accommodate the diverse needs and aspirations of migrant girls in China. By identifying the structural barriers that maintain gender disparities, the study highlights the urgent need for policy and practice interventions that promote gender equality in education access for all migrant children and it advocates for educational reforms to provide equal opportunities for girls to realise their aspirations. This aligns with the 'Transforming Routes' theme, as it challenges traditional gender roles and promotes a shift in educational policies to support the economic and social mobility of migrant children, ensuring their active participation in the socio-economic transformation of China.

Key words: Gender Inequality; Ethnography; Migrant Children; Educational Aspirations; Parental Expectations

Anti utopian imaginaries: youth-led social action for positive peer cultures at school

Rachel Wilder *University of Bath, UK*

"There is hope here, then: the particular revolution portrayed within may have been foreclosed, but the possibility of further change in the future has not been. There is something within it is organizing against, and it is pointing beyond." (Bell 2017:2) In this paper I consider how David Bell's morphology of utopia – his re-configuring of the constitutive concepts of 'no', 'good' and

‘place’ – and specifically the notion of anti-anti-utopia can deepen understanding of young people’s hopes for creating change and their visions of meaningful and caring peer cultures.

It draws on research conducted in partnership with a feminist community organisation, which facilitates a six-week positive relationships programme – centred around a youth-led social action project – with learners in secondary schools in the southwest of England. Across three state secondary schools, 14 learners contributed to the study through artifacts and documents created through the programme, informal conversations during programme time and focus groups. Five school staff also participated in focus groups.

In line with the ‘Trans*forming Routes’ theme of the GEA conference, our work strengthens recognition of learners as political actors and proposes a re-imagining of listening and leadership in school responses to sexual- and gender-based violence. This work also resonates as an ‘Activating Route’ to make feminist research matter through iterative methodologies and partnership working.

Gender Questions

Jen Gilbert *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada*

We are living in a time of gender; gender is everywhere. And for young people, gender—and specifically non-normative gender— has become one of the privileged vernaculars for describing the challenge of feeling at home in one’s body and the world. In vocabularies both precise and ever-expanding, young people articulate gendered identities that weave together friendship, romantic and sexual desire, embodiment, fashion, digital community and intimacies, political critique, and new models of kinship. Gender at once names our internal, felt sense of masculinity, femininity, and everything in between; our relationships with family, peers, and community; and our attempts to make a home in our always finite bodies. The refusal of binary gender has opened up new spaces for young people to articulate their discomfort with what the adult world had put on offer. In this paper, I explore the questions about gender that young people asked and answered in two empirical studies of sex, gender, and education conducted during COVID. What can we learn from young people’s gender questions? And what would it mean for education researchers to approach gender as a question? As we face increasing attacks on the lives of trans, non-binary, and queer people, what can it mean—politically, pedagogically, methodologically—to hold onto gender as a question?

Key words: gender; LGBTQ+ youth; qualitative research; questions

Session 6: Group 6

Performance: Pushing the Tower of PISA

Keisha Thompson *University of Manchester, UK*

I am an associate researcher at University of Manchester on a UREC project with the Mathematics department. Our all-female team are exploring what it means to be a community mathematician. Verylocalmaths.org.uk – Exploring and enacting ‘very local’ cultures of

mathematics across the UK

Additionally, I am working with Opera North and University of Leeds as the DARE Art Award recipient (link below). They are supporting my creativity mathematics pedagogy work. My focus is on the testing of creativity in mathematics in the PISA test 2022.

Results show that female identifying participants came out significantly ahead of their male counterparts in every single country. The executive summary disappointingly, but non-surprising, came to the conclusion that the data shows that boys need to be encouraged to be more creative.

Keisha Thompson wins DARE Art Prize (operanorth.co.uk).

Thus, I would like to deliver a performance that shares my findings with both projects. I will muse on how the interpretation of data on gender and mathematics is not being used to support women in academic mathematically spaces. Furthermore, I will share my view on how many unregulated, non-educational, community or culturally associated spaces are overflowing with female mathematical ingenuity. I am currently in conversation with the OECD team linked to the PISA test. I intend to return to the conference later this year, Creativity in Education, to share my reflections. PISA tests – from inception – have been used by many countries to inform educational policy. Therefore, my projects align seamlessly with the themes for this conference.

Key words: creative mathematics pedagogy PISA female

Session 6: Group 7

Trans Teachers as "Thorny" Bodies in Schools: Embracing Thorniness for Acts of Resistance

Jamie Anderson *University of Calgary, Canada*

Drawing upon Foucault's discourse theory, we analyze how power operates through language and normative constructions of identity (Foucault, 1980). Educational policies often reflect societal efforts to monitor and regulate individuals' identities, primarily through legislation and institutional norms that marginalize diverse expressions of gender (Foucault, 1990). In the current landscape of anti-trans policymaking, trans teachers emerge as "thorny bodies" within educational systems. Our presence serves as a defiant challenge to conservative agendas aimed at obliterating trans futures, embodying the possibility of such futures within the very institutions designed to marginalize them.

This presentation explores the concept of "thorniness" as a framework for resistance. We consider how this thorniness can be strategically leveraged to disrupt dominant narratives and practices that uphold anti-trans ideologies. Strategies such as malicious compliance can transform compliance into a form of resistance, exposing the contradictions within educational policies that seek to erase trans existence.

Furthermore, by embracing thorniness, trans teachers can resist the wave of epistemic violence

emerging from legislated trans erasure and spoil the pursuit of cruel joy that stems from the intentional misrecognition of trans and nonbinary people.

This presentation not only seeks to illuminate the lived experiences of trans individuals in educational settings but also advocates for transformative practices that uphold intersectional feminist values and combat the dehumanization perpetuated by prevailing ideological currents.

Key words: transgender, policymaking, anti-oppression, resistance, trans futures

Nonbinary teachers: navigating visibility in Finnish schools

Tommi Niinisalo *University of Helsinki, Finland*

In this article, Finnish nonbinary teachers' experiences with navigating visibility and disclosure in schools is explored, utilizing Sacks' and Schegloff's ethnomethodological Membership Categorization Analysis to group interview data in order to analyse social categories that emerge significant for negotiating and constructing visibility. Categories are understood as an interactional, indexical linguistic resource conveying meanings that reflect and shape the social reality of the teachers. Drawing from the interdisciplinary field of queer teacher research, visibility from queer teachers is often demanded or allowed in a manner that answers to the assimilationist and homonormative margin suited for normative teacher ideals; simultaneously, many face expectations to transgress cisheteronormative structures and be a role model as a teacher in a reality that positions gender diversity as a breach. This complex landscape is the product of historical trajectories, discourses, and power structures – examining how nonbinary teachers employ language use to construct shared knowledge in relation to their visibility can reveal the influence of these structures in present-day Finnish schools, thus making a compelling conceptualisation as to how nonbinary visibility is currently understood and approached in the societally significant context of school, and what meanings are implicitly transmitted to future generations. Preliminary findings suggest variation in the use of nonbinary terms, and that a range of binary-relying and sexuality-indicating social categories emerged as indexes of nonbinary presentation and as a visibility resource. Further, teachers construct various positionalities through their category work to negotiate erasure, the queer/teacher juxtaposition and to justify their visibility as nonbinary people.

Key words: nonbinary, teachers, MCA, visibility, language

Entanglements and Experiences of Time and Temporalities for LGBT teachers

Anna Llewellyn *Durham University, UK*

Following the presence of increased, yet turbulent, LGBT inclusion in UK schools, this presentation explores LGBT teachers experiences through a focus on time and temporalities. Arguably, this permits queries that potentially re-route current narratives of LGBT in education – both research and practice.

Specifically, a common 'temporal framing' of modernity, is that time follows an unbending narrative of linear progress, and society is moving towards an enlightened future (Serres & Latour, 1995). This narrative is omnipresent within education, with its reified connection to betterment and staunch affiliation to progress. LGBT teachers arguably have an even more

complicit relationship to time - LGBT itself also being bounded by 'temporal framings' of inevitable progress. As such, this presentation focuses on modalities of time, and temporal framings to explore the power of the unbending arc of progress in education, schools and being LGBT.

Using interview data from 50 LGBT teachers, it argues that for LGBT teachers the perception of time as one of stability, linearity, and objectivity is continually re-produced and becomes a dominant and uncontested expectation or temporal framing. This may create an uneven and unnecessary burden on LGBT teachers when progress is not routinely enacted. Moreover, time is not experienced as linear, and instead as an entanglement of past, present and future. These findings are important in firstly contesting singular narratives (particularly of progress), and secondly through re-routing and re-imagining perspectives that interrogate marginalisation in education.

Serres, M., & Latour, B. (1995). *Conversations on science, culture, and time*. University of Michigan Press.

Key words: LGBT, time, progress, neoliberal, teachers

Doomscrolling and vortextuality in the trans affective commons: UK trans youth experiences of social media

Drew Simms *Sheffield Hallam University, UK*

Trans youth and their use of the internet have been under increasing scrutiny in recent years, with anti-trans social contagion fears reaching the level of government in the UK, e.g. recent draft school guidance recommends frequent social media use be counted against any child seeking to transition. In this context of being frequently talked about but rarely heard from, I sought to ask trans young people in the UK about their experiences of using social media by holding asynchronous online focus groups with 17 self-identified trans youth, aged 17-24, over 2023. Findings revealed, rather than an echo chamber of "queer utopia" that LGBT+ people describe online in other research, many participants described a deluge of negativity made up of a combination of bad news, transphobic hostility, and other trans people expressing negative emotions. They attributed this to a combination of algorithms that prioritise engagement over wellbeing, and the obligation felt by trans people to "raise awareness" by sharing bad trans-related news. Many participants felt a responsibility to the community to stay engaged "doomscrolling" this content and described having to weigh up the benefits of taking breaks from these feeds against the detriments of missing out on the many positives of online trans networks, including essential agentic learning. Taking Malatino's (2022) model of a trans affective commons, Cavalcante's (2020) formulation of vortextuality and Chun's (2016) development of Berlant's (2011) *impasse* into the update, I used this data to develop an affect-driven model of trans youth engagement with negative social media content.

Key words: trans, youth, digital, affect, doomscrolling

Session 6: Group 8

‘People aren’t specifically mean or nasty, but here it is difficult to be out’: Slow violence and teachers’ lives in an outer suburban Australian secondary school

Leanne Higham *La Trobe University, Australia*

Slow violence is an attritional violence of delayed destruction that is not typically viewed as violence at all (Nixon, 2011). This invisibility can hinder efforts to act decisively towards slow violence. This paper provides insights into slow violence affecting teachers’ lives at school. I draw on material from an ethnographic study of slow violence in a predominantly White, working-class outer suburban state secondary school in Victoria, Australia, to examine its operation and cumulative effects in the lives of four teachers. The school was described by one closeted queer teacher as somewhere that ‘people aren’t specifically mean or nasty, but ... it is difficult to be out’. Working with queer and feminist affect and new materialist theories, I illuminate affective, discursive, and material dimensions of slow violence, lifting into view how this category-defying violence worked in the lives of teachers during parent-teacher interviews, through encounters with school leadership, and with students in the classroom. I argue slow violence is potent—yet not often recognised—in contributing to teachers’ feelings of marginalisation and exclusion at school. I call for increased attention to slow violence in everyday school life, so we might better respond to it in transforming teachers’ sense of nonbelonging in schools.

Key words: Slow violence; affect; heteronormativity; teachers

Homo - sexual/social/phobic: Queer Student Experiences of All-Girls Secondary Schools

Katie Sproule *Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia*

Single-sex schools remain one of the ‘most controversial subjects in developmental and educational research’ due to the extreme gendered nature of these settings (Li and Wong 2018, 1025). Contemporary proponents of all-girls schools often argue for their potential to combat girls’ experience of sexism and gender stereotyping within an educational context (Robinson et al. 2021, 6). It is too often overlooked, however, that without meaningful engagement single-sex schooling can instead reinforce heteronormative, traditionally gendered ideologies (Robinson et al. 2021; McCall 2020). The challenge of navigating this ideologically complex setting is heightened for queer students who pose a threat to the binary system by destabilising the distinction between a homosocial and homosexual environment.

My research foregrounds LGBTQIA+ young people within this ideologically complex educational context, asking: what is the lived experience of queer students in all-girls schools? Using a feminist lens, I draw from semi-structured interviews conducted as part of my doctoral research, focussing on ex-students memories of gender and sexuality within the context of Australian all-girls secondary schools. Following this, I highlight recent developments within the Australian education landscape that will impact how queer girls experience single-sex education in the years to come. In doing so, I aim to reinvigorate the long ongoing debate about single-sex versus co-education by imbuing it with renewed contemporary relevance and

prioritising the often overlooked experiences of queer women and girls.

Five keywords: LGBTQIA+, single-sex schools, queer, feminist, schools

Student and Newly qualified paramedics experiences of sexual and gender-based harassment within UK ambulance services

Gemma Howlett *University of Cumbria, UK*

Throughout the last decade there has been a spotlight on incidences and patterns of sexual and gender-based harassment within the ambulance sector globally. In the UK, an increasing number of student paramedics are reporting being subjected to harassment whilst on clinical placements. In this paper, I draw on my PhD research (at Lancaster University) in which I interviewed twenty women student or newly qualified paramedics about their experiences of gender-based violence whilst in employment or on placement. English, Welsh and Scottish ambulance services were represented in the sample. My analysis will draw on the voices of participants who spoke of a culture that normalised sexualised “banter”, inappropriate behaviour, sexual harassment and in some cases violence. Students reported feeling at the bottom of a rigid hierarchy in which the senior ranks were male dominated. Most interviewees felt unable to report or challenge the behaviours they were seeing and subjected to, and the male-dominated leadership and culture was perceived as a significant obstacle to reporting, which was regarded as ineffective and potentially damaging. I will conclude by discussing participants’ suggestions for transformation.

Key words: Sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, students, UK ambulance, culture

Session 7: Group 1

Re-routing the power paradigms in RSHE

Charlie Shaw *University of Lincoln, UK*

In the 18 years I have been an RSHE educator a paradox has emerged within English sexuality education. With the advent of statutory RSHE in 2020 the subject cemented its status in the curriculum. Simultaneously a devastating erosion in the provision of training for sexuality education teachers, once a remit for the local authority, gathered force as a casualty of the academisation drive. The RSHE paradox is the quandary that it remains the only compulsory curriculum subject, not possible to complete ITT in.

My aim is to establish why the RSHE paradox exists, to investigate why actors such as Ofsted, government, trusts and headteachers simultaneously extol RSHE and yet persistently marginalise it through policy and practice. Is there power in RSHE? A subject unique in that it is bereft of exams, difficult to assess and sits within its own specialist pedagogy. It certainly doesn’t fit into the neo-liberal box of what education should be and so the subject is othered. Rooted and entangled within this paradox is the politics surrounding the ‘dangerous’ concept of gender theory. Consequentially young people’s access to a quality sexuality education is being eroded by a culture of fear and misinformation about what takes place within the RSHE classroom. Children’s access to information about sex, sexuality and gender is often warped, censored and subverted. I aim to investigate why RSHE is othered, who benefits and who loses

when this happens and to imagine what a powerful force RSHE could be if it were not oppressed.

Key words: RSHE, Gender, Sexuality, Education, ITT

How comprehensive is Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)? An institutional (auto)ethnography of the CSE curriculum in its transnational travel

Tu Nguyen *Edgehill University, UK*

Emerging from the U.S. context, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) has become a standard for sexuality education, globally recognised for its aspirations toward human rights, international development, gender equality and global citizenship ideals. However, CSE also faces critiques for its ideological underpinnings and constraints, prompting further inquiry into its historical and geographical trajectories, and what enables or limits its agendas. In this paper, I ask:

- What has enabled CSE's translocal/transnational travel?
- To what extent is the CSE curriculum comprehensive, and why/where might it fall short?
- What does its rights-based, choice and citizenship-focused sexual politics do and not do in the current postcolonial-neoliberal context?

In exploring these questions, I examine the possibilities and constrains of CSE with an intersectional materialist lens, focusing on its transnational travel, ideological underpinnings and localised application in Vietnam, a postcolonial-neoliberal nation.

Adopting intersectional materialist theories and institutional (auto)ethnography as a method, this study follows CSE curriculum around, examining its ideological imageries in UNESCO and SIECUS guiding documents, tracing how certain CSE elements are included and excluded in Vietnam's state-mandated general education framework, and reflecting on my grassroots experience delivering CSE. While following the CSE curriculum from translocally to locally, I also aim to make visible the social, political and economic assemblages that both enable and constrain its transnational and translocal travel, and the implications of such travel.

Key words: Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), Intersectional Materialisms, Postcolonial Neoliberal Nationalism, Institutional Autoethnography, Travel

Beyond Marketable Skills: Tackling Gender Inequality and Working-Class Marginalisation Through Itinerant Curriculum Theory

Michaela Hall *University of Strathclyde, UK*

This research examines the impact of marketisation and commodification of the UK higher education curriculum on gender inequality and the marginalisation of working-class women. It advocates for a socially just curriculum through Itinerant Curriculum Theory (ICT), aligning with the Gender and Education Association's (GEA) mission to challenge gender inequality in education.

Combining critical pedagogy (Paulo Freire), socialist feminist theory (Nancy Fraser), and ICT

(João Paraskeva), this study addresses power dynamics and the impacts of current curriculum choices on gender and class intersectionality. ICT proposes a socially just curriculum, emphasising student agency and community engagement, inclusive of diverse perspectives, and contributes to the GEA's aim to produce and disseminate feminist scholarship.

This study uses a conceptual approach, integrating historical and critical analysis. Historical analysis traces the evolution of higher education policies, while critical analysis examines the underlying assumptions and implications of the current curriculum. The study synthesises literature, policies, and theoretical frameworks to draw conclusions about the effects of marketisation on gender and class inequalities.

In line with the conference theme of 'Diversifying Routes,' this research explores how ICT can create more equitable pathways for marginalised groups, particularly working-class women. While Braidotti (2019) highlights the exclusion of diverse knowledges, ICT provides a framework for incorporating these marginalised voices and addressing systemic inequalities. A commercialised curriculum actively disadvantages working-class women and fails to address their specific socio-economic contexts. However, ICT provides a structured framework for integrating social justice principles, challenging inequalities, and empowering all students.

Key words: Itinerant Curriculum Theory, marketisation, working-class women, gender inequality, social justice

Session 7: Group 2

Censorship in Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Dolly Padalia *School of Sexuality Education, UK*

As a small charity delivering relationships and sex education (RSE) in UK schools, we face many censorship attempts. This has come from many sources and taken many forms.

Our RSE programmes all respond to the government's own statutory guidance on RSE (DfE, 2019). They uphold important principles of providing comprehensive sexuality education - endorsed by experts such as the World Health Organisation (UNESCO et al., 2018). High quality RSE is increasingly seen as key to reducing sexual and gender-based violence, as well as improving health outcomes (e.g. DfE, 2019). The evidence base has long suggested that providing RSE to young people results in 'healthier' outcomes - like higher condom use and delaying age of first sex (Lindberg & Maddow-Zimet, 2012).

We analyse the censorship tactics we have faced. Much of it can be characterised as a challenge to any attempts to provide young people with information that does not uphold cis-heteropatriarchal standards. Another common theme is to label our RSE work as 'sexualising' or 'inappropriate' - despite what we know about the potential and likely benefits of RSE for young peoples' safety and health. We further explore the impact of this censorship, as well as the ways in which we have tried to counter it - to varying degrees of success. We draw conclusions about what we and others in the sector can learn from these experiences.

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Key words: censorship, education, cis-heteropatriarchy

Re-Imagining Sex-Ed: Sexual Choking, Sexting, Bodies and the actualities of Sex

Giselle Woodley & Lelia Green *Edith Cowan University, Australia*

Young people are curious about sex and sexuality and wish to learn in more developed and explicit ways than current education systems afford them. As part of an Australian Research Council funded project (DP190102435), Perceptions of harm from adolescents accessing online sexual content, this paper offers qualitative data from 49 interviews with teens (aged 11-17) and 4 focus groups with young people (aged 12-16) of diverse genders and sexualities. We found that teens want information about love, sex, and relationships, and some teens say that pornography fills a gap in their sexual knowledge that schools and homes do not, or cannot fill. Using sexual citizenship theory, this paper argues that teens have rights to information, autonomy and education. It offers an insight into teens’ perspectives about sexuality, sex education, and SEM such as pornography. Teens desire information around alternative sexual practices such as sexual choking, kink and differing relationship dynamics. Indeed, young people are actively searching for alternative ways to learn about sex instead of, or in addition to, having sex themselves. The sources they use include popular culture, parents, friends, school, the internet (including porn) and social media. With the forthcoming social media bans in Australia, however, and the proposed implementation of age verification and age assurance measures, teens face limitations in their quest for knowledge. This paper argues that teens, as sexual citizens, deserve access to sexual information. Policy makers and educators should work to re-imagine relationships and sexuality education to supply the information teens want and deserve.

Key words: sex education, sexology, youth sexuality, sexual citizenship, pornography

Chicken or the Egg? Examining How a Research Praxis Can Re-imagine Relationships and Sex Education in Initial Teacher Training.

Jodie McGoldrick *University of Portsmouth, UK*

Despite extensive literature highlighting the importance of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) being underpinned by comprehensive Initial Teacher Training (ITT), current provisions in England remain inconsistent. While pedagogical approaches in secondary RSE classrooms are increasingly researched and theorised, significant gaps persist in the pedagogical approaches required to ensure teachers are adequately prepared. This research critically analyses existing literature on RSE across secondary schools and higher education providers, employing the Freirean concept of *conscientização* (consciousness-raising) to challenge the binary conceptualisation of teachers as holders of knowledge and students as passive recipients. This analysis is further framed through a feminist post-structuralist lens, which explores the multiplicity of power relations and offers materialism as a potential site of resistance. Key themes examined include the 'de-professionalisation' of RSE teachers, the influence of heteronormativity on how RSE is constructed in schools and teacher education, and the transformative potential of praxis, both in classroom practice and research methodologies. This contextualises future research which aims to construct a framework for RSE in ITT through participatory arts-based methods with trainee teachers, school-based PGCE mentors and university-based PGCE tutors. Furthermore, it considers how young people, who are typically excluded from ITT discourse, can contribute authentically to research via Young Persons Advisory Groups. Central to this research is the belief that reconceptualising dialogue in education can help dismantle exclusionary knowledge hierarchies and effect meaningful change.

Key words: Freire, Feminist Discourse Analysis, praxis, RSE, ITT

Session 7: Group 3

Making space for unpredictable bodies - moving beyond gendered and normative expectations of divergent learners in early childhood education

Ruth Churchill Dower & Hannah Hogarth *Manchester Metropolitan University & Bath University, UK*

In this paper, we explore the gendered and normative expectations that are placed on divergent learners, especially girls, in early childhood education and search for possibilities in spaces that nurture the productivity of unpredictable bodies (Bailey, 2023). Normative expectations for performing socially acceptable roles that delineate them as 'good' (Hackett et al, 2024; MacLure et al, 2011) can be highly challenging for girls whose bodies and brains are considered 'neurodivergent' and whose social, cultural and lingual behaviours function in unpredictable and different ways (Douglas et al, 2021). Drawing on our PhD inquiries, this paper shares two stories of young girls who don't speak. Each girl's 'neurodivergent' story is bound with interpretations of how a body should be, tied up with learning systems that oppress, police and regulate according to gendered rules that defy even 'neurotypical' developmental

understandings (Manning, 2016). We explore what this does to the ways in which educators relate to them and teach-care for them, and how this troubles traditional notions of the 'good girl'. We explore how relational arts- and play-based methodologies and pedagogies can improvise, transform and activate encounters of alterity that sense the productivities of what a (girl's) differently functioning body can do (Spinoza, 1949). Through an ethics of care, we propose a movement away from neurodivergent diagnoses as attached to the person/body and consider how, by associating divergence with environments, educators can foster ethical-political spaces for resisting their pathologisation.

Key words: Neurodivergence, gendered education, early childhood, ethics of care, arts-based pedagogies

Re-routing Gender in Early Childhood Education Policy and Practice

Rachel Chapman *Melbourne Polytechnic, Australia*

Gender is increasingly positioned as a site of contestation in early childhood education policy and practice, with growing disinformation and cultural backlash influencing how gender is framed within educational settings, pedagogical practices, and curriculum. This presentation examines the positioning of gender in early childhood education policy, drawing on Australian policy as a case study and on comparative global contexts. Utilising feminist post-structuralist and queer theoretical lenses, I analyse how these frameworks negotiate gender, diversity, and inclusion in response to shifting socio-political climates. Using insights from my research with Australian early childhood educators, I explore how policy documents function as both regulatory mechanisms and sites of possibility, shaping professional identities and pedagogical approaches. I also consider how feminist and queer scholarship can intervene in policy discussions to promote intersectional, gender-expansive and evidence-based frameworks. This research aligns with the Gender and Education Association's vision by addressing injustice in education and advocating for policy transformation that challenges exclusionary practices. It engages with the conference themes of Re-routing Policy and Activating Routes by examining how gender is framed in early childhood education and exploring ways to disrupt misinformation and culture wars. By exploring how policy can be leveraged for greater inclusivity, this presentation contributes to feminist and queer interventions in early childhood education, supporting educators in fostering gender-expansive environments and ensuring that gender remains central to educational and research agendas.

Key words: gender expansive, early childhood, practice, policy, educators

Gender-full: Re-imagining gender in Early Childhood Education

Rochelle Mallet *Anglia Ruskin University, UK*

'Gender' is a highly politicised term which seeps into the very fabric of society, including Early Childhood Education. While it is well documented that the workforce of the sector is highly gendered, by taking a closer look at what else is happening within such settings, concepts of gender can be seen as entangled with the materiality of the spaces. This highlights the embeddedness of gender and its politicised nature. This presentation will explore the ways in which gender was continually (re)produced across three Early Childhood Education settings in England. The data were generated through feminist new materialist ethnography, which focused

on the materiality of the settings and its 'becoming with' the infants, children, and practitioners. This produced interesting and unexpected research findings which argue for the power of 'gender-full' practices in Early Childhood Education, where gender norms are challenged and disrupted in place of seeking to 'neutralise' gender. As such, the research seeks to re-imagine the possibilities and limitations of gender norms in the context of Early Childhood Education, and the ways it can trans*form how infants and young children become gendered from the very beginning of their education.

Key words: Early childhood, gender-full, feminist new materialism.

“Not old enough”: ideas of childhood in the blocking of the Gender Recognition Reform – Scotland (2022)

Luan Cassal *University College Birmingham, UK*

This paper analyses the ideas of childhood in the blocking of the Gender Recognition Reform – Scotland (2022) by the British Parliament in January 2023. The Scottish Reform would have lowered the minimum age requirement for applicants from 18 to 16. Two major topics appeared in Secondary Legislation and statements supported the blocking. First, the UK Government expressed concern because “women and girls” in single-sex/gender services would be at risk since the GRR-S would allegedly remove safeguards currently in place to prevent malicious applications. Second, concern was also expressed about single-sex/gender schools which would lack legal authority to exclude adolescents who have legal gender recognition under the GRR-S. In both cases, the concerns are about suspiciousness, trust, and how people would feel about the possibility (and not the fact) of changes in law. Hence, childhood appears as an object threatened by legal gender recognition and to be protected from vague concerns. As argued by Butler, the concept of gender (and here specifically legal gender recognition) is made an unfinished category open to interpretations – and projections, in psychoanalytic language – that engage anxieties because of gender melancholia, particularly when childhood is part of the debate. Childhood is then weaponised against legal gender recognition. To promote inclusion and expand legal gender recognition rights, it is necessary to challenge the idea of “not old enough” which regulates legal gender recognition and excludes not only children but also adults. Nevertheless, alternative forms of recognition have been taking place despite the State’s refusal to engage with them.

Key words: childhood, legal gender recognition, trans, discourse analysis

Session 7: Group 4

You are what Speak, Accentism in Post- Graduate Education: Intersections and Complexities of Class, Race and Gender

Carli Rowell, Rosa Marvell, Hannah Walters *University of Sussex, University of Portsmouth, Kings College London, UK*

This paper draws upon data generated through two ESRC funded research projects to explore working-class student access to, and experience of UK post-graduate higher education (taught and research). It combines Bourdieusian and intersectional analysis to examine how accent-

based discrimination manifests for working-class women across the higher education postgraduate pipeline. Bourdieu's (1984) work is particularly central to articulating the classed violence/s that working-class students encounter in their interactions with HE institutions, shaped by the symbolic resources and dispositions they have access to. However, as this paper demonstrates, expanding the work of Bourdieu and applying an intersectional lens allows us to unpack the ways in, for the white, working-class participants of these studies experience transitioning through the postgraduate pipeline of academia was shaped by both privilege and discrimination as their whiteness, working-class and gender complexified their experiences.

Doing so enables us, as scholars of gender and education to confront and consider the way in which white privilege combines with classed and gendered discriminations to not only a) shape and make the experiences of white, working-class women pursuing PGUKHE and b) but functions as a way of upholding racialised and classed in/exclusions with the academy. It is widely acknowledged that UKHE has historically operated as a space that privileges white, middle-class and western knowledge systems (Bhopal 2024; Walkerdine 2021) and if we are to work to work to dismantle the white middle class supremacy emanating from UKHE (and indeed too, the global landscape of higher education) and thus work to diversity routes into academia and the production of knowledge.

Key words: Postgraduate study, higher education, working-class, intersectionality, whiteness,

Transpositioning through visual translanguaging creativity: A multimodal analysis of a Chinese Wanghong girl's identity performance on YouTube

William Feng *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China*

This study analyzes how a popular Chinese vlogger Li Ziqi represent herself and the Chinese culture on YouTube for a global audience. It addresses two key issues of identity performance in vlogging: the transpositioning of the self drawing upon pluralized cultural repertoires, and the deployment of visual translanguaging resources for identity construction. We extended the notion of translanguaging to visual and multimodal meaning-making practices and explicate the complexity of transcultural identities. Analysis reveals a high level of visual translanguaging creativity in her videos, in which she orchestrated a wide range of semiotic resources in terms of the mise-en-scene, cinematography, and music, which transcend the divide between the traditional Chinese aesthetics, and the modern, commercialized aesthetics. The visual translanguaging creativity allows her to transposition herself as a romanticized farmer, a traditional craft expert, a Chinese cuisine bon vivant. All aspects of identity involve transpositioning in themselves, in which traditional and (post) modern attributes, as well as her identity as a farmer and a video creator, are seamlessly integrated. The study furthers our understanding of Chinese femininity as well as visual translanguaging as a key strategy of identity performance in translocal vlogging.

Key words: transpositioning; visual translanguaging creativity; YouTube vlogging; multimodal analysis; Chinese wanghong girl

The Silent Whimper and the ‘Unheard Voices’: Understanding the ‘Self’ and ‘Identity’ Construction through Life Histories of Youth with Visual and Locomotor Disabilities in the state of Odisha in India

Pratyasha Sahoo *University of Delhi, India*

The experiences of Youth with Disabilities (YWD) as they construct their ‘identity’ during the most sensitive period called ‘youth’ has invited untold debates and discussions in the academic circle. The key sites for the construction of ‘identity’ are the social institutions like the family and the school. Based on life histories of four youth with visual and locomotor disabilities in the educationally backward state of Odisha, this paper captures the voices of ‘youth and their parents’ with their nuanced experiences of ‘disability’. It attempts to understand how the ‘self’ and ‘identity’ of YWDs actively emerges with an amount of ‘agency’, ‘resistance’ and ‘contestation’ through processes of conscious communication and social interaction. The study focuses on the social construction of this ‘identity’, its negotiation, acceptance or rejection by YWDs and its mediation by the ‘significant others’. Data was gathered through in-depth unstructured face-to-face interviews using the case study method. From childhood to adulthood, YWDs and their parents talk about how and where, in the course of their lives, they have experienced a ‘disabled identity’, absorbed setbacks, faced challenges and struggled to stand up for themselves in their day-to-day lives.

Key words: Disability, self, identity, youth, family, school]

Patriarchy in Transition: Intergenerational Perspectives of Chinese Women

Xiaoqi XU *The Education University of Hong Kong, China*

As social change has led to a reconfiguration of power within the family and changes in the manifestations of patriarchy, this study aims to explore the transition of patriarchy by figuring out differences and similarities in the impact of patriarchy on two generations of urban Chinese women in terms of cultural expectations and personal experiences within the family context. It emphasizes intergenerational changes and the continuity of intra-family representations of patriarchy. Specifically, this study wants to explore 1. the impact of patriarchy on the family experiences of two generations of women; 2. the cultural expectations of patriarchy on both generations of women in the family; 3. the perceptions of the concept of patriarchy in the lives of two generations of women.

In terms of methodology, this study intends to use interpretive epistemology with qualitative method by using semi-structured interviews of the two generations (1960s-1970s, and 1990s-2000s) of women. As the study involves two generations of women and different representations of patriarchy, the development of the times, and the dialectic between modernity and tradition will be considered. A total of 40 (each generation with 20 participants) female respondents from urban China will be included. Walby’s six patriarchal structures will serve as the guideline for both the design of interview questions and the initial coding of thematic analysis. This study will contribute to the study of patriarchy within the family domain in China and benefit feminist activism in China.

Key words: Chinese Family; Patriarchy; Intergeneration; Gender; Chinese Women

Session 7: Group 5

Symposium: Unsettling Neo-Imperial Violence, Gender, and the Sacred Human—Sylvia Wynter, Hannah Arendt, and Judith Butler

Jo Dillabough, Liz Maber, Vidhi Gupta *University of Cambridge, UK*

Sylvia Wynter, Hannah Arendt, and Judith Butler each engage with the entanglements of imperial violence and the concept of the human in 20th- and 21st-century European thought. Their work offers critical insights into nation-building, political subjectification, and collective or revolutionary resistance. However, their perspectives diverge in their epistemological orientations, historical analyses, and methodological approaches. This panel examines these distinctions from feminist and anti-colonial perspectives, drawing upon ongoing research into the relationship between contemporary populism, authoritarianism, and the contested representational politics of gender and race in education. We ask how feminist, anti-colonial, and anti-nationalist critiques of modern state-building might illuminate the ways in which contemporary populist imaginaries are mobilized to shape ‘culture wars’ and political ruptures—particularly in relation to the legitimacy, visibility and legibility of gender politics in education. By engaging these thinkers in conversation, we explore how their work, when bridged, provides a novel conceptual framework for understanding why education has become a key battleground for the global conservative right in its efforts to dismantle gender and racial equality and reverse feminist gains in educational institutions. Through this discussion, we consider how education—whether in universities, schools, or broader society—functions as a paradoxical space: both a site of historical consciousness and a space of neo-imperial constraint in service of the state, shaped by coloniality. Specifically, we examine how Wynter, Butler, and Arendt each critique the historically specific ways in which imperial and colonial subjugation has been reinforced through gendered representations and utopian idealizations of coloniality and westernisation—and how these idealizations shape the broader category of the human in education in the ‘global present’. Finally, we consider how their distinct yet intersecting critiques (see also Rose, 2022; Sharpe, 2017, 2022) provide a critical lens for challenging the moral absorption of education into neo-imperialist and ‘nativist’ logics (Brown, 2021; Honig, 2017) shaping the ‘global present.’ In doing so, their analyses not only expose the constraints these frameworks impose on novel understandings of embodiment and identity but also illuminate new pathways for resisting the global right’s capture of education. Using fiction writing and drama (e.g. Wynter, 1968; Wynter, 2003), feminist and anti-colonial genealogical interventions (Butler, 2009; Foucault, 1979; 2001; Disch, 1999; Mbembe, 2017; Pillow, 2014; Sharpe, 2022) that reveal the discursively framed body, and archival material and visual culture, we seek to provide a novel framework for understanding how imperialist logic underpinning the Western man are mobilised in populist, autocratic and so-called ‘democratic’ educational contexts to endorse new utopian visions of society and nation, rebounding from empire.

Paper 1: From Subjugation to Rupture: Sylvia Wynter and the Politics of the Human in Education

Jo Dillabough and Vidhi Gupta

This paper examines Sylvia Wynter’s analysis of imperial violence, focusing on its epistemic dimensions within Western thought and its role in constructing the gendered and racialized Other as non-human or sub-human, thereby legitimizing exploitation and political subjugation. Drawing on Wynter’s fiction, playwriting, and scholarly work, we explore how her critique

compels a fundamental rethinking of the human that challenges the hegemonic figure of Western Man. This feminist anti-colonial intervention demands a rupture from the epistemologies of imperial and Enlightenment rationality, offering a critical lens through which to understand the contemporary resurgence of reactionary right wing politics and their impact on gender inequality within education. Specifically, we argue that modern institutions, including education, are experiencing an affective *choc en retour*—a neo-imperial boomerang effect (see Césaire, 1950, Wynter, 1962; Arendt, 1951; Butler, 2009)—manifested in the global Right’s mobilization of ‘biocentric’ thought to reclaim imperial legacies and reassert racial and gendered hierarchies (Bell, 2021). By situating Wynter’s work within these contemporary struggles, this paper highlights how her insights remain essential for both diagnosing and resisting the ongoing entanglements of coloniality, epistemic violence, and reactionary political imaginaries within the global present of education.

Paper 2: Grievable Lives, Populist Imaginaries, and the Politics of Performance in Gender in Education

Liz Maber

This paper examines Judith Butler’s account of the precariousness of human life and the politics of grievability, analyzing how populist imaginaries mediate which lives are mourned, recognized, or erased—particularly through the domain of gender, race and education. I focus on the neo-imperialist state’s ongoing struggles over sovereignty and its deployment of education as a neo-imperialist site for reinforcing gender normativity.

Through the institutionalization of knowledge production, the state reconfigures gendered and racialized hierarchies, systematically undermining the politics of care as a shared condition of a world in common. I also explore how Butler’s notion of gender performativity help us understand how a differential distribution of ‘grievable lives’ is sustained through education. Within contemporary populism, this manifests in education as the active nativist construction of reactionary gender norms, where populist performances of gender, race and sexuality seek to reassert hegemonic authority. By aligning Butler’s critique with Sylvia Wynter’s deconstruction of the ‘normative Man,’ I close by arguing that both theorists expose the colonial foundations of the human as a regulatory ideal. However, while Wynter calls for a radical reimagining of Western man beyond Imperialist and Colonial thought, Butler focuses on destabilizing gendered, racialized, and sexualized norms through the twin concepts of grievability and performativity. In tracing these connections, we illuminate how education has become a critical battleground where populist movements mobilize imperial legacies to regulate gender, race and sexuality in an age of new extremes, seeking to undermine feminist and decolonial efforts to unsettle Western Man.

Paper 3: Education and the Coloniality of Man: Arendt, Wynter, and Butler in Dialogue

Jo Dillabough

This paper argues that while Hannah Arendt, like Sylvia Wynter, is deeply concerned with how imperialism shapes political subjectivity, her analysis does not fully engage with gender or the ‘coloniality of being’ in examining how modern educational institutions mediate the political conditions of freedom and plurality. Instead, Arendt’s critique centers on how modernity fractures the foundations of political life, rendering humans superfluous—particularly through bureaucratic structures that constrain spontaneity and suppress plurality. Although she acknowledges the colonial roots of totalitarian violence, her response foregrounds the

restoration of political action through natality and the authentic storied self, rather than interrogating the epistemic and ontological foundations of the human.

In contrast, Wynter critiques the racialized construction of "Man" as the governing category of Western humanism, exposing the epistemic colonial violence embedded within this framework. Similarly, Judith Butler examines the performative mechanisms through which normative constructs of gender and race are constituted, foregrounding the instability and precarity of embodied subjectivity. While all three thinkers illuminate the colonial logics underpinning contemporary political life, they diverge in their historical analysis and political projects: Arendt seeks to reclaim the political through the promise of a shared common world of plural others; Wynter calls for a radical reimagining of the human beyond the epistemic confines of Western modernity; and Butler reveals how the performativity of gendered and racialized norms renders some lives grievable while others remain expendable. Bringing these perspectives into dialogue, this paper explores how education can operate a site of necro-sovereignty (Carci-Diester & Smith, 2019) or as a necropolitical apparatus (Mbembe, 2017), governing the conditions of "life" and "death" over and against a storied account of gender, race, or the category human. In doing so, it reveals how educational institutions have become entangled in the competitive logics of sovereignty and the global structures of earlier imperialist European modernities—reinforcing new exclusions and fueling 'culture wars' that fracture political constituencies along the lines of belonging, identity, and recognition.

Key words: Feminist Anti-Colonial Thought, Coloniality of Man from the Perspective of Winter, Man and Butler, Education and Populist Imaginaries

Session 7: Group 6

Straight, White, Christian, Male: Dis/assembling Masculinity in Educational Contexts Through Creative Methods

Huw Berry-Downs *Cardiff University, UK*

For teenage boys growing up amid shifting societal narratives, masculinity is a dynamic process of creation and negotiation synonymous with crisis (Hickey-Moody 2019). Drawing on two arts-based projects, this paper explores how boys actively de/ and re/construct, dis/ and re/assemble gender within and beyond educational contexts, creating rather than discovering masculinity (Bragg et al. 2018).

Framing masculinity as an assemblage (Hickey-Moody 2019) or atmosphere (Campana 2015)—a relational constellation of external forces, actors, objects, and networks—this study examines how young people engage with intersecting ideals of masculinity, whiteness, and heteronormativity. The first vignette analyses a workshop with four cisgender, heterosexual, white boys (aged 14), whose Lego constructions and discussions reflected perceptions of traditional masculinity as under threat. These accounts reveal defensive responses to societal change and insights into navigating shifting gender norms. The second vignette focuses on Jude, a 14-year-old participant who used creative methods to challenge and reconstruct the label "straight, white male." Through his Christian faith, Jude reimagined masculinity, using religious frameworks as resources for transformation (Nyhagen 2021).

Findings highlight educational spaces—formal and informal, online and offline—as central to these gendered negotiations, where boys navigate tensions between traditional and emergent

masculinities. This paper contributes to the Diversifying Routes theme by offering an as-yet underexplored dimension of the masculine assemblage, Christian faith, and by drawing on participatory and creative methods to enable teenage boys to dis/ and re/assemble gender in ways that challenge, imitate, and reproduce dominant narratives of masculinity.

Key words: masculinity, Christianity, assemblage, creative, childhood

Reframing masculinity: How do male-identifying youth facilitators challenge or promote particular models of masculinity?

Angharad Morgan *Lancaster University, UK*

Initiatives to empower women and girls have been an integral part of work to increase gender justice, reduce incidents of violence against women and girls (VAWG), and make way for a gender-equitable world (Garcia, 2021). However, it is now more widely understood that involving men and boys in these discussions is vital to achieving these goals (Flood, 2019; Greig, 2018). Gibbs et al. (2015) highlight the limited research on the role of facilitators in addressing masculinity.

In this paper, I draw on my PhD research, which uses photo-elicitation and semi-structured interviews to understand 20 male youth facilitators' understandings of masculinity and their potential to engage young people in reframing negative hegemonic masculinity and challenge gender binaries. I also explore their capacity and desire to act as role models for young people, and allies for feminist movements. I ask participants to reflect on their positionality, discussing their visual representation of masculinity (through an image/photograph), possible motivations to reframe different models of masculinity, and any challenges that may arise from this. My work is focused on the North of England to identify if locality impacts facilitators' experiences, recognising Northern culture, in particular, working-class identities, economic decline, and community relations.

Throughout the paper I am guided by a social constructivist view of masculinity, looking at how feminist and queer theory interact and acknowledging that facilitators may challenge gender binaries and endorse positive identities that are not exclusively masculine.

Key words: Masculinity, Facilitators, Feminist, Queer, photo-elicitation

Moving, beyond toxic masculinities: bringing nuance to how young people navigate contemporary masculinity assemblages through creative methodologies and pedagogies

Sara Bragg, EJ Renold and Jessica Ringrose *University College London and Cardiff University, UK*

This paper aims to contest a tendency in popular debates and some research about the 'problem space' (Lury 2021) of rising 'toxic' masculinities to flatten complexity by describing them in terms (such as 'misogyny' or 'sexism') that already assume their meaning for and effects on young people. To counter such reifications, we draw upon on a recent research project with 125 young participants (aged 11-18) that harnessed the power of creative methods

to 'empirically attune' (Stewart 2010) the un/known effects and affects of some complex, intrasectional (Puar 2009) masculinity assemblages in ways that kept young people's often contradictory meaning-making practices on the move.

Drawing on postcolonial and posthuman approaches which queer any monolithic account of rising neo-fascist gender ecologies (Luciano and Chen 2019), we unfold a suite of 'rising' masculinities vignettes. Each 'rise' (as value, flow, rebellion) explores how young people offer nuanced accounts of navigating through a diverse spectrum of 'movement masculinities', from the white supremacy of alt-right manospheres, to feminist and queer-inflected homosocial support and desire for un/doing masculinity. The paper concludes with a practitioner case study suggesting how creative and participatory methodologies might yield more generative and affirmative pedagogical approaches, in schools and beyond.

Key words: genders, masculinities, creative methodologies, creative pedagogies

Toxic masculinity, toxic debate, and creative/ critical responses

Caroline Stancer *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

'Toxic masculinity' is a widely used phrase in popular discourse but is considered problematic by many critical researchers. Feminist theorists such as Carol Harrington (2000) and Andrea Waling (2019) contend that the term individualises complex problems, increases unhelpful binaries between 'Toxic and 'Healthy', reduces personal responsibility and is negative and simplistic. It remains however an emotive term and a recent study suggests that its use affects people's responses to public debate and that it is a term the public readily understands (Jensen 2020).

I contend that a number of creative/ critical writers offer complex responses to these debates and a movement away from binary 'either/or' thinking. Among other writers I discuss Katherine Angel's passionate and compassionate explorations of sexual pleasure and consent (2022), Terrance Hayes' explorations of masculinity and race in America (2018) and Harry Josephine Giles explorations of restrictive notions and practices of gender which oppress trans identities (2024).

In this paper I will explore the following provocations: Can contemporary poetry and creative critical writing offer new routes for navigating terrains which have become 'toxic' in debate? Rather than jettisoning the term, can 'toxic masculinity' be discussed in ways which preserve complexity and inclusivity in debates around gender? How might creative writing be particularly well equipped to offer humanising, gender-inclusive and intersectional responses? Can we engage with terms such as 'Toxic masculinity' in order to influence popular debates, remaining aware of its roots and connections with other terms, while recognising it as subject to change and reimagining?

Key words: Masculinity, Poetry, Creative writing, Inclusivity

Session 7: Group 7

Role models through the intersectional lens

Monika Kovács *ELTE University Budapest, Hungary*

One of the key processes that creates masculinity by default in society is the over-representation of men in high status roles - including teaching materials - in science and the arts. Showcasing female role models who have achieved important accomplishments in different fields can change this perception. At the same time, role models, if they appear to be exceptional and outliers, can reinforce a lack of sense of belonging for women or their success can obscure the problem of structural inequalities, creating the illusion that effort always leads to success, i.e. the illusion of meritocracy.

When we present minority women as role models, we face similar problems, only the external and internal difficulties stemming from gender stereotypes and prejudices are compounded by additional layers of disadvantage, e.g. exposure to ethnic discrimination and/or differences stemming from poverty and low educational background in the family, often embodied in lower expectations of teachers. In the framework of the “Anti-gender backlash and democratic pushback” Horizon project, we have developed an educational booklet that takes into account these difficulties and pitfalls by presenting four Roma women’s school, family and career experience in a way that shows not only how they have been disadvantaged by intersecting structural inequalities but also how – besides talent and hard work - their family and majority group member allies (e.g. teachers, colleagues) have helped them to establish an exceptional career, thus offering an opportunity not only for discussing intersectional disadvantages but the dynamics of allyship.

Key words: intersectionality, Roma women, masculinity default, meritocracy, structural inequality

From Steel City to Smart City: Intergenerational Affective Embodiment of Class & Gender within Higher Education Policy

Shay Greig *University of Newcastle, Australia*

This presentation draws on PhD research within the industrial communities of the Illawarra. It challenges fixed notions of HE policy based on the outmoded and homogenising categories. It seeks to disrupt the neoliberal construction of Higher education within the so-called knowledge economy, which often overlooks or mis/recognizes inequalities, resulting in an ongoing struggle to achieve authentic social justice through widening participation.

The neoliberal focus on “evidence-based” measurements of disadvantage within HE frames inequality as something that can be measured. Consequently, “if it can’t be measured, it doesn’t count” (Burke, 2020b: 83). Our histories, emotions, imaginaries, experiences, and knowledges are reduced to judgements pertaining to our worthiness as human capital, productivity, and future value as workers within the economy. Education is at the centre of the so-called knowledge economy, and the commodification of the learner as a potential worker within this discourse has created increasingly narrow policy vision, aims, and outcomes that have further entrenched systems of inequality and deficit imaginaries.

This presentation will uncover the complexity of our routes through historical accounts of the intergenerational affect of class and gender and how periods of social and economic change

feels for working-class people and understandings of the role and purpose of education. It will explore the fluid and contradictory nature of emerging subjectivities and identities and how we can draw on these microhistories to engage in and co-create new spaces for transformative educational experiences, narratives, and understandings for more inclusive policy directions.

Key words: affect, working-class, deindustrialisation, ethnography, microhistories

The Invisible Gap: Educational Inequities Facing White Working-Class Girls

Nicki Pierce *University of Lincoln, UK*

My paper investigates the overlooked educational underachievement of White working-class girls in the UK secondary education system. While policy and academic discourse have focused extensively on boys' underperformance, and in recent years, White working-class boys, this attention has obscured the persistent challenges faced by their female counterparts. Through an intersectional feminist lens, I critically examine how gender, class, and Whiteness intersect to shape educational outcomes and perpetuate systemic inequities. My research highlights how societal and institutional assumptions about working-class girl, (characterising them as non-compliant, unambitious, or troublesome), reinforce lower expectations and hinder their educational trajectories. I explore the inadequacy of existing interventions, which predominantly target boys' achievement, and questions how these policies have failed to address the needs of girls who are doubly disadvantaged by their gender and socioeconomic status. Drawing on sociological theories and empirical data, the paper challenges monolithic notions of gender and class, emphasising the nuanced experiences of this group. I call for a reimagined approach to educational policy that prioritises diversity and equity, recognising the unique barriers faced by White working-class girls. By addressing this gap, my study contributes to the broader discourse on social justice in education and advocates for inclusive strategies to improve outcomes for marginalised learners.

Key words: White working-class girls, Educational underachievement, Intersectionality, Gender and class inequities, Education policy

Gender tracings: Cartographic Analysis of Gender and Sexuality Policy

Sandra Schmidt *Teachers College, Columbia University, US*

In May 2024, President Biden expanded Title IX to include protections against gender identity and sexuality discrimination in education. A US Court recently overturned the changes in support of the argument that progressive leaders were imposing a “radical gender ideology” in schools. In this presentation, I unpack the claims of “radical” and “ideology” circulating through policies in the U.S.

The data for this analysis include the revised Title IX, the US Court decision, gender-erasing education policies from Tennessee and Florida, gender-inclusive education policies from New Jersey and Nevada, and the resultant curricular framework from New Jersey.

The analysis concretizes Braidotti's cartography to examine gender theory, policy discourse, political rhetoric, and policy implementation (curriculum). Theoretically, I start with Butler and the trouble that a gender binary builds, particularly in relationship with sexuality. I also think with LGBT, queer, and trans theories as they each consider how discourse, categories, and

signifiers arise, are produced, deployed, and circulated. I trace these through the policies to build relational maps of language and constructs.

The purpose of the analysis is to speak back to the claims of the radicalness of policies that merely expand recognition with little intention or ability to transform gender and sexuality into queer expressions. Exploring the gendered cartographies of policy context and discourse is a tool for re-routing our resistance. Rather than a direct confrontation against troubling signifiers, gender scholars can embrace and produce real radical ideologies. Placed alongside other re-routing papers, perhaps we can build collective, cross-national tools of resistance.

Key words: Cartography, Policy, Gender studies, Queer theory

Workshops and Additional Sessions

Pre-conference Workshops

Methods That Matter: Transformative Feminist Approaches in Gender and Education (Workshop 1, Early Career Researchers)

Joanne Dillabough and Sarah Truman

1pm - 2.10pm, Tuesday 27th May

Room BS 1.24

This workshop explores the vital interplay between methodological innovation and impactful feminist research in gender and education, including an exploration of our own “epistemic attachments” (Bacevic, 2019) to wider questions of impact and method. Facilitated by experienced researchers, theorists and practitioners, it provides early-career scholars and doctoral students an opportunity to reimagine how their research can drive meaningful change across schools, communities, societal contexts and the field. The session highlights creative approaches to achieving research impact that must necessarily extend beyond the canon and conventional academic outputs. Examples include decolonizing gender and education methods, addressing the role of empire, race, coloniality and intersectionality in our feminist methodologies, decentering methodological canons through a range of critical perspectives, and leveraging, for example, videography, digital podcasting, and arts-based digital tools, ensuring participants are staying ahead of the audio and visual curves of our historical moment and its impact. Discussions will explore how visual tools uncover hidden narratives, amplify marginalized voices, and foster spaces for dialogue and reflection. Facilitators will showcase impactful methods such as short videos, visual storytelling, podcasting and participatory exhibitions, illustrating how feminist methodologies challenge inequalities and inspire collective action through transformative school and community policies. Importantly, this session equips participants to address contemporary challenges while resisting narrow, bureaucratic notions of impact often driven by research councils, REF metrics or institutional HR agendas. Instead, it emphasizes feminist approaches that redefine what impactful scholarship can achieve.

From Draft to Dialogue: Navigating the Politics of Publishing in Gender and Education (Workshop 2, Early Career Researchers)

Emily Gray, Mindy Blaise & Helen Rowlands (Editorial Manager of the Gender and Education journal)

2.30pm - 3.40pm, Tuesday 27th May

Room BS 1.24

Publishing in leading journals is a key milestone for early-career researchers and doctoral students. Yet, the process can feel overwhelming, with challenges ranging from meeting editorial expectations to articulating a clear feminist voice. This workshop, led by experienced editors and contributors, will demystify the publishing process and offer practical strategies to help participants develop their research for successful publication. The session will open with an overview of publication strategies, crafting engaging and provocative research, aligning submissions with editorial aims, navigating the peer-review process, and positioning work within feminist educational scholarship. Participants will also learn how to respond constructively to reviewer feedback, particularly when facing critical or conflicting comments. Facilitators will explore how feminist research challenges academic norms through originality, and innovative questions, and intersectional and anti and de-colonial approaches, ensuring critical engagement with power, knowledge and inequality. Participants will also explore how co-authoring, collaborative theorizing, and participatory methodologies can enrich their research. Through case studies and real-world examples, participants will also practice crafting research questions and article outlines, and gain feedback on their own publication ideas. Whether you are preparing your first submission, navigating the revision process, or seeking to enhance the impact of your work, this workshop will equip you with the tools and confidence to write and publish whilst connecting you with peers, editors and feminist scholars committed to supporting the next generation of researchers in the field.

Engaging young people in Relationships and Sex Education (Teacher/Educator Professional Learning Workshop)

EJ Renold and Sara Bragg

4.00pm - 6.00pm, Tuesday 27th May

Room BS 1.24

Participants interested in exploring how and why youth voice matters in developing Relationships, Sex and Sexuality Education and how creative listening can support this process are welcome to a two hour workshop. At the workshop participants will: find out about what and how young people are learning about relationships, sex and sexuality from recent research (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2023/how-young-people-are-learning-about-relationships-sex-sexuality>); explore creative ways to listen to youth voice in the design and delivery of high quality RSE; understand how a rights-based approach to RSE has the potential to create inclusive learning environments that attune to young people's diverse views and experiences; try out some simple creative and participatory activities to adapt in school

settings to engage with children, young people, staff, parents and governors and receive links to resources to support your learning journey. To find out more, and to register, please visit: <https://forms.office.com/e/f3PGUpHUwX?origin=lprLink>

Conference Workshops

Publishing with Bloomsbury: An Editor-Led Workshop and Q&A

Alexander Bell (Commissioning Editor) and Jayne Osgood (Series Editor, *Feminist Thought in Childhood Research*)

1.15pm - 2.15pm, Wednesday 28 May

Room 1.24

Learn everything you need to know about publishing an academic research book with Bloomsbury in this joint session with Alexander Bell, Commissioning Editor for Gender and Education, and Jayne Osgood, Co-Editor of the *Feminist Thought in Childhood Research* series. Al will introduce Bloomsbury's education publishing and walk you through the publishing journey, giving practical tips for prospective authors and answering FAQs. Jayne will introduce her series' aims and scope, and offer her own advice and perspectives as a series editor. At the end of the session you'll have the chance to ask both Al and Jayne your own questions.

Feminist solidarities: Editors, authors and reviewers.

Emily Gray and Mindy Blaise

12noon - 1.00pm, Thursday 29th May

Room BS 1.24

This session will provide GEA conference delegates the chance to meet and talk with 2 of the Editors of the Gender and Education journal. This session will provide an opportunity for delegates to think with what it means to be a gender researcher in precarious and politically divisive times. The session is aimed at making new connections, fostering existing solidarities and finding collective ways forward in what can feel like a dangerous space, depending on the context you are working in. The Editors are keen to commission a Special Issue of Gender and Education on this topic, and so this session will also provide an opportunity to develop a guest editorial team, and to think about what a Call for Papers might look like for such a Special Issue.

Movement Workshop

Winding down: a movement workshop with Anna Hickey-Moody (Maynooth University, Ireland)

Friday 30th May, 3pm -3.45pm Business School South Atrium

As the conference closes, join us for a movement/yoga session with Anna Hickey-Moody to close the meeting,

Books and Screenings

Film screening: Her Story, Our Inspiration: A Film Celebrating Inspirational Women Across Generations – Magic Me

<https://magicme.co.uk/project/her-story-our-inspiration/>

We are thrilled to announce the launch of *Her Story, Our Inspiration*, a powerful short film exploring the legacies of inspirational women and how they continue to impact us today. This film brings together students from Mulberry School for Girls and Connaught School for Girls with older women from Tower Hamlets to share stories, insights, and reflections on the challenges women face—and overcome—across generations.

Created over six weeks of workshops with filmmakers and artists, *Her Story, Our Inspiration* is a collaborative effort led by filmmaker Chuck Blue Lowry and poet Laila Sumpton. Through discussions of personal and social history, this intergenerational group reflects on the resilience, passion, and determination required to keep advocating for women's rights and inspiring one another.

This film is part of Magic Me's commitment to fostering dialogue and understanding across generations through the arts, supported by Arts Council England.

Credits:

- **Filmmaker:** Chuck Blue Lowry
- **Artist Facilitators:** Laila Sumpton, Sue Mayo, Charlene Low
- **Music by:** Charlie Davey
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With thanks to:

Mulberry School for Girls, Connaught School for Girls, Mulberry Schools Trust, and Global Girl Leading

Book Launch

Wednesday 28th May, 5pm – 8pm Business School South Atrium

We are proud to host three book launches during the wine reception on the Wednesday evening of the conference. The books that will be launched are listed below.

Towards posthumanism in education: theoretical entanglements and pedagogical mappings

Edited by Jessie Bustillos Morales and Shiva Zarabadi

Queer Kids and Social Violence: The Limits of Bullying

Edited by Elizabeth Payne and Melissa J. Smith

Gender Un/Bound: Traversing Educational Possibilities

Edited By Susanne Gannon, Ampersand Pasley and Jayne Osgood