



## **ESA Research Network Sexuality (RN23) Online Seminar Series Spring 2021**

### **Sexuality and Disability**

**26<sup>th</sup> January 5:00-6:30 pm (CET)**

Julia Bahner (Lund University, Sweden) – Challenging academic rights and wrongs: Lessons learned from an international comparative study of sexual citizenship and disability

Andrea García-Santesmases Fernández (Open University of Catalonia, Spain) – “Yes, we fuck!”: An ethnographic approach to the potentialities and challenges of the queer-crip alliances in the Spanish context

### **Sexuality and Regimes of Mobility**

**17<sup>th</sup> February 1:00-2:30 pm (CET)**

Kate Pincock (Overseas Development Institute) – Containment and coloniality in European LGBT asylum policies

Yiu-Tung Suen (Chinese University of Hong Kong) – Sexuality and (im)mobility: Lesbian and gay professionals living abroad in an era of unequal lesbian and gay rights development across the globe

### **Sex workers and academic alliances: perspectives from Brazil and Portugal**

**24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 5:00-6:30 pm (CET)**

Thaddeus Blanchette (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) and Mara Clemente (University Institute of Lisbon) – Sex worker and academic alliances in Brazil and Portugal

**Sexuality and Politics**

**28<sup>th</sup> April 1:00-2:30 pm (CET)**

Stevi Jackson (University of York, UK), Petula Sik-Ying Ho (University of Hong Kong) – The Politics of Sexuality in China

Billy Holzberg (King's College, London) – The Sexual Politics of Right-Wing Terrorism

**Beyond pleasure seeking and 'bad sex'**

**25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 5:00-6:30 pm (CET)**

Christian A. Eichert, Jack Coffin, Shona M. Bettany – The Marketisation Of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) In The United Kingdom: An Exploratory Consumer Culture Inquiry

Laurie James-Hawkins - Strategic Silence: College Men and Hegemonic Masculinity in Contraceptive Decision Making

**Mapping the global field of sexuality studies**

**30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 5:00-06:30 pm (CET)**

Zowie Davy, Ana Cristina Santos, Chiara Bertone, Ryan Thoreson, Saskia E. Wieringa - Presentation of the SAGE Handbook of Global Sexualities

## Detailed Programme

### Sexuality and Disability – 26<sup>th</sup> January 5:00-6:30 pm (CET)

#### **Julia Bahner - *Challenging academic rights and wrongs: Lessons learned from an international comparative study of sexual citizenship and disability***

This paper reflects on my experiences from a project on policies, practices and advocacy relating to disabled people's potential needs and wishes for sexual support as part of their independent living arrangements. I used a social justice-focused intersectional framework (Hill Collins & Bilge 2016) as the overarching analytical approach. The ambition was to conduct a series of participatory workshops with disability and sexual rights organisations with the aim to develop best-practices on the issues that they saw as important and interesting. However, fieldwork in England, the Netherlands and New South Wales revealed that there were considerable differences, divisions and histories in the disability and sexuality movements which impacted upon the possibilities for collaboration. In this paper I discuss and problematise three aspects: designing a project without involvement of the ones affected, the ideal of the independent academic, and doing comparative studies of complex issues. I propose a framework for overcoming (some of) these issues, exemplified with my model for sexual citizenship advocacy (Bahner 2020).

#### **Andrea García-Santesmases Fernández - *"Yes, we fuck!": An ethnographic approach to the potentialities and challenges of the queer-crip alliances in the Spanish context***

Feminisms, queer theory, and crip theory allow us to denaturalize categories of bodily standardization and identify them within body regulation systems: hetero-patriarchy and ableism. However, these systems do not act in an infallible and totalizing way. On the contrary through their own performative iteration, they inevitably lead to disruptions, errors, transformations. Starting from this perspective, I analyse the production and subversion of gender and (dis)ability in disabled people. This analysis is based on an ethnographic research that took place in Barcelona during the second decade of the 21st century. This was a privileged context, since local independent living activism was undergoing a change of repertoire that came to place the body and sexuality at the centre of political practice and identity construction. I had the opportunity to be part of this process by collaborating with Yes, we fuck!, a documentary which seeks to portray the sexuality of disabled people focusing on their empowerment while criticizing ableism. Its filming has helped to generate a process of synergies in Spain between different activisms which has been named Queer-crip alliances. I will reflect on these alliances' potentialities and challenges regarding the construction of (another) imaginary of disabled people's sexuality.

**Julia Bahner** is a postdoctoral fellow in the School of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden. Her recent publication "Sexual Citizenship and Disability: Understanding Sexual Support in Policy, Practice and

Theory” (Routledge, 2020) empirically explores the concept of sexual citizenship in relation to disability. She has also done work around sex education in special schools (“Crippling Sex Education”, Journal of Sex Education, 2018).

**Andrea García-Santesmases Fernández** is a PhD in Sociology (with honours). Her thesis “(Im)pertinent bodies: a crip-queer analysis of the possibilities of subversion from functional diversity” won the Extraordinary Doctorate Award. Currently, she is a postdoctoral fellow in the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute (Open University of Catalonia) and an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology at Autonomous University of Barcelona. Her main lines of research are the intersections between gender studies and disability studies. Most related paper: “From alliance to trust”: constructing Crip-Queer intimacies, Journal of Gender Studies.

### **Sexuality and Regimes of Mobility – 17<sup>th</sup> February 1:00-2:30 pm (CET)**

#### **Kate Pincock – *Containment and coloniality in European LGBT asylum policies***

In recent years, media attention and activism has highlighted the lack of protection afforded to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) individuals in the global South, setting its sights on the failures of governments to protect and even persecute those who identify (or are identified by others) as ‘queer’. Yet queer/migration research has thus far largely focused on the troubling experiences of LGBT refugees in navigating asylum in the global North. Significant numbers of asylum claims on the basis of SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) are however pursued *within* the global South. Reflecting growing hostility to all forms of immigration in the EU, refugee-hosting countries in Africa are increasingly under pressure to ensure that refugees never reach European borders. Kenya has received EUR 65,874,600 from the EU Trust Fund for Africa, the main arm of Europe’s externalisation strategy in Africa. Its encampment policy sees refugees detained in camps, where LGBT individuals with whom I undertook research in 2018 have no freedom of movement and are deeply vulnerable to homophobic violence from other refugees. In the cities, LGBT refugees with permission to reside outside the camps are targeted and harassed by Kenyan police. All the while, they are kept in limbo as to their legal status, unable to leave and claim asylum elsewhere. This paper draws out the deep hypocrisies of European country policies on SOGI asylum. On the one hand, countries such as the UK position themselves as supporters of LGBT rights; on the other they pursue and fund externalisation efforts that prevent LGBT refugees ever reaching their borders and detain them indefinitely in conditions which violate their rights to protection under international law. The sociological study of sexuality must do more to connect well-documented injustices in LGBT asylum policies to neo-colonial structural violence and the reproduction of global inequality.

**Yiu-Tung Suen – *Sexuality and (im)mobility: Lesbian and gay professionals living abroad in an era of unequal lesbian and gay rights development across the globe***

This paper builds on and contributes to three strands of research literature: migration and assimilation; migration and sexuality; and research on lesbian and gay expatriates. It draws on my ongoing research funded by the General Research Fund in Hong Kong (Ref: 14606318) and 40+ interviews with lesbian and gay professionals who move from where there are more legal rights for lesbian and gay people to where there are fewer. This paper asks the questions: As lesbian and gay rights are rapidly developing across the globe but such development is highly unequal, how do lesbian and gay business professionals living abroad interact with the host society? What factors do the lesbian and gay professionals consider when they assess the host culture? How do they evaluate the different opportunities and costs? When they move from a society with more legal rights for lesbian and gay people to a society with fewer legal rights for lesbian and gay people (or in the extreme case, criminalization of same-sex sexual acts), do they conceal their identity, remain silent, thus 'assimilate' into the culture of their host society as they see it? Or would they be joining the local social movement and engage in public advocacy, or even start a social movement if there is none, to stand their ground to demand their rights? This paper will discuss the emerging research findings that reveal paradoxes of privilege and marginalization, as well as structure and agency when the lesbian and gay professionals move across border. In doing so, this paper also contributes to the debate on global sexual citizenship, which is especially timely in an era of unequal lesbian and gay rights development across the globe.

**Kate Pincock** completed a PhD in International Development at the University of Bath in 2016. Her doctoral research in Tanzania highlighted tensions within discursive framings of gender and sexuality in development policy and explored their implications for praxis. From 2017 to 2019, Kate worked as a Research Officer for the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford, undertaking ethnographic research on community-based social protection in Uganda and Kenya. Kate's research interests include queer migration studies; she is particularly interested in exploring how LGBT refugees navigate asylum processes in East Africa. She is currently working as a researcher for the Overseas Development Institute on the Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence programme.

**Yiu-Tung Suen** is Assistant Professor of the Gender Studies Programme and Founding Director of the Sexualities Research Programme, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His studies inform and are informed by critical current debates on sexual orientation and gender identity laws and policies, particularly with a view to provide empirical evidence which has been largely absent in Asia. His research is multi-disciplinary in nature.

24<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 'Sex workers and academic alliances: perspectives from Brazil and Portugal

**Thaddeus Blanchette (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) and Mara Clemente (University Institute of Lisbon) – *Sex worker and academic alliances in Brazil and Portugal.***

When we talk about a 'rightwing backlash', it is important to remember that, once again, sex workers have been the 'canaries in the coal mine' in that their very right to exist has been under direct and concerted attack since the early years of the 21st century. One of the key nexuses for this assault has been anti-trafficking initiatives that have consciously confused independent, consensual sex work with 'slavery'. Under the rubric of 'protecting women and children from trafficking', certain feminist movements have made alliances with Christian movements that openly advocate the rollback of women's rights and the destruction of so-called 'gender indoctrination'. This alliance has been attacking sex workers and trans- people for more than a decade and, in many cases, has been instrumental to the casting of gender as 'ideology'. In Brazil, an alliance of sex workers, feminists, academics, community activists, and journalists has challenged the criminalization of sex work by weaving of alliance networks that have cultivated solidarity between social scientific researchers and sex workers, aiding both groups in confronting the anti-gender, anti-women, anti-sex work attacks promulgated by right wing populism.

The presenters will discuss what Laura Murray has labelled 'puta politics' in the Luso-speaking world, concentrating primarily on Brazil, but also on the experience of Portugal. In both Brazil and Portugal, the view that 'prostitution = trafficking' has been more-or-less successfully challenged. In Brazil, this has been largely due to the alliance described above, which has managed to (at least for now) place sex workers as stake holders at the negotiating table in the anti-trafficking law-making field. By contrast, Portugal has largely been ignoring sex workers as potential trafficking victims as a result of decisions taken without significant sex worker input within the field of official national anti-trafficking policy. In Brazil, the anti-trafficking field has thus served to (partially) articulate sex worker demands for better working conditions and political autonomy while in Portugal, these have largely been ignored.

**Thaddeus Gregory Blanchette** is a Social Anthropologist and Associate Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro's Social Ecology Institute in Macaé, RJ. Together with his partner Ana Paula da Silva, he is a founding member of the Prostitution Policy Watch Research and Extension Program at UFRJ. For three years, he was the Davida sex workers' rights collective representative on the Federal Anti-Trafficking Committee, which rewrote Brazil's anti-trafficking in 2016.

**Mara Clemente** is a sociologist with teaching and research interests focused on migration and gender issues and qualitative research methods. Her fields of expertise cover human trafficking, refugees, sex work and sex tourism. Mara is currently working on a research project entitled "The Construction of Counter-Trafficking Regimes in Mediterranean Europe: Actors, Discourses and Representations". Mara joined the Center for Research and Studies of Sociology (CIES-IUL) of ISCTE – the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL), where she is currently an integrated researcher. She is also associate researcher of the Emigration Observatory (OEm).

## Sexuality and Politics – 28<sup>th</sup> April 1:00-2:30 pm (CET)

### **Stevi Jackson and Petula Sik-Ying Ho – *The Politics of Sexuality in China***

Changes in Chinese society since ‘opening up’ and shift to a market economy seemed to promise new opportunities for sexual expression and sexuality scholarship, but in the last decade, especially since Xi Jinping’s rise to power, there has been a reversal of these trends. In the Xi era there has been a curtailment of some of the incipient freedoms won during reform, an intensification of surveillance of the population through new technologies, increased restrictions on academic freedom, particularly on teaching on gender and sexuality, and suppression of feminist and LGBTQ activism. Xi has also promoted the ‘China Dream’ (*Zhonggo Meng*), linking the aspirations of the nation (restoring China’s greatness) to personal aspirations for success and happiness, defined largely, we argue, in highly gendered, heteronormative terms. In this paper we seek to explain why sexuality matters to the Chinese party-state and how these political changes have unfolded. Sexuality is a political issue in China: it is central to the party-state’s governance of the population, its representation of China as possessing its own unique and superior ‘socialist spiritual civilization’, its revival or reinvention of Confucian tradition and promotion of the ‘harmonious society.’ Sexuality, however, is also a site of tensions and contradictions within party-state rule, especially in relation to business practices and economic development, and of social inequality and injustice – not only in gender relations and China’s highly heteronormative social order, but also, and in intersection with, class inequality, Han ethnic supremacy and the urban-rural divide. The study of the politics of sexuality in China is of wider significance in offering us a window into the governance of the world’s most powerful authoritarian regime.

### **Billy Holzberg – *The Sexual Politics of Right-Wing Terrorism***

The racist murder of ten people in the city of Hanau in February 2020 highlighted the ongoing threat of right-wing terrorism in Europe and called for renewed scholarly and political attention. What remains relatively unexplored in most sociological accounts of the intensification of right-wing terrorism in and beyond Europe, however, are its sexual and gendered dimensions. In this talk, I analyse the manifestos and arguments published by the perpetrators and supporters of right-wing terror attacks in Germany like the shooting of Hanau, the killing of Walter Lübcke and the NSU-murders. I argue that the ideas expressed by these actors such as the presumable threat of a “population swap”, the possessive claim over female sexuality and calls for the protection of the white nuclear family are by no means individual ideas confined to particular fascist and neo-Nazi actors. Instead, I contend that they reach far into the mainstream as they link back to German conceptions of citizenship created during the height of European colonialism which continue to secure the nation through heteronormative constructions of whiteness. Showing how discourses of sexuality in Germany are entangled with racialised constructions of nation and citizenship, I contend that sexual politics need to play a crucial role in challenging nativist nationalism and might operate as an anchor point for renewed queer, feminist and anti-racist coalitions.

**Stevi Jackson** is Professor of Women’s Studies at the University of York, UK. Her research interests include families and intimate relationships, the sociology of gender and sexuality and feminist

sociological theory. She is author of *Childhood and Sexuality* (Blackwell 1982), *Christine Delphy* (Sage 1996) and *Heterosexuality in Question* (Sage 1999). She has co-authored, with Sue Scott, *Theorizing Sexuality* (Open University Press, 2010), with Momin Rahman, *Gender and Sexuality: Sociological Approaches* (Polity 2010) and, most recently *Women Doing Intimacy: Gender, Family and Modernity in Hong Kong and Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan 2020) with Petula Sik Ying Ho. She has also co-edited a number of collections including, with Sue Scott, *Gender: A Sociological Reader* (Routledge 2002) and with Jieyu Liu and Juhyun Woo, *East Asian Sexualities: Intimacy, Modernity and New Sexual Cultures* (Zed Books 2008). She has also published numerous articles and chapters on sexuality, family relationships and feminist sociological theory. She is co-editor two book series: 'Sexuality, Gender and Culture in Asia' (with Denise Tang and Olivia Khoo) for Palgrave Macmillan and 'Gender and Sociology' (with Sue Scott) for Bristol University Press and (with Petula Sik Ying Ho) of a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Gender Studies* entitled 'Sexual Politics and Gendered Lives: East Asian Perspectives'.

**Petula, Sik Ying Ho** is Professor in the Department of Social Work and Social Administration at the University of Hong Kong. Her recent work includes, *Women doing intimacy: Gender, family and modernity in Britain and Hong Kong* (2020) co-authored with Stevi Jackson; *Love and Desire in Hong Kong* (2012), co-authored with Ka Tat Tsang. She is also author of *I am Ho Sik Ying, 55 years old* (2013) and *Everyday Life in the Age of Resistance* (2015). Her research projects explore the using of documentary films and multi-media theatre to integrate arts and scholarship. They include: *22 Springs: The Invincible* (2010); *The "Kong-lo" Chronicles* and *The Umbrella Movement: A Collaborative Focus Group Analysis* (2016); *Labouring Women Devised Theatre* (2019) and *Carrie Lam Bring Out Your Freedom Pussy* (2019).

**Billy Holzberg** is a Lecturer in Social Justice at King's College London. Interested in the affective, sexual and psychic life of power, his current research examines what role affect plays in producing, legitimising and contesting the contemporary European border regime. He holds a PhD from LSE's Department of Gender Studies and has been a post-doctoral fellow at LSE's sociology department and a visiting scholar at Columbia University's Institute for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality.

### **Beyond pleasure seeking and 'bad sex' – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 5:00-6:30 pm (CET)**

**Christian A. Eichert, Jack Coffin, Shona M. Bettany – *The Marketisation Of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) In The United Kingdom: An Exploratory Consumer Culture Inquiry***

New HIV diagnoses in the UK have dramatically declined in recent years, mostly due to the proliferation of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), which is up to 99% effective in protecting HIV-negative people from contracting the virus. London's biggest sexual health clinic, for example, recorded an 80% drop of diagnoses within two years. While PrEP has been approved in the US since 2012, the drug has only become available on England's public National Health Service (NHS) in 2020. Through collective efforts by consumers, activists, and overseas pharmacies, the price for a one-month private prescription of PrEP has dropped from up to £800 in 2012 to less than £20 in 2020.

We trace the surprising success of PrEP, despite its lack of institutional support, through international networks of consumers, activists, healthcare-providers, and other stakeholders, who helped to legitimise, de-stigmatise, and disseminate this radical healthcare innovation. For example by importing cheaper generic PrEP through online-pharmacies from India, or by educating fellow consumers, the emerging market-system of PrEP has empowered consumers to take responsibility for their own sexual health, and that of their extended social networks, well before institutions like NHS England conceded to act.

Adopting a consumer culture approach, our research explores how these networks transgress and transform traditional geopolitical and socio-cultural boundaries between concepts such as ‘citizen’, ‘patient’, and ‘consumer’. We discuss the phenomenological, practical, and political implications of producing and participating in markets of sexual health products, and theorize how consumers incorporate PrEP as a disruptive innovation into their existing regimes of risk management, social responsibility, and hedonistic intimacy within the neoliberal paradox of privatised public health. Study website: <https://prepstudy.co.uk>

**Laurie James-Hawkins - *Strategic Silence: College Men and Hegemonic Masculinity in Contraceptive Decision Making***

Condom use among college men in the United States is notoriously erratic, yet we know little about these men’s approaches to other contraceptives. In this paper, accounts from 44 men attending a university in the western United States reveal men’s reliance on culturally situated ideas about gender, social class, race, and age in assessing the risk of pregnancy and STI acquisition in sexual encounters with women. Men reason that race- and class-privileged college women are STI-free, responsible for contraception, and will pursue abortion services if necessary. Since men expect women will take responsibility, they often stay silent about condoms and other contraceptives in sexual encounters—a process we term “strategic silence.” Men’s strategic silence helps uphold local constructions of hegemonic masculinity that prioritize men’s sexual desires and protects these constructions by subtly shifting contraceptive and sexual health responsibility onto women. Our analysis demonstrates the importance of men’s expectations of women for upholding constructions of hegemonic masculinity, which legitimate gender inequality in intimacy and are related to men’s underestimation of the risks associated with condom-free sex.

**Christian Eichert** is Lecturer in Marketing at Goldsmiths, University of London. His research interest lies at the intersection of sexuality, markets, and culture. **Jack Coffin** is Lecturer in Fashion Marketing at the

University of Manchester. He works on the consumer behaviour of LGBTQ+ populations, sexuality, and the consumption of space and place. **Shona Bettany** is Professor of Marketing at the University of Huddersfield. She is a leading expert on sexuality, gender, and marketing.

**Laurie James-Hawkins** is Senior Lecturer of Sociology and Social Psychology and Deputy Director of the Centre for Intimate and Sexual Citizenship at the University of Essex. Laurie is interested in the social psychology of women's health and reproductive health, human sexuality, gender dynamics, men and masculinity, and both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and studies gender and contraceptive use among emerging adults, as well as gender and health in Islamic countries.

**Mapping the global field of sexuality studies – 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 5:00-06:30 pm (CET)**

**Zowie Davy, Ana Cristina Santos, Chiara Bertone, Ryan Thoreson, Saskia E. Wieringa -  
*Presentation of the SAGE Handbook of Global Sexualities***

The presentation of the SAGE Handbook of Global Sexualities is an occasion to discuss strategies and dilemmas in mapping the field of sexuality studies. The Handbook strived to grasp global trends and main epistemological and methodological challenges, while giving account of the diversity and contentiousness of the field. As critical knowledge of sexuality and an essentialist view of sexuality as the expression of the subject's inner truth are being reassessed, scholars also operate in fields shaped by powerful global tendencies to re-naturalize social hierarchies. In this context, power relations within sexuality studies need to be addressed. A key issue the handbook had to deal with thus concerns the promises and pitfalls of decentering perspectives from mainstream sexology, the Global North and the works of well-established scholars.