

TRANS/QUEER GENDER AND NARRATIVE FORM

15TH, 22ND AND 29TH APRIL 2021

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

SUSAN LANSER, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY, US

TRISH SALAH, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, CAN

Since the first interventions in feminist narratology in the 1980s, the importance of gender as a contextual aspect of cultural productions has been firmly established in the study of narrative form. The interpretation of formal features such as narrative voice, poetic structure, temporality, genre and medium is inevitably influenced by the gender of those who produce, experience or are represented by texts. At the same time, queer and trans studies have established methodologies for approaching embodiment, ethics, social structures and cultural politics. This symposium brings together scholars working at the intersection of form and queer/trans gender in order to foster new approaches to the relationship between embodied identities and texts.

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PROGRAMME

Thursday, 15th April 2021, 3pm-5pm BST (GMT+1)

Writing/Reading/Playing Narratives of Trans Embodiment

Cody Mejeur, University at Buffalo

Tristessa de St Ange: A Character Study in TERF Light

Nemo Gorecki, Université de Lille SHS

Mad about the "Boys"? Passing and (Mis)recognition in Varro's *Eumenides*

Chris Mowat, Sheffield University/Newcastle University

‘The Monopoliser of Her Own Sex’: Queering Methodism in The Female Husband

Grainne O’Hare, Newcastle University

Keynote:

Narrating Trans Genres: Ordinary Time Travel and Autobiographical Science Fictions

Trish Salah, Queen’s University (CA)

Thursday, 22nd April 2021, 3pm-5pm BST (GMT+1)

Trans Touches Across Time and Text: *Confessions of the Fox*

Gil Mozer, Mesa Community College

Trans Forms: Gender-variant Subjectivity and First-person Narration

Chiara Pellegrini, Newcastle University

From Male Impersonator to Drag King Performer: A Palimpsestuous Reading of Sarah Waters’ *Tipping the Velvet*

Elsa Adán Hernández, University of Zaragoza

Asking Queer Questions about Narrative Coherence and Identity: How to Read ‘What She Knew’?

Joonas Sääntti, University of Jyväskylä

Keynote:

Trans-forming Narratology

Susan Lanser, Brandeis University

Thursday, 29th April 2021, 3pm-5pm BST (GMT+1)

Narrating Queer Subjectivity in 1830s Russia: Nadezhda Durova's A Year in St Petersburg (1838)

Margarita Vaysman, University of St Andrews

Duchess Achilles: Trans Narratives in James Thornhill's Achilles on Scyros

Aimee Hinds, University of Roehampton

When Literary Studies meet Trans/Gender Studies: Working with German Autobiographies Written by Trans People using Queer Theory and Narratology

Sandy Kathy Artuso, LEQGF - Laboratoire d'Études Queer, sur le Genre et les Féminismes

Untimely Subjectivities: Queer/Diasporic Temporality in Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*

Carolina Sánchez-Palencia, University of Seville (Spain)

'My Male Skin': (Self-)Narratives of Transmasculinities in Fanfiction

Jonathan A. Rose, University of Passau

Conclusion of Symposium:

Breakout Rooms Discussion

ABSTRACTS

Writing/Reading/Playing Narratives of Trans Embodiment

Cody Mejeur, University at Buffalo

Cognitive narrative scholarship has drawn attention to the roles of embodied cognition in encountering, reading, and interpreting texts (Punday 2003; Herman 2013; Carraciolo 2014). This trend has been paralleled in studies across media—for example, game studies has begun to explore how gameplay is mediated and profoundly affected by player

embodiment (Farrow & Iacovides 2014; Keogh 2018). Yet it has only been recently that cognitive studies scholars such as Karin Kukkonen have started to draw attention to the fact that the bodies that perceive and interpret narrative texts are different, meaning that cognitive studies of narrative must account for different embodied experiences in systems of race, gender, sexuality, and disability (2018). This paper furthers this work by arguing that the body is a site for bridging queer, feminist, and cognitive narratologies, reading them into each other and providing new insights for each. In particular, this paper focuses on what it means to be embodied as and think like a trans person in a narrative video game. I draw on my team's experiences of developing a video game where players play through short stories drawn from different trans folks' experiences, such as choosing which bathroom to use, going on a date, or finding a new church. By placing players in the shoes of different trans folks, the game asks players to think across difference and understand a bit of experiences that may not be like their own. Virtual embodiment in a video game cannot fully simulate what it is to be trans (nor should it), but the mediated experience of virtual space requires players to play across bodies in ways that resonate with trans experiences. In reflecting on these points, this paper highlights the challenges in representing trans embodiment, the narrative forms that help address them, and their implications for narrative theory.

Cody Mejeur is Visiting Assistant Professor of Game Studies at University at Buffalo, SUNY. Their work uses games to theorize narrative as an embodied and playful process that constructs how we understand ourselves, our realities, and our differences. They have published on games pedagogy, gender and queerness in games, and video game narratives and player experiences, and they are currently the game director for *Trans Folks Walking*, a narrative game about trans experiences. They are Co-Director of the Palah Light Lab at UB and work with the LGBTQ Video Game Archive on preserving and visualizing LGBTQ representation.

Tristessa de St Ange : A character Study in TERF light

Nemo Gorecki, Université de Lille SHS

That is why he had been the perfect man's woman! He had made himself the shrine of his own desires, had made of himself the only woman he could have loved!
(Angela Carter *The Passion of New Eve* Virago, London [1977] 128-129)

Tristessa de St Ange in *The Passion of New Eve* is an icon of idealised female suffering. The big twist of the short novel is that Tristessa is 'actually a man'. Since the character uses she/her pronouns and had requested a medical transition (refused to her because she is 'too much of a woman, already, for the good of the sex' (173 *ibid*)), she could reasonably be considered to be a trans-woman by modern definition. In the current popular debates around trans-identity (sometimes dubbed TERF wars) it would seem that Tristessa thus stands as a literary embodiment of many 'gender critical' 'concerns' about transwomen. By suggesting an in depth analysis of Tristessa's character and exploring the relation of transwomen with prescriptive female suffering (Serano's account for example) it would be interesting to see why, in current TERF trends, internalised misogyny invalidates transwomen's femininity but not cis-femininity. It will be necessary to interrogate the literary representation and glorification of suffering women, trans- like cis-, and distinguish a prescriptive pattern through this ideal. Thus various layers of narrative

have to be analysed: the biased representation of women by men, the internalisation of these tropes by women (trans- and cis-), and the ‘exposition’ of this internalisation when it comes to trans women (this being seen by TERFs as an appropriation of women’s body by ‘men’). Seeing how this translates in the character of Tristessa and her problematic representation might highlight a double-standard in Carter’s prose on female suffering.

Nemo Gorecki (transmasc NB - they/he) is a PhD student at the Université de Lille SHS where they completed a Masters thesis on the representation of transwomen and hijras in the latest novels of Mia Gallagher and Arundhati Roy. Their thesis focuses on ‘Queering Ireland’, taking four novels with LGBT+ protagonists by modern Irish authors as a starting point to explore the ‘Amphibian’ nature of queerness and Irishness using queer and decolonial theory.

Mad about the “Boys”? Passing and (Mis)recognition in Varro’s *Eumenides*

Chris Mowat, Sheffield University/Newcastle University

The practitioners of the cult of Cybele in Republican and early Imperial Rome, known as the galli, underwent voluntary self-castration as a requirement for entry into the cult. This initiation, essentially a form of premodern gender reassignment surgery, aligned the sex of their bodies to a position outside the male/female binary and, in many senses, removed them from any heterosexual (or at least heteronormative) matrix. Almost all the extant literary references to the galli treat them with disdain or revulsion: they appear the butt of jokes, repulsive perverts or frauds.

In this cultural milieu, the fragments of the *Eumenides*, a play by the Roman polymath Varro, stand out as taking a different approach to the galli. In what remains of the narrative, the unnamed protagonist spies upon a group of galli, seeming to become enchanted by and even enamored of them. In this paper, I want to situate this desire within the contextual revulsion that follows the galli, and ask *whom*, and indeed *how* is the protagonist desiring? Is he, in his desire, (re)placing them within at least a binary sexual matrix, a model already rife with binaries that do not and cannot map simply onto one another, such as man/woman, active/passive, and subject/object? Through aligning this construction of the galli to the contemporary transgender concept of ‘passing’, I want to consider the way in which they are viewed (and, perhaps, misunderstood) as sexually desirable objects in this narrative, and as gendered subjects in the wider context of Republican Roman society.

Chris Mowat is an honorary research fellow at Sheffield University and a teacher in Classics at Newcastle University. Their research focuses on the relationship between gender and religion in the Roman Republic, as well as broader themes of queerness and identities in the ancient world, and the history of sexuality. Their book, a revised version of their PhD thesis, *Engendering the Future: Divination and the Construction of Gender in the Late Roman Republic* came out in March 2021.

‘The Monopoliser of Her Own Sex’: Queering Methodism in The Female Husband

Grainne O’Hare, Newcastle University

1746 saw the publication of Henry Fielding's *The Female Husband*, an account based on the life of Mary Hamilton, who was that year brought to court under a charge of fraud for masquerading as a man ('Charles') and tricking a woman into marriage. As well as satisfying the desires of the eighteenth-century public to read sensational tales of criminals and misadventure, *The Female Husband* also served as one of many examples of anti-Methodist satire of the period. Misty G. Anderson speculates in her work *Imagining Methodism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* that Fielding's 'use of Methodism mocks the movement and, at the same time, takes it seriously as a transformational experience, dancing around the question of what difference belief makes.' Fielding's Hamilton is a follower of Methodism, a movement that sparked much controversy in the eighteenth century not least for the number of women who were members of Methodist societies, and some of whom took active leadership roles in preaching. This paper explores C18th anxieties demonstrated in the novel about the queer undertones associated with Methodism, from suspicions around the same-sex band meetings (Fielding describes Mrs Johnson, who first introduces Hamilton to Methodism, 'no novice in impurity, which, as she confess'd, she had learnt and often practiced at Bristol with her Methodistical sisters'), to concerns about the challenge Methodism presented to traditional perceptions of gender.

Gráinne O'Hare is a PhD candidate at Newcastle University. Her research focuses on representations of Methodist women in writing and print media of the eighteenth century, with particular interest in women's life-writing and correspondence, satirical prints, and Methodism in fiction. She is also Media Editor of Criticks Reviews for the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Trans Touches Across Time and Text: *Confessions of the Fox*

Gil Mozer, Mesa Community College

Paratext plays a prominent role in the public dissemination, reception, and promotion of trans narratives. Just as Gérard Genette argues that there is no text without paratext, there seem to be no public trans texts without paratext. Trans narratives must contend with the pressures of reams of external, adjacent, and supplementary text, often authored by people in positions of medical, legal, or academic authority. While transgender studies and social science scholars often study the complications, opportunities, and images of trans that appear in such paratexts in their work, few examples of literary fiction explore the relationship between trans narratives and their paratexts. This presentation examines the juxtaposition of a fictional paratext and a fictional text in Jordy Rosenberg's 2018 novel *Confessions of the Fox*. Rosenberg frames the novel's primary narrative, a fictional biography of eighteenth century transgender criminal *célèbre* Jack Sheppard, with multiple layers of heavy footnoting by the novel's narrator, Dr. Voth, a trans scholar who discovers and attempts to authenticate the manuscript. Voth tries to resolve the manuscript's ambiguities through research and speculation encapsulated in extensive footnotes. His commentary, however, progresses beyond illuminating the text, creating intersections between Sheppard's biography and his own narrative, reaching toward a trans "fellowship across time." This project argues that Rosenberg manipulates the novel form, juxtaposing a substantial and at times intrusive amount of Voth's paratext with Sheppard's narration of his own story. This project claims that Rosenberg thus queers the

nature and function of the paratext, critiquing its centrality to both the "presenting" and the "making present" of the individual trans narrative.

Gil Mozer (they/them, he/him) holds a PhD in English literature from the University of Miami (Florida, USA). Their book project, "Writing Transgender: Speculative and Real" explores transgender writers' innovations in fiction and engagement with paratext across genres. Their other research endeavors bring narrative studies and trans studies together to investigate literary fiction and media texts. As a member of the Residential English faculty at Mesa Community College in Mesa, Arizona, Gil teaches writing, literature, and humanities courses centered on visual rhetoric, education as liberation, and queer studies.

Trans Forms: Gender-variant Subjectivity and First-person Narration

Chiara Pellegrini, Newcastle University

Since the first interventions in feminist narratology in the 1980s, the importance of gender as a contextual aspect of texts has been firmly established in the study of narrative form. The interpretation of formal features such as narrative voice, poetic structure, temporality, genre and medium is inevitably influenced by the gender of those who produce, experience or are represented by texts. At the same time, queer and trans studies have established methodologies for approaching embodiment, ethics, social structures and cultural politics. This paper is the result of a sustained analysis of contemporary Anglophone narratives with gender-variant first-person narrators, produced and consumed in a variety of contexts and spanning a variety of genres – from Octavia Butler's *Imago* (1989), to Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body* (1992) to Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex* (2002), to Juliet Jacques' *Trans* (2015) and Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* (2018). My aim is to illuminate points of encounter between narratology and trans/queer studies that can act as a starting point to address the textual encoding of gender variance. By showing how an attention to narrative form and an attention to gender identity are guided by overlapping concerns – such as temporality, metaphors, authority, pronouns, voice, genre and the ethics of representation – I propose a methodology that can unpack the contemporary textual/political dimensions of issues of embodiment, time, visibility and voice.

Chiara Pellegrini is a Ph.D. candidate in English Literature at Newcastle University. Her research interests include literary studies, queer theory, trans studies, film and tv studies, narratology and continental philosophy. She has recently published two articles: 'Posttranssexual Temporalities: Negotiating Canonical Memoir Narratives in Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw* and Juliet Jacques' *Trans*' (*a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, 2019) and 'Adaptation as Queer Touching: Transgressing the Boundaries of Bodies and Texts in *The Safety of Objects*' (*Queer/Adaptation*, ed. by Pamela Demory, Palgrave 2019). Her interview with author Juliet Jacques has been published in *Transgender Studies Quarterly* (2020).

From Male Impersonator to Drag King Performer: A Palimpsestuous Reading of Sarah Waters' *Tipping the Velvet*

Elsa Adán Hernández, University of Zaragoza

Tipping the Velvet (1998), Sarah Waters' first novel, presents the life of Nancy Astley, an oyster girl born in the 1890s in Withstable, a seaside town on the north coast of Kent. She is expected to make a living in the family business, marry a kind man and live a contented life. However, in one of her visits to the theatre she meets the male impersonator Kitty Butler and, after falling in love, moves with her to London. This moment marks the beginning of Nan's process of self-discovery and maturation. Cross-dressing and theatricality open up to her the possibility of dismantling gender and sexual stereotypes on socially acceptable scenarios. As a first-person narrator, Nancy explains in detail her feelings and thoughts, which are strongly indebted to Judith Butler's ideas about performativity and acting as a kind of palimpsest to be unveiled by the reader. More concretely, Butler equates the concepts of queerness and the palimpsest to describe identity, something that runs parallel to Nan's process of identity formation. The palimpsest allows us to read through Nan's narrative and discover layers of meaning that can go unnoticed at first sight. Drawing on Gérard Genette, Sarah Dillon proposes the term "palimpsestuous" to describe the type of relationality that is reified in the palimpsest. This relational reading offers the possibility of revealing the connection between our own contemporary age and the issues of the Victorian past explored by Waters, as is the case of the male impersonator. Interpreting the novel from this relational perspective, the protagonists display clear drag king traits. The fact that this key but disregarded figure within the LGBTQ+ community can be unearthed from the profound layers of Waters's palimpsestuous novel, proves the Neo-Victorian genre "highlight[s] for astute readers the very contemporary (and un-Victorian) nature of the text" (Llewellyn 213).

Elsa Adán Hernández completed her degree in English Studies in 2015 at the University of Zaragoza. Then, she studied a Master of advanced studies in literature and film also at the University of Zaragoza and completed her Master Thesis with special mention in October 2016, in which she analysed in detail *Affinity* (1999) by Sarah Waters. She is currently a PhD student at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters in Zaragoza. Her main interests are concerned with British contemporary literature, where she focus on gender, feminist and queer studies, specially exploring these issues from the perspective of the historical novel.

Asking Queer Questions about Narrative Coherence and Identity: How to Read "What She Knew"?

Joonas Sääntti, University of Jyväskylä

"What she knew" (1986), a short story by Lydia Davis begins with a strange statement: "People did not know what she knew, that she was not really a woman but a man, often a fat man, but more often, probably, an old man." What kind of challenges does this remarkably compact short story (just 83 words) consisting of rather confusing statements and absurd qualifications create for narrative coherence, experientiality and readerly desire to naturalize and make sense of the story? Apart from the narrated content, the underreporting of information and the condensed minimalism of Davis's prose participate in creating the strangeness of her narratives. I discuss "What She Knew" as a test case for textual queer and political queer. What kind of challenges does the narrative style create for interpretation? Is it possible to read this story as a

representation of one possible subjective experience of gender? If so, how should we understand the “factual” in the following statement: “The fact that she was an old man made it hard for her to be a young woman.” Or the ambiguously homosexual situation ending the short story: “Why is this young man flirting with this old man?” The work of Lydia Davis is not unknown for queer theorists, especially after another short story, “Break It Down” was discussed by Lee Edelman and Lauren Berlant in their correspondence *Sex, or the Unbearable* (2003). Her prose works, however, usually focus on heterosexual dynamics and are arguably easier to situate in feminist than queer or queer-feminist contexts. This brings me to a second, perhaps larger and more directly political question concerning the politics of queer reading. Are there “right” and “wrong” narratives, texts, questions for a queer scholar? For a queer narratologist, discussing contemporary literature often means negotiating between strategic essentialism (focus on texts by LGBTQIA+ authors about queer lives) and strategic universalism (emphasizing the unknowability, uncertainty and contingency of anyone’s gender/sexuality). It is easy to imagine someone reading Davis’ story as making fun of trans experiences or using gender trouble mostly as an amusing spectacle. It is also possible to read the text as an exercise in style, ignoring thematic questions. From my point of view, the matter-of-factly reported breaking down of coherent gender identities is meant to be taken seriously – even while enjoying it’s strange, oblique, ambiguous, that is to say, queer sense of humor. For a reader identifying as anti-binary, the concise absurdity of this short story might even make it more resounding or truthful than most autobiographical novels and more representational poetics.

Joonas Säntti is a grant researcher and a PhD student at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Their research focuses on ungendered and ambiguously gendered narrators in 21st century Finnish and English prose fiction. Joonas is working with queer theory, feminist, cognitive and unnatural narratologies to study queer(ly) experimental literature. They have recently published on metalepsis and uses of metafiction in Finnish novels with transgressively gendered character-narrators. They understand queer as a critical tool, more as a verb and as an adjective than as an identity. Joonas has also worked as a university teacher and a literary critic.

Narrating Queer Subjectivity in 1830s Russia: Nadezhda Durova’s *A Year in St Petersburg* (1838)

Margarita Vaysman, University of St Andrews

The celebrated memoirs of Nadezhda Durova, a female cavalry officer who, disguised as a man, served in the Russian Army during the Napoleonic wars, have been popular with the Russian readers since the moment of their publication in 1836. The *Notes of the Cavalry Maiden* propelled Durova to fame and made her a welcome guest in the St Petersburg literary salons. Deftly manipulating the narrative form and conventions of military memoir, Durova subverted the gendered expectations of her readers to tell a story of a character who constantly negotiated a non-binary sexual identity. The 1962 Soviet musical *The Hussar Ballad* transformed the narrative of Durova’s military adventures into a love story and glossed over any controversial issues of gender normativity raised in Durova’s original text. Thanks to the lasting popularity of the film, Durova remains a familiar and curiously de-queered character to the contemporary Russian audiences and is well-known to historians of nineteenth-century Russian culture

in Russian and abroad since two English translations of *The Notes* were published in 1988. This paper will discuss Durova's later, less well-known text *A Year in St Petersburg*. In 1838, Durova travelled to St Petersburg from her home in provincial Russia to promote *The Notes* and other fiction published since then. *A Year in St Petersburg* offers an intriguing first-person account of negotiating the pitfalls of nineteenth-century queer celebrity: Durova markets herself as a female author in male disguise but the narrative reality of her gender identity appears to be more complex than that. I will offer a reading of Durova's narrative that considers both the direct challenges of narrating a non-binary identity in a language with gendered grammar, but also exposed the less obvious strategies of narrating queer celebrity. Durova's deft manipulation of narrative forms, both in 'feminising' the military memoir and 'masculinising' the sentimental tale through a first-person narration of queer subjectivity demonstrates an early example of queer exploration and manipulation of popular early-nineteenth-century literary genres.

Margarita Vaysman is Lecturer (Assistant Professor) and Head of Department of Russian at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, where she teaches Russian and comparative literature. She is the author of *Self-Conscious Realism: Metafiction and the Nineteenth-Century Russian Novel* (Legenda, 2021) and co-editor of *Russian Realism in the Nineteenth Century: Society, Knowledge, Narrative* (NLO, 2020). She specializes in Russian and Ukrainian literature, culture, and history of ideas, and is currently working on a cultural history of cross-dressing in Eastern Europe, exploring historical intersections between literature, culture, sexuality, fame, and fashion and their conflicted legacy in contemporary culture.

Duchess Achilles: Trans Narratives in James Thornhill's Achilles on Scyros

Aimee Hinds, University of Roehampton

The moment of Achilles' detection in womanly disguise on the island of Scyros was a popular theme in Roman art and the subject of Statius' unfinished first century CE epic poem the *Achilleid*; the tale also had a resurgence in the arts during the Restoration period. Intended to illustrate the innate dominance of masculinity, this episode was clearly supposed to be of great shame to Achilles, the embodiment of heroic masculinity (Bessone 2016). In an eighteenth-century mural by Sir James Thornhill, Achilles is depicted at the moment in which his gender is revealed through a performance of stereotypical masculinity. The painting presents a trans narrative: Achilles has the face of Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough. In this paper, I am concerned with how in this instance of classical reception, the myth has been utilised for its implications of gender fluidity to infer the same. The hyper-masculine Achilles, depicted at a moment of gender ambiguity, portrays the ultra-feminised Sarah Churchill, (re)queering both of them simultaneously. Thornhill's painting is socially and politically complex, drawing on contemporary explorations of sexuality and gender expressed through cross-dressing and women being allowed to act for the first time in Restoration theatre. In the *Achilleid*, Thetis' transformation suggests Achilles' re-birth as a woman; in Thornhill's painting, this metamorphosis is realised. Thus, the decision to use this specific moment from mythology can be redemptive and validating for both contemporary and modern notions of (trans)gender and sexuality, and allows the gender binarism in ancient versions of the myth become fluid and open to variation.

Aimee Hinds is a PhD student at the University of Roehampton, researching intersectional possibilities in receptions of Greek mythology in popular culture. Her approach to intersectionality encompasses queer theory, Marxist theory, post-coloniality and disability studies to explicitly open the boundaries of feminist theory. She has written about bad feminism in classical reception, issues with fashion's engagement with the ancient Mediterranean, and polychromy in Neoclassical and modern art.

When Literary Studies meet Trans/Gender Studies: Working with German Autobiographies Written by Trans People using Queer Theory and Narratology

Sandy Kathy Artuso, LEQGF - Laboratoire d'Études Queer, sur le Genre et les Féminismes

This paper synthesizes my dissertation which analyses a corpus of German autobiographies written by trans people between 1983 and 2016. As I follow a narratological approach, I focus on the structure of the stories told in these books, what life episodes are told, by whom, in which way. Not only should be asked – as Sandy Stone did in *The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto* – whose stories these are, but also, what stories want to be written and read. These questions will be answered using queer theoretical practices, while discussing the relevance and the effects of the so-called *trans narrative* on the production of contemporary German autobiographies. Furthermore, I will reflect on the importance of the body in trans autobiographies, and how the discussion of “the trans body” as an apparently unfinished project is achieved through the narration. This facet – the body as a teleological project - foreshadows a temporal dimension which will become unsurprisingly significant, especially when discussed under the lens of queer and trans temporalities.

Sandy Artuso is an independent literary researcher, combining Narrative Studies, Trans/Gender Studies and Queer Theory, with a soft spot for the representation of LGBTIQ+ people in literature, cinema and TV. She is the co-founder of LEQGF, an independent organisation for queer, gender and feminist studies in Luxembourg. Her doctoral thesis on German autobiographies written by trans people will be completed this spring.

Untimely Subjectivities: Queer/Diasporic Temporality in Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019)

Carolina Sánchez-Palencia, University of Seville (Spain)

Claiming that individuals and communities get their choices, rhythms and practices biopolitically choreographed by temporal mechanisms that dictate which human experiences are included or excluded, Elizabeth Freeman states that those “whose activities do not show up on the official time line, whose own time lines do not synchronize with it, are variously and often simultaneously black, female, queer” (2011). The narrative subject of Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) is black, female and (mostly) queer in her design of a polyphonic text featuring twelve women of colour occupying a temporal dimension that deviates from the linear and teleological modes. Following up on Warhol and Lanser's invitation to unbind narrative theory so as to include feminist and queer approaches (2015), it is my aim to analyse Evaristo's novel as

a text informed by queer temporality. I draw on Edelman (2004), Ahmed (2010, 2017), and Freeman (2010) to address these characters' resistance to chrononormative assumptions like "the straight time of domesticated gender, capital accumulation, and national coherence" (Ramberg 2016). I address her cast of "untimely subjects"—lesbians, transgender women, feminist killjoys and menopausal females—as characterized "chronotopically" inasmuch as their postmigrant, racialized and gendered subjectivities coalesce temporally and spatially seeing their pasts and futures overlap in a typically transpositional, queer and diasporic continuum. Considering that their life accounts constitute an archive of temporal dissidence associated to other forms of socio-sexual dissidence that have typified as queer for several decades now, we can argue that queer (auto)biography (as presented by Evaristo) stands as an overlapping of diverse times: the individual, the collective, the national and the historical. I also make use of Freeman's notion of *erotohistoriography* (2010) as a distinctive mode of queer time that not only recognizes non-linear chronopolitics, but decidedly prioritizes bodies and pleasures in self-representation—against the emphasis on trauma, pain and loss that has so far characterized many queer metanarratives. I contend that Evaristo depicts bodies as likewise performing this encounter between past and present in hybrid, carnal, transnational and intergenerational terms, and in her joining temporality and corporeality, memory and desire, she suggests alternative ways of narrating British contemporary history.

Carolina Sánchez-Palencia is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of English and American Literature at the University of Seville where she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate units and supervises PhD students. Her main areas of interest are Gender Studies, Postcolonial Criticism, Body Theory and Contemporary Literatures in English having published extensively on Modernist and Postmodernist authors. Dr. Sánchez-Palencia is a founding member of SIEMUS (Seminario Interdisciplinar de Estudios de la Mujer Universidad de Sevilla) and currently belongs to the research group "Escritoras y Escrituras" (HUM-753). She participates in national and European projects (Queer Temporalities in Anglo-American Culture PGC2018-095393-B-100 ongoing to 2022). Her experience in the field of Digital Humanities has led her to the Literature Advisory Group of ProQuest where she collaborates in the development of research tools and resources for faculty and students.

'My Male Skin': (Self-)Narratives of Transmasculinities in Fanfiction

Jonathan A. Rose, University of Passau

Fanfiction is "one of the many ways media audiences create and circulate their own media content today" (Ott and Mack 285). By creating narratives of their own based on those presented in e.g. films, TV series or literature, fans showcase and diversify the ways in which a text can be read and understood. As "archontic literature", fanfiction contributes to an archive that as "a virtual construct [surrounds a] text, including it and all texts related to it" (Derecho 65). This type of writing, according to Derecho, "has been often used by minority groups [...] as a technique for making social and cultural criticism" (61). The proliferation of fanfiction in digital culture is akin to the diversification of trans practices afforded by digital participation. Today's digital culture "shapes contemporary transgender practices" (Prosser) and has the potential to lead to "self-representations more prolific, multiform and engaging than those of pre-digital counterparts" (ibid.).

This paper examines the emerging fanfiction genre transfic, in which canonically cisgender characters are reimagined as trans – here primarily transmasculine, as a form of “digital trans” (Prosser). Through fanfiction’s inherently intertextual and palimpsestic nature, transfic provides an opportunity to add trans narratives to the possible readings and reworkings of a given text. Positioned at the intersections of (digital) media studies, fan(fiction) studies and trans studies, this paper understands transfic as a form of trans (self-)narrative which makes use of its digital platforms’ collective modes of storytelling to add trans to our cultural archives by making viable trans imaginings of popular characters and visible different narratives of transmasculinity, resulting in the emergence of trans(ing) spaces.

Jonathan A. Rose is a lecturer and PhD candidate at the Professorship of English Cultural and Media Studies at the University of Passau, Germany. He holds undergraduate degrees in economics and management as well as philosophy, English and literary studies. He graduated from the Free University Berlin with an MA degree in English Studies. His dissertation project looks at transgender narratives in fan cultures. Among his publications are book chapters on the continuing popularity of the *Harry Potter* phenomenon and the public-private nature of fanfiction. His research interests include popular culture, literature and new media, genders and sexualities, adaptation and related phenomena as well as fan cultures.