

inQueery 2024

“No Pride in Genocide”: Queer Politics in the Wake of Palestine

InQueery Symposium Overview

[Webinar Link](#)

Webinar ID: 930 7887 6206

Passcode: 722016

4:00-4:10	Welcome Remarks and Introduction
4:15-5:45	3 Concurrent Panels/Breakout Rooms
5:45-6:00	Break (Zoom meeting ends; return to same meeting ID)
6:00-7:00	Keynote: Sa’ed Atshan, “Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique”

Concurrent Session Panels

Panel/Breakout Room #1, Moderated by Sezin Zorlu

Feminist, Queer, Critical Race Perspectives in the Wake of Palestine

- *Queering Humanitarian Aid in Israel and Palestine: A Decolonial Critique—Chelsea Kopp
- *Shaping and Reshaping Imperialist Propaganda Through Identity— Neely Ellis
- *Imaginative Collectivism: Afrofuturism and Palestinian Liberation – Laila Rose Markland

Panel/Breakout Room #2, Moderated by Ash Debuse

Beyond Gay Tunnel Vision: Queer Intersectionalities

- *Accepting of All [Terms and conditions may apply]”: The Exclusion of Non-conformist and Diverse Racial identities in Queer Spaces – Will Legg
- * Militarization of Youth in America – Natalie Higgins
- * On Intersections of the Disability Justice & Fat Acceptance Movements— Monroe Amos

Panel/Breakout Room #3, Moderated by Kyle Douglas Serrott

Queer Texts and Contexts: Media, Space, and Arms Technology

- *Resisting Genocide: the Internet as Queer International? – Olivia Pavek
- * Why is Portland like that? The Politics of Trans Visibility – Lea Duffy
- * Let’s not ‘jump the gun’ on Trans Firearms Politics—Madeline Fodor and Forest Bletz



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
**Program in Women’s, Gender
and Sexuality Studies**



WSU PULLMAN
LGBTQ+ Center

Presentation Descriptions

Panel/Breakout Room #1, Moderated by Sezin Zorlu

Feminist, Queer, and Critical Race Perspectives in the Wake of Palestine

Queering Humanitarian Aid in Israel and Palestine: A Decolonial Critique—Chelsea Kopp

In its ruthless commodification of everything, neoliberalism has effectively naturalized the otherwise apparent irony of both US-backed weaponry and humanitarian aid in Israel and Palestine. My presentation analyzes discourse from Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza since 2024, Sigrid Kaag, through Bishnupriya Ghosh's essay, "The Plague Check: Population Culling as Pandemic Realpolitik," Steven Thrasher's *The Viral Underclass*, and Palestinian author Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*, to argue that a queer, feminist, and decolonial rendering of the genocide of Palestinians discloses a war/aid industrial complex that serves settler-colonial nations like the US and Israel through displacement, genocide, land-grabbing, and humanitarian aid. Thrasher and Ghosh underscore the ways in which COVID-19 and the HIV/AIDS crisis produce "shocks" (per Naomi Klein) that are weaponized by the neoliberal state to enact colonial practices and projects, while Abulhawa's novel critically examines these strategies as they manifest in sexual violence and incarceration in Palestine. As Angela Davis has pointed out, Palestine is a moral litmus test for the world. How the world responds to the occupation of Palestinian land and its erasure since the Balfour Agreement of 1917, will determine whether global communities continue to accept and naturalize the brutal processes of settler colonialism and global capitalism or embrace the leadership of grassroots movements and their strategies to actualize social, political, and environmental change in the 21st century.

Shaping and Reshaping Imperialist Propaganda Through Identity— Neely Ellis

The U.S. imperialist order relies on the dehumanization and marginalization of those at its imperial periphery. Deployment of these tactics, through the U.S.'s multifaceted media apparatus, has created a smokescreen to rationalize the violence it perpetuates. In particular, the U.S. has stoked Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism legitimizing both the War on Terror and the ongoing existence of the settler-colonial state of Israel. This propaganda has assumed many forms, with the narrative of "liberating the Muslim woman from behind the veil" proving to be exceptionally persuasive in bolstering consent for the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. By framing Muslim women as needing to be "saved," Western media and imperial feminists have created a justification for interventionism and occupation. However, in the case of Palestine, this narrative has been largely set aside. Prominent Palestinian feminist activists have effectively challenged this propaganda, rendering it ineffective. In its stead, Israel and the U.S. have turned to a tactic known as "pinkwashing," weaponizing LGBTQ identity to depict Palestinians—and Muslims more broadly—as uncivilized. Pinkwashing reinforces Islamophobic stereotypes and perpetuates a narrative of Western moral superiority. The varying caricatures of Islam and predominantly Muslim countries act as a continuation of early colonial ideologies and the so-called civilizing mission. Through these tactics, Western countries maintain their imperialistic goals, all while masking their aggression under the guise of humanitarianism and progressivism

Imaginative Collectivism: Afrofuturism and Palestinian Liberation—Laila Rose Markland

The power of collective resistance is a necessary opposition to the oppressive forces of imperialism, white supremacy and colonialism, which work to construct and maintain systems that use differences as

a means of division. In conversations around liberation throughout history there have been unavoidable connections between Black power movements and Palestinian resistance, highlighting the possibility of using differences as a means of unification and empowerment. Through an Afrofuturistic lens, this paper seeks to address liberation movements across the African and Palestinian diasporas with the use of major historical events such as the murder of George Floyd and the U.S. sanctioned Israeli genocide of Palestinians as markers for how community leads to change. Afrofuturism combines creative fictional perspectives with historical evolutions to imagine a liberated future for Black communities and by extension, all oppressed peoples. Furthermore, this paper aims to bring forward the intersection of LGBTQIA2+ identities within these communities and the role queerness plays in struggles of freedom past, present, and future. Through the analyzation of studies and research, the present paper will bring forth important considerations for continuing to move towards liberation through collective resistance and organized movements.

Panel/Breakout Room #2, Moderated by Ash Debus

Beyond Gay Tunnel Vision: Queer Intersectionalities

Accepting of all (Terms and Conditions may apply): The Exclusion of Non-conformist and Diverse Racial Identities in Queer Spaces—Will Legg

On the outside the Queer community prides itself on being radically accepting, but it takes only a shallow look into our culture and determines it is undoubtedly not. The community may come together to fight against major injustices. Still, the separation and hierarchy dependent on heteronormativity that thrives in once 'inclusive' spaces leaves entire demographics of people abandoned and isolated. Transgender and genderqueer culture was pioneered by trans women of color, people who challenged social norms, and is rooted in the idea of non-conformity. Yet over the years, an emergence of the "correct way" to be trans has caused those transitioning to instead turn to extreme conformity, forcing themselves into the mold set by Western, hetero society. As the Queer community grows, and the general public's opinion on gay rights evolves, the harmful stereotypes and rhetoric inside that same community gain more traction, and become more normalized. One phrase is replaced with another in an endless cycle of microaggressions- and refusing to say the quiet part out loud.

"I support trans people, but they should try a little harder to pass."

"How can I be expected not to misgender a trans guy when he has Double D's?"

"I'm gay, and I support the trans community, except for those ridiculous neo-pronouns."

Militarization of Youth in America – Natalie Higgins

In the United States, the prominence and thus influence of militarization within culture and society does not begin at eighteen. Adolescents are taught a homogenized conception of military and war due to military officers' presence throughout the secondary education system and through programs such as the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC). Furthermore, the military focuses recruitment at specific schools and demographics, such as students of color, low-income, rural, immigrant-heavy, or otherwise vulnerable student bodies. Such students are then pigeonholed into enlistment with the promise that it is the only means to better socioeconomic status, usually through "free" higher education. To aid the U.S. military's efforts in recruitment, strategies, such as Otherization and weaponizing youth-heavy interests like the gaming industry, have been utilized to intentionally target

adolescents for enlistment. The recruitment of adolescents has increased since the beginning of the twenty-first century after 9/11, leading to an increase in military activities and, thus, a higher demand for soldiers. During this recruitment period, Don't Ask, Don't Tell was in place; since then, Don't Ask, Don't Tell has been rescinded, and the military has increased efforts of inclusion for genders and sexualities. However, this inclusion ultimately achieves the same thing that youth-focused requirements and marketing strategies do—which is to get more bodies into uniforms. If the U.S. Military centers child recruitment around the premise that the armed forces are the gateway to a better future, then whose future is being bettered, and who defines betterment?

On Intersections of the Disability Justice & Fat Acceptance Movements— Monroe Amos

I recognize that under the definition of disability, fatness can be considered one. However, this is in itself anti-fat. Disability and health are opposites, in a completely nonmoral way. Fatness and health are not opposites; health can exist at every size. By claiming fatness as a disability, we make a claim that is antithetical to the fat acceptance movement. In this presentation, I focus on how socio-cultural understandings of fatness moralize it and functionally discuss it as a chronic illness, and therefore a disability. I will be exploring the ways that this moralization harms the fat acceptance movement, by using autoethnography, Marvel movies such as *Thor: Love and Thunder* and *Avengers: Endgame*, and narratives from the medical institution, such as pamphlets and posters shown in doctors' offices. I hope to conclude that, in both the moralization of fatness and the cultural considerations of fatness as a disability, we continue to uphold colonial beauty standards as the epitome of health. That serves no one, not even those for whom these systems were created to uphold and uplift.

Panel/Breakout Room #3, Moderated by Kyle Scott Serrott

Queer Texts and Contexts: Media, Space, and Arms Technology

Resisting Genocide: the Internet as Queer International? – Olivia Pavek

In her 2012 book *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International*, Sarah Schulman conceives of an ethereal space that queer people inhabit that hovers above straight people's geography that she dubs "the Queer International." What Schulman calls the international, I call the internet. The internet has been a powerful tool of information during the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. As major new publishers are bending their narratives to excuse and downplay the deaths of thousands, Palestinians themselves take to platforms like TikTok and Instagram to show the real conditions of what they are living under. From using social media for information on the real conditions, to GoFundMe campaigns allowing opportunities for direct aid to Palestinian people, the internet provides those of us an ocean away from Palestine an opportunity for direct involvement in resisting genocide. In this paper, I will explore the ways the internet mirrors Schulman's Queer International in how it provides us as queer people a chance to build coalitions across national and geographic barriers and acts as a site of resistance for people in the middle east and Palestine to organize and gain support. In analyzing the Woman, Life, Freedom movement in Iran and the role of social media in the ongoing genocide, we can begin to map these ethereal online spaces of resistance to understand the way that we as queer people online can contribute to and support these movements.

Why is Portland like that? The Politics of Trans Visibility – Lea Duffy

With this essay, I'd like to explore why Portland is viewed as something of a "trans haven": why there's a larger population of trans people and greater level of trans visibility than most American cities.

Portland doesn't have the *highest* population of trans people of any city in the US- that seems to be San Francisco- but it's viewed that way, in how it's described casually and in news coverage. And it's not the only city like that, the previously mentioned San Francisco has a perception like Portland's, but it's still not quite the same. It's almost like people think there's something in the water here turning people trans: why is that? I want to use intersectional analysis to describe how Portland's history of protest and resistance against the status quo of capitalism, homophobia and police militarism has made it fertile ground for a variety of interconnected progressive beliefs. I will use archival history and oral interviews to support my argument.

Let's not 'jump the gun' on Trans Firearms Politics—Madeline Fodor and Forest Bletz

Transgender, non-binary, and gender diverse (TG/NB/GD) people experience high rates of transphobia-fueled harassment and physical violence, including firearm-related harm. Individuals who perceive threats of violence are more likely to carry a handgun. However, our understanding of handgun behaviors and experiences of TG/NB/GD young adults is limited. Data were from MyVoice, a text message-based survey in which US young adults ($N=607$) responded to handgun-related open-ended prompts. Responses were thematically coded and compared between those identifying as TG/NB/GD ($n=86$) and cisgender ($n=521$). We found that TG/NB/GD young adults were more likely to share negative or mixed feelings about handguns ("I'm totally fine with handguns, but I am very against assault rifles."; 20/non-binary/mixed race), and less likely to report positive feelings, compared to their cisgender peers. They were also more likely to cite multiple reasons for peer handgun use. Broadly, we found incongruence between TG/NB/GD participants' feelings about handguns and experiences within their families/communities ("My mom and her husband have guns, for potential protection. I don't really feel that much safer with them having access to them."; 21/trans man/white). Due to the highly politicized nature of firearm perceptions in combination with transphobic violence, experiences of handguns among TG/NB/GD young adults are multi-faceted and complex. Qualitative inquiry highlights nuanced lived experiences, breaking down stereotypes of TG/NB/GD young adults with handguns, and contributes to conversations about transphobic violence and self-protection. Understanding TG/NB/GD young adults' perceptions and use of firearms can inform interventions to mitigate firearm-related harms by more accurately matching motives to safety practices.

InQueery 2024 Keynote Speaker (6:00pm-7:00pm)

Prof. Sa'ed Atshan

“Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique”

Dr. Sa'ed Atshan is Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies and Anthropology at Swarthmore College. His areas of research include contemporary Palestinian society and the politics of global LGBTQ social movements. Atshan is the author of *Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique* (Stanford University Press, 2020). His talk will draw on his book in light of recent events in Israel and Palestine.

