

**Sociology,  
Gender Studies  
and Criminology**

Te Taura Takata



# **Postgraduate Symposium VI Proceedings**

Friday 5 August 2022  
St Margaret's College, 333 Leith St.

**Social and  
Community Work**

Anua a iwi



Te Taura Takata / Sociology, Gender Studies and Criminology

Āhua ā iwi / Social & Community Work

# **POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM VI**

St Margaret's College, 5 August 2022

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Postgraduate Symposium Proceedings VI.

# **POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM VI PROCEEDINGS**

Symposium Programme

Presenters and Abstracts

Current and Recently Graduated Students

# Symposium Programme

*Join us for presentations with intermittent refreshment breaks throughout the day. Both the Research Presentations (15 minutes) and 3-Minute Thesis Presentations are followed by 5 minutes for audience feedback.*

*All presentations and quick breaks take place in the Valentine Common Room. If you need to step out, and when you return, please do so between presentations. Please wear a mask. Please mute your phone.*

**9:15** **Mihi Whakatau** Shayne Walker

**Waiata Puraea Nei**

**9:30** **Keynote Address** Dr Elizabeth Kerekere MP *via Zoom*

**Chair** Jordan Dougherty

**10:10-10:30—Morning tea in the Dining Room**

## **Research Presentations**

**Chair** Dr Rebecca Stringer

**10:30** Peyton Bond, 'Work like any other: Sex worker subjectivities and modern work' (Ph.D Gender Studies)

**10:50** Suddhabrata Deb Roy, 'Vanguardism and Women's Politics in India: The Working-Class Movement and the Idea of Women as Revolutionary Reason' (Ph.D Sociology) *via Zoom*

**11:10** Sonja Bohn, "Glorious' New Zealand' (Ph.D Sociology)

**11:30-11:35—Quick break**

## **Research Presentations**

**Chair** Joshua James

**11:35** Jordan Dougherty, 'Theory and Evaluation in Sexual Violence Prevention' (MA Sociology)

**11:55** Charlotte Von Waldenfels, 'Trauma, Landscape and Womanhood in Crime Drama' (Ph.D Gender Studies)

**12:15** Regina Maniam, 'Engaging Indigenous Worldviews in Doctoral Research' (Ph.D Sociology) *via Zoom*

**12:35-1:35—Lunch in the Dining Room**

### **3-Minute Thesis Presentations**

**Chair** Peyton Bond

**1:35** Olivia Mayhew, “‘I Volunteer!’ Examining the Experiences and Perceptions of New Zealand Community Prison Volunteers’ (MA Sociology)

**1:45** Faiqa Ahmad, ‘Discursive Representations of Domestic Violence in Urdu Novels and Readers’ Response to them’ (Ph.D Sociology) *via Zoom*

### **Research Presentations**

**1.55** Kennedy Templer, Kelvin Weston & Lillian Gibbs, ‘Lecturing Alone: The Reflections of University Instructors on Their Teaching during Covid-19 Pandemic’ (PG Dip and 300-level Sociology)

**2.15** Sophie Dix, ‘Rural New Zealand Men’s Perceptions of Dating’ (MA Sociology)

### **2.35-2.40—Quick break**

**Chair** Jordan Dougherty

**2.40** Aaron Hu, ‘Exploring Mental Health Disparities Among Chinese Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals: an introduction to the research context’ (Ph.D Gender Studies) *via Zoom*

**3.00** Sean Lennon, ‘Suicide and the Experiences of Queer Youth’ (Ph.D Gender Studies)

### **3.20 Catered Closing in the Valentine Common Room**

Join us to reflect on the day’s presentations and to give thanks. There will be a range of hot and cold beverages and snacks: juice, wine, beer and cheese, tea coffee and biscuits. Cash bar with Eftpos available.

### **Purea Nei**

Purea nei e te hau  
Horoia e te ua  
Whitiwhitia e te rā  
Mahea ake ngā pōraruru  
Makere ana ngā here

E rere wairua e rere  
Ki ngā ao o te rangi  
Whitiwhitia e te rā  
Mahea ake ngā pōraruru  
Makere ana ngā here



### **Keynote Speaker**

### **Dr Elizabeth Kerekere MP**

Elizabeth was born in Gisborne where she lives with her wife, Alofa Aiono, her dog Indiana, and cats Havana and Chicago. On her father's side, she is Whānau a Kai, Ngāti Oneone, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Rongowhakaata and Ngāi Tāmanuhiri. On her mother's side, Elizabeth hails from County Clare and County Tipperary in Ireland.

Elizabeth's moko kauae symbolises 'waewae pākura' – the footsteps of the pūkeko. This is not only an ancient term used in carving and weaving but also about holding space. She reflects this by a style of leadership that emphasises teamwork and collaboration. Elizabeth also creates and holds space to ensure the mana of the most marginalised is enhanced and their mauri recognised and valued.

Elizabeth has been community-based, focused on kaupapa Māori and Te Tiriti issues for 40 years. She works on local and national projects across health, mental health, suicide and violence prevention and youth development.

Elizabeth has represented Rainbow and indigenous human rights issues nationally and overseas, including at the United Nations in Geneva.

As a leader within Rainbow and youth development sectors for over 30 years, Elizabeth has mentored over 50 youth leaders and young people. Despite her hectic schedule, she is known for dropping everything if one of her young people calls. Elizabeth founded Tiwhanawhana Trust in 2001 to advocate for takatāpui to “tell our stories, build our communities and leave a legacy.” Elizabeth bases all of her work from this tūrangawaewae.

Elizabeth’s PhD on takatāpui identity and well-being is required reading in universities here and internationally, including in Australia, USA and Europe. Her takatāpui suicide prevention resources are used in health and school settings across the country. Elizabeth brings Te Tiriti o Waitangi/takatāpui-based advice to current research projects addressing: assisted reproductive health and family formation, LGBTIQ young people health and well-being, trans and non-binary health and well-being, and gender inclusive maternity care.

Elizabeth’s vibrant style is part of her life as an artist. She studied at Toi Houkura, the leading Māori art school in Gisborne and her artwork hangs in the Rainbow Room in Parliament and at the United Nations in New York.

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**Peyton Bond**

Kia ora! My name is Peyton, and I am almost finished with my PhD thesis. My thesis project examines the workplaces of indoor sex workers in Aotearoa New Zealand using qualitative feminist methodologies. The project has led to a broader interest in gendered workplaces and how people grapple with the precarity and neoliberalism of modern work. I am particularly interested in how people forge friendships and camaraderie both within and outside of workplaces to resist the difficulties of modern work and life. I hope to continue my work in this space, especially looking into how people experience friendships in different places and throughout a lifetime.

**Qualification:** PhD candidate

**Programme:** Gender Studies

**Supervisors:** Dr Fairleigh Gilmour and Professor Janine Hayward

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## **Work like any other: Sex worker subjectivities and modern work**

Peyton Bond

This paper draws from a project exploring the workplace experiences of indoor sex work in Aotearoa New Zealand. New Zealand decriminalised sex work in 2003 with the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA). While many places around the world criminalise sex work, the legislation in Aotearoa means that it is legally work as any other. Participants used both comparisons and contrasts to ‘straight’ work to contextualise their work experiences and I frame my analysis in that context. That is, I separate my analysis into worker subjectivities produced in the sex industry that are either the ‘same as’ or ‘different from’ those produced in the ‘contemporary work system.’

For this paper, I discuss the worker subjectivities that are produced in the sex industry that are the same as those produced within the contemporary work system. The contemporary work system is the modern landscape of work: precarious, gendered, and neoliberal. The worker subjectivities produced that exist within the contemporary work system are the affective worker, the commodified worker, and the responsible worker. The affective worker speaks to the specific and gendered nature of affective labour that is increasingly expected from workers. The commodified worker describes how the worker is consumed: a worker’s body, class, race, and more are used, shaped, and reproduced to extract a tangible or affective product. Lastly, the responsible worker is grounded in the neoliberal movement of responsibility from the state to the worker, particularly in discussions of safety, risk, and the need to work for survival.

**Keywords:** sex work; gendered workplaces; affective labour; commodifying workers; neoliberalism



*Anganwadi Workers on the 18th Day of their Strike in New Delhi 2021*

### **Suddhabrata Deb Roy**

Suddhabrata Deb Roy is a PhD Candidate at the University of Otago, New Zealand. He is the author of numerous academic articles which have appeared in journals like TripleC, Capital and Class, Films, Fashion & Consumption, etc. He is the author of ‘Social Media and Capitalism: People, Communities and Commodities’ (Daraja Press, 2022) and ‘Mass Struggle and Leninism: Dialectics, Contradictions and Revolution’ (Phoneme Books, 2022). He is currently working on a book on the dialectical and humanist understanding of the Post Covid-19 Scenario which has been contracted by Routledge.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Marcelle Dawson, Dr Simon Barber and Associate Professor Annabel Cooper

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## **Vanguardism and Women's Politics in India: The Working-Class Movement and the Idea of Women as Revolutionary Reason**

Suddhabrata Deb Roy

Anticapitalist politics in India is mostly dominated by political formations based upon the notion of the Revolutionary Vanguard. These formations which adhere largely to the organisational and ideological foundations propagated by the Third International or the Comintern, function through numerous mass organisations in addition to the Vanguard Party. These mass organisations serve as platforms where the political formations articulate specific positions on issues surrounding particular social attributes and design methods to intervene directly into their struggles by conceptualising them as a socio-political category. These include organisations such as the 'All India Democratic Women's' Association', 'National Federation of Women', 'Progressive Women's Organisation', etc., which remain ideologically affiliated to various left-wing Stalinist or Maoist political parties. Even though these organisations remain as multi-class organisations, they adhere strictly to the ideological formulations of the Vanguard Party, which often results in conflicts within the selves of certain individual members who do not find their issues represented fully in the politics of the Party – which is at times constructed as a higher being. Even though they remain committed to the ideas of women's liberation, their activities and positions remain bound to the Vanguardist notions which create rifts between how individual members analyse their own selves. Raya Dunayevskaya's elaboration on Hegelian Dialectics and her ideas suggesting the ideological construction of women as revolutionary force and reason prove critical to an analysis of these issues because of her emphasis on the idea of 'freedom'. The paper engages with her Marxist-Humanist philosophy to analyse the potential construction of the working women as vanguard within the Indian working-class movement and the possible implications of this transformation.

**Keywords:** Women; Vanguardism; Reason; Marx; Raya Dunayevskaya; Dialectics



**Sonja Bohn**

Kia ora, I'm a PhD student in Sociology. My project explores how capitalism and colonialism intersect with the environment at tourist sites in Aotearoa. I lived in Dunedin as a child and returned here three years ago, having completed my BA in Auckland and an MA in Sociology at Victoria, University of Wellington. My fascination with tourism started early. I recall slideshow evenings of my parents' two-year backpacking trip that brought them from their home in Switzerland to settle on an orchard in Otago. It seemed their travel stories provided a direct understanding of the world, but later, on my own travels, the relationship between tourists and the world we traverse appeared much more complicated.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Dr Simon Barber and Associate Professor Sophie Bond

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## **‘Glorious’ New Zealand**

Sonja Bohn

Tourism in Aotearoa involves two complex worlds with contradictory relationships to land and nature: one where land is whenua, intricately linked to people through whakapapa; and one where it is a resource to be exploited, enjoyed and sometimes preserved. Colonial collisions and negotiations between these worlds occur at touristic sites where nature is primarily a commodity and the industry operates through the structure of capitalism. Given the threat of climate change and pressure from burgeoning arrivals, followed by the interruption of Covid-19, industry and government planners propose to move towards less extractive relationships: to be sustainable, regenerative and to ‘give back’ to people and place. In my thesis I hope to critically interrogate such plans by examining the ontologies and values that underlie them.

In this presentation I set the scene for my project by showing how Aotearoa is packaged for tourism consumption. An early promotional film shows a scenic wonderland, a little outpost of the British Empire on the ‘rim’ of the world, while later publicity presents a 100% Pure adventure playground. Both these campaigns romanticise nature and Māori culture, while celebrating progress in the nation. I will suggest they each work to reinforce the colonial/capitalist relations of their respective times. To begin imagining less-exploitative alternatives for tourism in Aotearoa, I propose using a critical lens that recognises how contemporary carbon-fuelled tourism is entangled with both capitalism and colonialism.

**Keywords:** Aotearoa; tourism; discourse analysis; capitalism; colonialism; environment.



Jordan Dougherty

Kia ora, I'm Jordan Dougherty and I finished my Bachelor of Arts in Gender Studies and Sociology in 2014 and returned to study in 2021 to complete Honours in Gender Studies. During my time in undergrad and after I volunteered at Rape Crisis Dunedin (now ŌCASA). After travelling I spent 2018 and 2019 working at Te Whare Tāwharau here at Otago, where I learnt more about this issue and developed a greater understanding of how sexual violence impacts survivors. In my spare time I enjoy getting coffee with friends, watching TV and Movies and reading queer love stories.

**Qualification:** MA

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Melanie Beres and Dr Jeff Foote

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## Theory and Evaluation in Sexual Violence Prevention

Jordan Dougherty

Over the last fifty years, feminists, public health researchers, criminologists and academics have developed various frameworks and approaches in an attempt to tackle the persistent problem of sexual violence. In 2022, there are thousands of programs, campaigns and initiatives proposing varied methods of eliminating sexual violence. However, upon closer inspection, these approaches do not contain an explicit mechanism for change, nor are many of them aligned with contemporary feminist theories of the causes of sexual violence.

I will apply theoretically informed evaluation literature to uncover the implied mechanism for change in sexual violence prevention approaches, in order to uncover whether these programmes are both consistent with our contemporary understanding of the causes of sexual violence and if the implied mechanisms are consistent with evaluation literature. My presentation will focus on the literature review stage of this project. First by exploring feminist theories of sexual violence and approaches to sexual violence prevention. Then introducing evaluation literature, in order to establish how we know prevention efforts are working.

Efforts to prevent sexual violence have been ongoing, yet we have not seen a decrease of rates of sexual violence. We must utilise theory and tools from across disciplines to ensure the hard-earned resources going into prevention efforts are going to create the specific types of change they are targeting.

**Keywords:** sexual violence, prevention, consent education, theoretical evaluation



### **Charlotte von Waldenfels**

Charlotte began her venture into academia at the University of Aberdeen with an MA in Film and Visual Culture. She finished her MLitt in Film Studies at the University of St Andrews in 2019. Her research focuses on the representation of women and queer people, in particular how visual culture depicts and influences the lived reality of women. With that background, she is now embarking on her journey at Otago, researching the triangulation of trauma, landscape and womanhood in contemporary female-led crime series.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Gender Studies

**Supervisors:** Dr Rebecca Stringer and Professor Catherine Fowler

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## Trauma, Landscape and Womanhood in Crime Drama

Charlotte von Waldenfels

Within popular crime fiction on television there exists a subset of narratives that revolve around female detectives and the landscapes they experienced traumatic events in. Visually anchored in the conventions of Nordic Noir, the repeated association of women's trauma and the landscapes in which these events takes place warrants further exploration. Through a case study of *Top of the Lake* (2013-2017), *Zone Blanche* (2017-2019) and *La Forêt* (2017), this thesis investigates what exactly is being articulated in the triangulation of trauma, landscape and womanhood in these detective series.

This presentation focuses on the preliminary theory that what joins together landscape, trauma and womanhood in these shows is a shared existence of the liminal, which destabilises hierarchical binary thinking. In the space of the liminal, we find a coexistence of openness and doubt, a space to explore the debilitating nature of trauma and ideas about moving forward. The landscapes' functions as allegory, setting and character show the potential of the liminal as an opportunity to view and assess an existing system, while also acknowledging the social implications of such an act. The women in these shows have access to a knowledge that comes from experiences outside of the norm, which allows them to interact with the systems in a radically different way, but this comes at the cost of belonging. As such, they are simultaneously trailblazers *and* left behind by their communities.

**Keywords:** trauma; feminism; landscape; crime drama; television



### **Regina Maniam**

My name is Regina Maniam. I am Malaysian of Indian ethnicity. I was educated under a British school system and have work experience in local and international businesses. I have a doctorate in management. Recently, I realised that I am better able to engage in research by drawing on indigenous worldviews as opposed to the dominant modern worldviews (western). This position is influenced by evidence suggesting that using indigenous worldviews contributes to better outcomes for the economy, environment, health and education.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Patrick Vakaoti and Associate Professor Mele Taumoepeau

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## Engaging Indigenous Worldviews in Doctoral Research

Regina Maniam

My PhD thesis focuses on engaging indigenous worldviews in doctoral research. In this presentation I explain why it is important for doctoral students (as future academics, policymakers, and influencers) to consider indigenous worldviews. Despite technological progress and techniques for the betterment of the world, environmentally unfriendly and unsustainable development persist. Universities biased towards dominant modern (western) worldviews are implicated in this process. As a result, indigenous knowledge and worldviews have little or no place in many universities. They also face three notable challenges. First, indigenous topics are limited to indigenous studies departments. Second, indigenous knowledge and topics are often subsumed into mainstream undergraduate learning and teaching practices where they often remain invisible. This flows into postgraduate practices that maintain the status quo. Thirdly, it is difficult to prioritise a particular indigenous worldview because they are diverse, and universities often lack indigenous minded faculty members to progress this aspiration. I explore how these challenges can be understood and addressed.

**Keywords:** Indigenous worldviews; doctoral research



### **Olivia Mayhew**

Kia Ora!

My name is Olivia, and I am from Auckland and started studying at Otago in 2019. I started out in Psychology and Criminology where I had the opportunity to volunteer at Otago Corrections Facility, working alongside other students to deliver a creative writing class for the inmates. This ignited my passion and research interest in prison reform, inmate advocacy and volunteer work. Outside of study, I teach group fitness at UNIPOL and have a passion for fitness and keeping active in fun and collaborative ways.

**Qualification:** Masters of Arts (Coursework)

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisor:** Dr Fairleigh Gilmour

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## **“I Volunteer!” Examining the Experiences and Perceptions of New Zealand Community Prison Volunteers**

Olivia Mayhew

Increasingly, our prison systems are relying on community-based volunteers to deliver a diverse array of rehabilitative services and programs to inmates. Community based volunteers constitute an additional and unique role within our prison systems with their work often going unacknowledged by the public who have little access to the prison environment. Alongside this, there is a dearth of research examining the volunteers themselves and the realities of their work. Research that has been conducted in this area, is over saturated with accounts of American faith-based volunteer organisations, with little work focusing on New Zealand based volunteers. Considering the unique role of volunteer workers and the gaps in the current research, this project will focus on and investigate New Zealand community volunteers from a range of organisations who work to provide rehabilitative services within Aotearoa prisons. More specifically, this project will investigate the overarching research question, what are the perspectives of community volunteers on their experiences, benefits, and challenges of prison volunteer work within an Aotearoa New Zealand setting? To investigate my stated research question, I will conduct qualitative interviews with a range of prison volunteers from the Ōtepoti community. This project will work to thus uncover the nature of prison volunteer work from the perspective of the volunteers themselves. This will be to generate a richer understanding and appreciation for the role community members play within Aotearoa prison facilities.

**Keywords:** Volunteerism; prison; rehabilitation; community



*Cover Photos taken from 2 Urdu novels*

### **Faiqa Ahmad**

My name is Faiqa Ahmad. I am a Pakistani woman. My research interest lies in studying the social issues plaguing the Pakistani society, especially its women. I am a witness of how a certain level of discrepancy has prevailed on every level for women, be it on societal, educational, cultural, political, or personal level. The goal is to know the very root causes and try to highlight them. Apart from this, I am painter, poetess and a makeup enthusiast. I enjoy long afternoons with books and coffee, and love to go for walks with music on and cook food.

**Qualification:** MA

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Dr Fairleigh Evelyn Gilmour

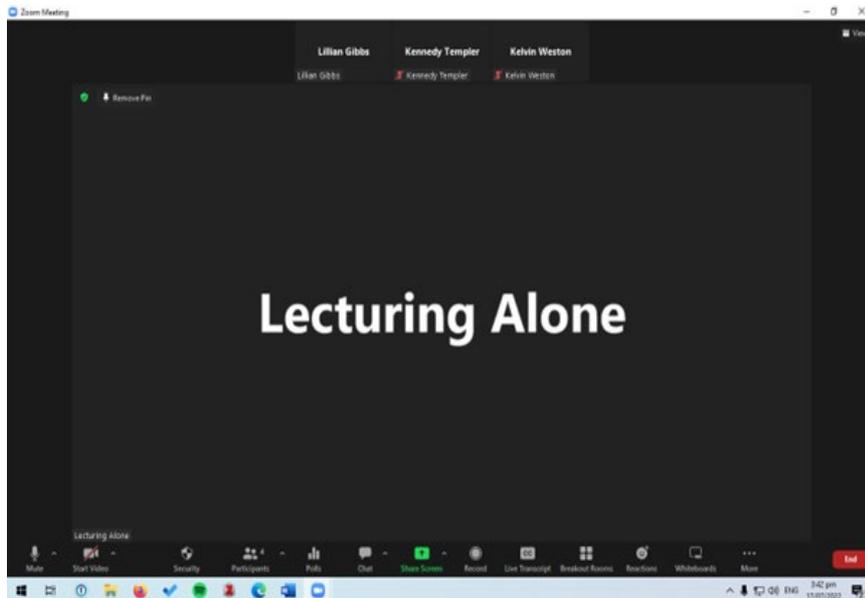
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## **Discursive Representations of Domestic Violence in Urdu Novels and Readers' Response to them**

Faiqa Ahmad

The proposed research aims to examine how domestic violence is discursively represented in Urdu novels published in Pakistani digests, and how readers respond to discourses therein. Urdu digests have solid readership with 300,000 adult readers receiving hard copies of these digests on monthly or quarterly basis, and with many more reading them online. They are particularly popular among teenage and young women in both rural and urban settings of Pakistan. For the proposed research, I will draw on the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It deals with relationships between societal structures and texts, and how they maintain power imbalance in the society. In study 1 of this research, seven novels featured in three prominent Urdu digests, between 2015 and 2020 with domestic violence as the central theme will be read multiple times to identify dialogues, objects and action to identify how domestic violence is being represented. The identified discourses will be further compared against Damien O'Neill's explanations of domestic violence circulating in the society. Study 2 will focus on how readers explain the texts on domestic violence in Urdu novels. Participants will be requested to read a chosen novel before coming to the focus group. Four focus groups will be conducted with the presence of 5 to 6 participants. The focus groups will be guided by a semi-structured interview schedule. The focus group schedule will include questions regarding their understanding of domestic violence and views about how it is explained in novels.

**Keywords:** Domestic Violence; Pakistan; Urdu Novels; Discourses; Women



*Staring into the void – Taken by Kennedy Templer*

### **Kennedy Templer, Kelvin Weston, and Lillian Gibbs**

Our collaboration started when we did a group project for SOCI306 at Otago University last year. Since we enjoyed the experience so much we decided to look further into our findings. Our research interests revolve mainly around the social experiences in the tertiary education system. All three of us are very passionate about getting into academia. Personally, Lillian has a strong interest in singing, creating, and performing her own music. Kelvin enjoys history and hiking, and Kennedy's interests involve playing the piano and saxophone.

**Qualifications:** PGDip and Undergraduate

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisor:** Yuki Watanabe

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## **Lecturing Alone: The Reflections of University Instructors on Their Teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Lillian Gibbs, Kennedy Templer & Kelvin Weston

The disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic have escalated the shift to online and hybrid models of instruction in tertiary education. This study presents the findings of qualitative interviews of university instructors who taught papers in 2020 to investigate their experiences of transitioning from in-person teaching to emergency remote teaching. The interviews covered a wide range of topics from pedagogical to personal including the use of instructional technologies (e.g. zoom, Echo 360 and Turnitin), interacting with students online, and coping with the social isolation. The initial round of interviews was conducted during Semester 1, 2021, followed by the second round in early 2022 to capture their reflective insights. Our findings revealed that the participants felt isolated by teaching remotely citing the difficulty of engaging in dialogic teaching, the loss of incidental interactions with students and the anxiety about their digital competencies as major reasons. The findings also outline how they coped and adapted in order to maintain a connection with students. The second round of interviews showed that the participants had developed strategies and skills to navigate unstable remote-teaching conditions in a more reflective manner. These findings inform us about the participants' journey as they adjusted to remote teaching and provide insights into developing further institutional support and guidance to ensure quality experiences for university instructors and thus their students in post-pandemic era.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, remote teaching, longitudinal, qualitative, social isolation, online learning, Zoom, tertiary education



## Sophie Dix

Kia ora, I'm Sophie. I grew up in small rural area in South Otago called Warepa. This upbringing formed an interest in rural communities. In 2020 I completed my BA in Gender Studies and Theatre and in 2021 I completed my Honours in Gender Studies. I have continued to explore different research interests, however, my main focus includes gender and sexuality in rural communities. I am also passionate about research and activism around sexual violence. Outside of studies I enjoy reading, exercise, baking and spending time with friends and family.

**Qualification:** MA

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Melanie Beres and Professor Hugh Campbell

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## Rural New Zealand Men's Perceptions of Dating

Sophie Dix

Issues that concern rural New Zealand are evermore becoming a common and often contentious topic in national news, whether that be cows' CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, Groundswell protests or recent Country Calendar complaints. This heightened national interest in rural New Zealand makes now a perfect time to look deeper into what those living rurally are thinking.

I am specifically interested in how gender is enacted within rural society as many scholars have highlighted the way masculinity is embedded in rural culture. Research on heterosexual dating suggests that factors like popular media, religion, conservative political beliefs, and sexism all impact gender roles in heterosexual dating. This research has been useful to inform sexuality education and also sexual violence prevention – as dating norms play a role in how sexual violence happens. Thus, this study will explore young rural New Zealand men's perceptions of romantic and sexual relationships.

Most of the research focuses on the general population and occurs in more urban environments. Research into rural communities suggests that there are gendered norms, particularly about masculinity, that differ from broader New Zealand gender norms.

This study will begin to address this gap by interviewing young rural New Zealand men to understand their perceptions about their dating lives. This presentation will focus on the discourse analysis I have conducted of rural men's interactions online specifically Facebook, as a tool to begin to understand rural New Zealand's men's perceptions of dating.

**Keywords:** rural; masculinity; gender; relationships



## Aaron Hu

Aaron Hu is a Chinese doctoral student who joined the School of Sociology, Gender Studies, and Criminology in 2022. She has studied in mainland China and Hong Kong. Prior to her doctoral studies, she worked as a full-time research assistant in Hong Kong for five years. She is pursuing her doctoral studies under the supervision of Dr John Wei and Associate Professor Melanie Beres. Her research interests include sexual minorities and mental health. She engages in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Dr John Wei and Associate Professor Melanie Beres

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## **Exploring Mental Health Disparities Among Chinese Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals: An introduction to the research context**

Aaron Hu

Previous studies have demonstrated that lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals are at a higher risk for mental health problems than their heterosexual counterparts. China has a population of approximately 70 million LGB people. Although homosexuality has been officially decriminalized and depathologized, many Chinese may still find it challenging to understand and tolerate LGB individuals. Social, political, cultural, internalized stigma and discrimination against LGB people persist significantly in current Chinese society. Consequently, Chinese LGB individuals are experiencing multiple pressures, which may lead to mental health problems. This review provides a brief introduction to the context of the research project. Firstly, it reviews how same-sex relations were tolerated in ancient China. Secondly, it introduces the turning point of how Chinese people's attitude toward same-sex relations was dramatically changed since the Western sexology concept of homosexuality was incorporated and accepted in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thirdly, it explains how people's attitude towards LGB individuals was influenced by the policy, social environment, traditional culture, and Confucian values. This review suggests that LGB individuals in contemporary China are facing multiple pressures from various perspectives. The mental health disparities among Chinese LGB subgroups should be explored under macro, meso, and micro levels. The present research project will provide evidence for policy-making and social work professional development.

**Keywords:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual; China; mental health disparities



**Sean Lennon**

Sean is at the beginning of his PhD, which focuses on the high rates of suicide amongst queer youth in Aotearoa and challenges the current psychocentric approach to suicide. He majored in psychology in undergrad and completed his masters in peace and conflict studies, focusing on the violence faced by the trans community in Aotearoa and interventions to the violence.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Gender Studies

**Supervisors:** Dr Fairleigh Gilmour and Dr Gabrielle Jenkins

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## Suicide and the Experiences of Queer Youth

Sean Lennon

Queer youth in Aotearoa experience higher rates of suicide ideation and suicide than their non queer peers. The context in which suicide occurs has been oversimplified, with research and interventions focusing on individual pathology, only understanding suicide as it relates to mental health issues like depression. However, an individualized approach fails to consider the impacts of marginalisation and social inequalities on suicide.

This study will: explore why queer youth in Aotearoa are experiencing higher levels of suicide ideation; and identify queer youth perspectives on how to reduce suicide. A critical suicidology framework will be used to examine the causes and impacts of social inequalities on suicide and how to disrupt them. Queer youth are marginalized and experience bullying at school, violence, and poorer access to healthcare. Analysing the impacts of marginalisation is essential to understand and meaningfully address suicide. An intersectional approach to both research design and analysis will help provide a more complete picture of the diversity of queer experiences.

To explore these research questions, the proposed study will involve a survey of approximately 200 queer youth in Aotearoa between the age of 16-25 and interviews with 10-15 participants. The interview sample will include those who have in the past but are not currently experiencing suicide ideation. The findings will help direct government resources toward addressing the causes of suicide and develop better support services for individuals in crisis.

**Keywords:** Suicide; Queer; Critical Suicidology; Intersectionality

# **CURRENT AND RECENTLY GRADUATED STUDENTS**

Te Taura Takata / Sociology, Gender Studies and Criminology

Āhua ā iwi / Social & Community Work



**Kaitlin Gordon**

My name is Kaitlin Gordon. I am currently completing my Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, with my dissertation focusing on the barriers and stigma that prevent children with Autism gaining a quality education. Looking at education as a social structure is something that I am passionate about, specifically looking at the inequalities within the education system for children with intellectual disabilities, specifically Autism. I believe that education is valuable and every child should have access to it, including those with intellectual disabilities. My hope is for the future is that education will become more accessible and inclusive for children with intellectual disabilities.

**Qualification:** Honours

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Professor Anita Gibbs

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## **Being Disabled in the Education System: The Issue of Systemic Barriers within the Education System and how to Gain Support for Children with Autism.**

Kaitlin Gordon

Quality education means that every child is included in the classroom and has equal access to individualised support and resources. However, the way the New Zealand education system constructs disability denies these children the opportunity to obtain a quality education. Disability is still defined under the medical approach to understanding disability. This approach categorises disability as something separate from the rest of society and continues to create stigma and barriers to these children obtaining a quality education. For children with Autism, the education system expects these children to learn and engage within a system that is not meeting their individual needs. Not only do these barriers impact the child directly, but this also creates issues for teachers in how they look to incorporate a child with autism within the classroom and also support their diverse needs.

This dissertation takes a qualitative approach, using secondary interview analysis to understand what quality education looks like for young people with autism and what are the barriers that prevents children from accessing quality education. The secondary interview analysis will use past interviews from journal articles, with the participants being teachers, parents, and students with autism. The purpose of this secondary interview analysis is to understand how the lack of resourcing, understanding from the teachers, and support for the family have prevented children with autism from obtaining a quality education. From the thematic analysis, the research will also identify what changes are needed in the future to help children with autism to obtain a quality education in New Zealand. By identifying these barriers within the education system, future research can look for ways to reduce them so children with Autism can have an easier transition from school into society.

**Keywords:** Autism; Secondary school; stigma; parent perspectives; teacher perspectives; barriers



**Cassandra Joseph**

Books are my best friends. I love them so much I did a BA (Hons) in English Literature and taught English & Creative Writing in varying capacities for 8 years. If books taught me anything, it's that life is unpredictable—and it pays to be adventurous. Therefore, my CV is peppered with eclectic jobs ranging from a presenter at a zoo, a scriptwriter for a children's animated television show, and a hostess at the Hard Rock Café. I was a sporadic backpacker (back in the days when pandemics were the stuff of Science Fiction), and all my travelling combined with various life experiences reminded me of just how passionate I am about the way people perceive identity. This led me back to a topic I've always found interesting—tomboys. My research is a culmination of my different interests—gender and queer theories, critical race theory, and the philosophies of language and feminism.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Gender Studies

**Supervisors:** Professor Chris Brickell and Dr Rebecca Stringer

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## Tomboys at the Intersections

Cassandra Joseph

The word “tomboy” makes its debut appearance in sixteenth century England, and was initially used to refer to rowdy males rather than boisterous females. In the 1590s to 1600s, its meaning then changed to signify “a girl who behaves like a spirited or boisterous boy; a wild romping girl; a hoyden,” which remains unchanged to this day. The shift in the definition of what it means to be a tomboy is highly symbolic of fluidity of meaning that the body of the tomboy takes on, and how its adept movement between gender binaries calls for a fresh perspective towards the conceptualisation of gender.

It is my aim to add to the scholarship available on the advent of tomboyism in a way that expands and exposes the binary constructs of femininity and masculinity, and dismantles the assumption of white privilege historically tied to the term. Tomboyism is a topic often overlooked as a “phase” in developing femininity, and I intend to give the concept more coherence in broadening the parameters of what it means to be a tomboy in adulthood. My research incorporates the use of differing cultural contexts, and relies heavily on my participants’ varying experiences of being or having been a tomboy.

I intend to dismantle the constructs of binary gender embodiment by exploring tomboyism and all its many facets and intersections. I hope to unravel what it means to be a tomboy and/or gender-nonconforming in contemporary (multi-cultural) society, ultimately exposing a view of gender that transcends the confines of the dualistic gender binary.

**Keywords:** Tomboys; Genderqueer; Non-binary; Race-politics; Gender Theory



## Georgia Knowles

Georgia graduated from the University of Otago in 2015, with an MA in Gender Studies focused on preventing sexual violence through social marketing campaigns. Since then, she has worked across the public service in a variety of roles that focus on preventing harmful sexual behaviour, bullying and harassment. Georgia's work has included strategic and policy leadership at a national level, as well as the design and delivery of prevention initiatives for specific population groups and communities.

Georgia recently implemented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'Speak up Safely' programme, which works to prevent and respond to unacceptable behaviour in the foreign service for staff around the globe. Currently she is the Family and Sexual Violence Programme Lead at ACC, where she supported the development of a \$45 million dollar investment into the primary prevention of sexual violence - the largest by any government agency in New Zealand history.

**Qualification:** PhD

**Programme:** Gender Studies

**Supervisor:** Dr Rebecca Stringer

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## **Love as a way of preventing violence: What can we learn about love from people who have experienced love and violence?**

Georgia Knowles

There is an emerging evidence base both in Aotearoa and internationally around preventing domestic and sexual violence, spanning disciplines such as gender studies, public health, criminology, social work and psychology. However, I've noticed through my work and research in the domestic and sexual violence prevention area, that very few studies or frameworks on domestic and sexual violence prevention engage with the concept of love or its qualities as a preventative factor. Nor do we conceptualise loving relationships or social norms as an outcome or goal of violence prevention efforts.

While love has been well studied, little has been done to advance the theorisation of love as a concept worth exploring to prevent domestic or sexual violence. Much of the research on the connection between love and violence perpetuates two dominant narratives of love and violence. One of love and violence as binary and the other of love and violence as conflated.

While much of the research gestures toward complexity and ambiguity in love and violence, it does not look deeply at the complexities of love for people who use or experience violence. This highlights gaps in the literature, including understanding how people distinguish between love and violence and what this can tell us about love as a framework for violence prevention.

**Keywords:** Violence prevention; love; domestic violence; wellbeing



Adlard, C. (2020, November 20). Walking Dead artist draws Covid-19 health messages for Shropshire. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-shropshire-55004128>

### Kelly Turketo

Transdisciplinary social theorist and popular culture nerd, fluent in memes. My first research dissertation was focused on *The Social Ontology of Zombies*. The supervising professor advised me, “you will never get a job in the field with a research topic like that”. They weren’t entirely incorrect... Fast forward ten years, a global pandemic struck. The social critiques present in zombie lore and literature – the allegory of otherness, notably – crossed over from mythology and fiction into the real world. While my new research topic has moved away from the popular culture curiosities of my youth, it still draws inspiration from those origins.

**Qualification:** MA

**Programme:** Sociology

**Supervisors:** Simon Barber

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## **Otherness (Xenophobia) within the frame of Covid-19: Perspectives from Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Australia.**

Kelly Turketo

Covid-19 forever altered humanity, shifting the very foundations of how societies function, as the value of human life was weighed against the importance of capitalist accumulation. What could have been a unifying phenomenon, a common enemy for the collective to fight against, the fear of this invisible threat saw people turn an apprehensive gaze on each other. Instead of unifying, the pandemic divided the world as rich countries stockpiled vaccines and medical supplies while vulnerable countries were left exposed. Class divides usually hidden under the guise of democratic equality were drawn to the forefront. The death toll amongst the lower socioeconomic population in the United States has been likened to class genocide. Dark areas of the internet whispered of conspiracies and certain governments encouraged such ideas with the spread of misinformation and weaponised rhetoric to redirect attention away from their own mishandling of the pandemic. China, and indeed Asia in general, were vilified. This caused further division, suspicion, and ultimately, an increase in hate crimes across the globe.

My dissertation is transdisciplinary in nature and aims to create a holistic conceptual framework from a myriad of schools of thought (sociology, philosophy, psychology, communication, political theory and so on). Using Covid-19 to explore the inversion of democracy, mass manipulation, xenophobia and the weaponisation of fear in politics and the media. As Noam Chomsky remarked in an interview relating to the AIDS epidemic, “hundreds of billions of dollars are spent every year to ‘control the public mind’”. My central hypothesis centres on this notion of elite control of the masses via division, disenfranchisement, distraction, fear, and discord, and the elite’s capture of democracy that results.

**Keywords:** Covid-19; mass manipulation; fear and social control; otherness; xenophobia; conspiracy theories.

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