

Online International Conference

Unreal Embodiments: The Queer, Trans* and Crip Faces of the Monster in Latin America



University of Cologne

Registration

Friday, December 16

15:00 to 20:30hs Cologne Time. Online

Organizers


Dr. Carlos G Halaburda, University of Toronto

Dr. Janek Scholz, University of Cologne

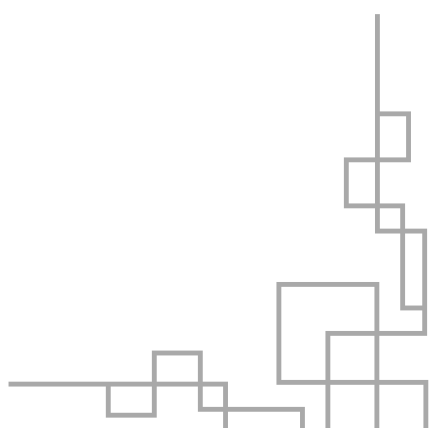


Bettina Zellner Grieco

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The Erich Auerbach Institute for Advanced Studies Online International Conference Unreal Embodiments examines how the notion of monstrosity perpetuates and yet simultaneously resists coercive systems of sexual discipline, gender regulation, and ableism in medical and cultural texts of modern Latin America. By studying a series of scientific and cultural sources, from psychiatry, criminology, and endocrinology to trans* novels, poetry, the printed and digital press, and graphic narratives, panelists will explore the multiple somatic and aesthetic constructions of queer, trans* and crip embodiments. The conference traces an ample genealogy that identifies a radical shift in perspectives of gender, sexuality, and ableism from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. Whereas in the modern cultural archive, the monster was a marker of pathology, contemporary postmodern literature and visuality reimagine the meanings of monstrosity and embodiment through a post-humanist lens. Revealing the bio-aesthetic procedures of ‘monstering’ and ‘re-monstering’ will offer new methodologies to show the cultural trajectory of body dissidence within the current scholarship on gender-sex minority populations.



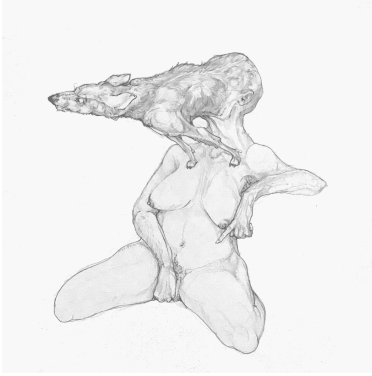


SCHEDULE
CET Central European Time



15:00-15:10hs

Unreal Embodiments
Welcome Remarks
Carlos G Halaburda
Janek Scholz



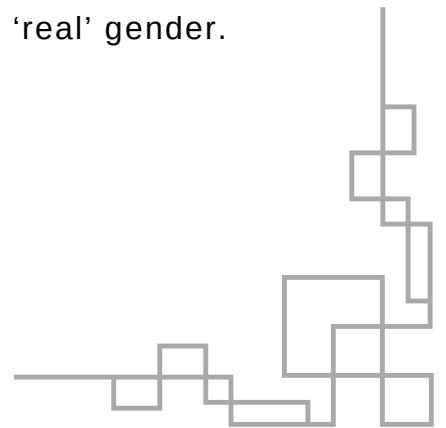
15:10-15:40

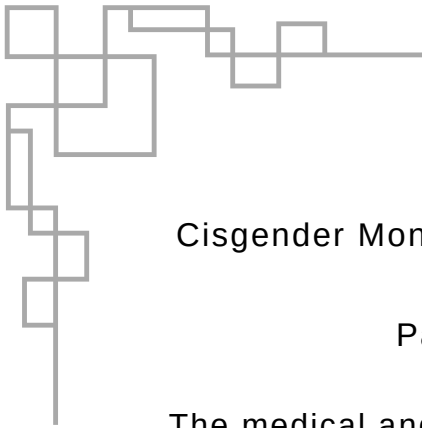
The Endocrine Monster: Uranists and the Literary Origins of Hormone
Science in Modern Brazil

Carlos G Halaburda University of Toronto

Erich Auerbach Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Cologne

This presentation offers a critical reinterpretation of how twentieth-century Brazilian psychiatrists, criminologists, and endocrinologists produced the notion of 'sexual inversion' (the somatic name applied to trans* embodiment) through a series of literary tropes about the monster: primitivism, vampirism, lycanthropy, disfigurement, lasciviousness, promiscuity, and irrationality. The medical studies considered are *Homosexualismo. A libertinagem no Rio de Janeiro. Estudo sobre as perversões e inversões do instinto genital* (Almeida, 1906); *Homosexualismo e endocrinologia* (Ribeiro, 1938); and *Medicina Legal [Legal Medicine]* (Gomes, 1942). These somatic fictions will be read against the grain of medicine's pathologizing impulse to look for instances of trans* testimonial agency and resistance against cisnormative reaffirmations of the 'real' gender.





15:40-16:10hs

Cisgender Monstrosity: A Brief History of Cisgender Frontier in Argentina
(20th Century)

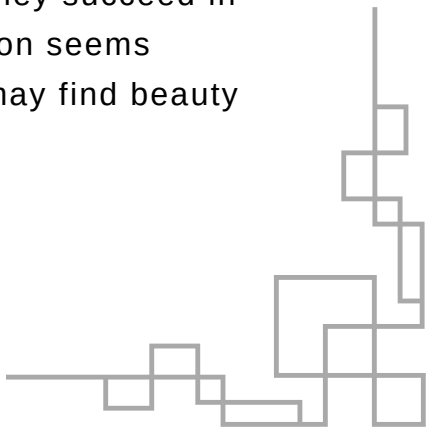
Patricio Simonetto - University College London

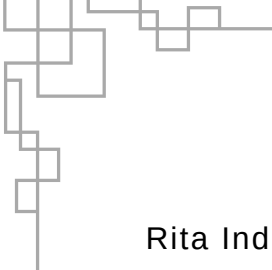
The medical and popular portrayal of gender non-conforming bodies was central to the making of gender belonging. Doctors and journalists circulated images and texts to define the limits of who could be considered a man or a woman. By focusing on five cases in vital moments in Argentine History (1900, 1930, 1960 and 1980), this presentation analyses the role of the public portrayal and experimentation in the production of the modern understanding of sex as a relationship between specific genitalia and gender belonging. This work will explore how trans history can renovate gender history by challenging previous cisgender bias.

16:10-16:40hs

Amoeboid shape-shifting and the monstrosity of slime in Lino Arruda,
Bruna Kury, and Aun Helden
Janek Scholz - University of Cologne

What is already underway in the context of the nation-state is still to be achieved in the field of gender identity: Overcoming the so-called container model towards a positive, potential-oriented view of hybridity. However, this change is by no means occurring at a rapid pace: The idea of fluidity, dilution and blending is a deep-seated anxiety that has been socio-politically fed for many centuries. The three Brazilian trans* artists Lino Arruda, Bruna Kury, and Aun Helden play with this unease towards shape-shifting and hybridity. In their works, they draw on the image of the monster and combine it with liquidity and fluidity as they make slime the starting point of their reflections. With this juxtaposition of two socially rejected concepts (monsters and slime), they succeed in a re-appropriation through which a positive reinterpretation seems possible. If the spectators overcome their disgust, they may find beauty in ugliness and the potential in living as a monster.





16:40- 17:10hs

Rita Indiana's Monsters - Speculative Writing from the Caribbean

Philipp Seidel - Freie Universität Berlin

Rita Indiana is a master at creating new dystopian worlds. In her second novel - *La mucama de Ominculé* - the Dominican author invites us to the not-so-distant future of 2037 on her native island, which underwent major political and social transformations and a serious ecological crisis following an earthquake in 2024 that threatens the seas and islands of the Caribbean. To save the ecosystem, the male protagonist Alcilde, who becomes - thanks to a new drug - the female protagonist Alcilde, must travel back in time to prevent the destruction of the environment in the past. At the same time, various events from this past are narrated, overlapping with episodes from the distant colonial past of the 17th century. This speculative narrative can certainly be described as queer, not only because the protagonist changes their sex, but also because of the different ways in which bodies are exposed to new futuristic technologies, but also because of the close connection to a natural, indigenous world through mysterious anemones. Ultimately, one must ask who the real monsters are, a question that will be explored in this paper.

17:10-18:10hs

Dinner/Lunch Break

18:10-18:40hs

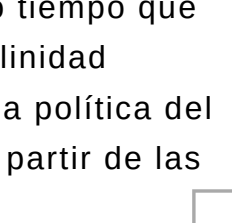
Fora do lar. Trabajo sexual, sexualidades no normadas y universos criminales a partir de las transposiciones cinematográficas de *A navalha na carne* de Plínio

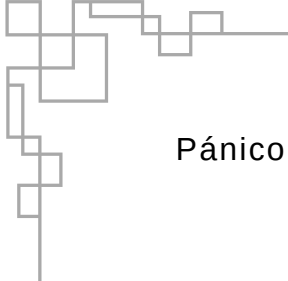
Marcos

Cecilia Nuria Gil Mariño

CONICET/Universidad de San Andrés

Estrenada en 1967 con gran éxito, la obra teatral *A navalha na carne* de Plínio Marcos, rápidamente se enfrentaría a la censura del régimen militar que prohibió por más de una década su presentación en Brasil. Un cafetão, una prostituta – en los términos de la época- y un empleado de limpieza homosexual son los protagonistas de la trama. No obstante, la censura no alcanzó al campo literario y cinematográfico, ya que en 1968 se editó el libro y en 1969, Braz Chediak realizó la primera transposición cinematográfica de la obra. La segunda llegaría décadas después, en 1997 dirigida por Neville de Almeida. *A navalha na carne* expone de manera cruda las relaciones de explotación y violencia de este triángulo de personajes marginales, configurando figuraciones de la alteridad por parte de la sexualidad no normada y por fuera de la moral de la época, al mismo tiempo que tuerce la retórica de lo monstruoso en la representación de la masculinidad hegemónica. En esta dirección, se propone pensar las tensiones de la política del monstruo, como repertorio de miedos, represiones y explotaciones a partir de las versiones cinematográficas de la obra teatral de Plínio Marcos.





18:40-19:10hs

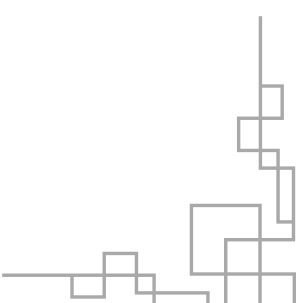
Pánico marimacho: deporte, feminidad masculina y moda en el fin de siècle
Nathalie Bouzaglo
Northwestern University

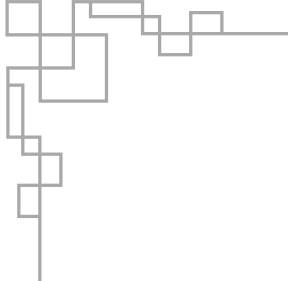
Propongo leer un grupo de relatos (artículos de periódicos, anuncios publicitarios, programas educativos) y sus polémicas en torno a la participación de las mujeres en el deporte a finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Las deportistas se solían representar como mujereres indeseables y marimachas. En esta época, la presencia de las mujeres masculinas se multiplica y deviene una especie de excusa o pretexto que sirve para imponer impredecibles fantasías sobre las construcciones del género y la sexualidad. Analizo específicamente la imagen de la mujer deportista, ya que su cuerpo -en este caso un cuerpo moldeable, metamorfoseado- evidencia las versátiles y contradictorias maneras de canalizar las representaciones de la masculinidad femenina y su relación con su inminente participación en la esfera pública. La mujer atleta, desatendida por la crítica latinoamericana, reta la idea de feminidad tradicional tras experimentar con cuerpos, vestimentas, estéticas, políticas y sensibilidades que ponen en crisis la constitución binaria del género y que, sobre todo, me permiten indagar en cómo se sella la violencia inscrita en la oposición binaria masculino-femenino.

19:10-19:40hs

Masculinity and Gestation: Claiming the Right to be a ... ¿Monster?
Andrés Mendieta
Northwestern University

In 2018 the world was scandalized at the public appearance of Thomas Beatie, known as “the first pregnant man”. Although he was not really the first man to be pregnant and the issue of male pregnancy had already been approached in numerous novels, films and poems, Beatie was the first man to go public about it as a transman. In this presentation, I investigate the figure of the pregnant man and how its unintelligible corporeality denaturalizes, destabilizes and re-articulates the normative bonds between binarism and the social roles and expectations of the sexed body. What makes the pregnant man figure an oxymoron?





19:40-20:10hs

Tocophobia, teratology and obstetric instruments in Eduardo Urzaiz's *Eugenia*
(1919)

Susan Antebi
University of Toronto

This paper focuses on some fictional and clinical writings of the Cuban-born Yucatec writer and physician, Dr. Eduardo Urzaiz, including his short novel, *Eugenia*, with attention to repeating concerns about the dangers of conventional childbirth, and to the author's insistence on caesarean sections as a safer and more modern alternative. *Eugenia* depicts a futuristic society in which males give birth to eugenically selected offspring via c-section, while in his medical texts of the same period, Dr. Urzaiz describes both monstrous births and the use of the caesarean procedure to avoid the risk of future incontinence in the mother. In these works, the horror and uncertainty associated with reproductive risk shifts continuously between the potentially gestating female body and the products of conception, resolving itself at times through the physician's instruments and his artful interventions.

20:10-20:30hs

Closing Remarks
Lino Arruda

PANELISTS

Susan Antebi **University of Toronto**



Susan Antebi is Professor of Latin American Literature at the University of Toronto, Canada. Her research focuses on disability and corporeality in the contexts of contemporary and twentieth-century Mexican cultural production. Her most recent book is *Embodied Archive: Disability in Post-Revolutionary Mexican Cultural Production* (U of Michigan Press, 2021). She is also the author of *Carnal Inscriptions: Spanish American Narratives of Corporeal Difference and Disability* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009). Her co-edited volumes include *Libre Acceso: Latin American Literature and Film through Disability Studies*, with Beth Jörgensen, (SUNY, 2016); and *The Matter of Disability: Materiality, Biopolitics, Crip Affect*, with David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, (U of Michigan Press, 2019).

Nathalie Bouzaglo **Northwestern University**



Nathalie Bouzaglo is Associate Professor of Latin American Literature at Northwestern University, United States. She specializes in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Latin American literature, with an emphasis on the modern novel and modern narratives of nation-building. She is the author of *Ficción adulterada: Pasiones ilícitas del entresiglo venezolano* (Editora Beatriz Viterbo, 2016). This book examines narratives of adultery from late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Venezuela and argues that these narratives are the site of complex and often contradictory projections regarding the establishment of a national culture in an emergent state.

PANELISTS

Carlos G Halaburda

University of Toronto

**Erich Auerbach Institute for Advanced
Studies, University of Cologne**



Carlos G. Halaburda is a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto and a Visiting Junior Research Fellow at the Erich Auerbach Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Cologne, Germany. His articles have appeared in Taller de Letras, Latin American Theater Review, and El lugar sin límites: Revista de Estudios y Políticas de Género. His next works will be published by Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos and Symposium: A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literatures. His article “Lunfardos: Queerness, Social Prophylaxis and the Futures of Reproduction in Argentine Dramaturgy” received two awards: the LASA Carlos Monsiváis award and the Canadian-Hispanic Association Essay Prize. His first book project, *Erotic Villains: Melodrama and the Twilights of Reproduction in Latin America*, is in preparation.

Andrés Mendieta

Northwestern University



Andrés Mendieta holds a B.A in Communication Studies from the National University of La Plata (UNLP) and a M.A in Gender Studies from the National University of Tres de Febrero (UNTREF) in Buenos Aires, Argentina where he also teaches seminars in queer and trans* studies. During 2019 - 2020 he was an Andrew W. Mellon predoctoral fellow in the Critical Theory in the Global South Project at Northwestern University. He is also a research member in “Trans. Arch: Archives in Transition” an international research project funded by the European Union’s Horizon Research.

His research focuses on trans* and queer theory, 19th century Latin American and archival studies. He is currently a PhD student at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Northwestern University.

PANELISTS



Cecilia Nuria Gil Mariño
CONICET/Universidad de San Andrés

Cecilia Nuria Gil Mariño is Assistant Researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), Argentina. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at the Instituto Luso Brasileiro (PBI) at the University of Cologne with a project on urban culture, sexuality, and cinematographic genres in Brazilian cinema, 1960-1980. She is the author of *The Market of Desire. Tango, Cinema and Mass Culture in 1930s Argentina* (Teseo, 2015). The book won the Second Prize of the Régimen de Fomento a la Producción Literaria Nacional y Estímulo a la Industria Editorial del Fondo Nacional de las Artes de la Argentina.



Janek Scholz
University of Cologne

Janek Scholz is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Portuguese-Brazilian Institute, University of Cologne, Germany. He holds a degree in Romance Studies (Italian and Portuguese), German as a Foreign Language and English Linguistics at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena. In 2020 he completed his PhD at Universität Wien with a project on the figure of the fortune teller in Brazilian literature, adopting a narratological and post-colonial approach. He is currently developing a postdoctoral project on contemporary queer literature in Latin America. He is the author of *Kartomantie in der brasilianischen Literatur. Fiktionale Möglichkeitsräume und narrative Hegemonie*, Peter Lang, 2021.

PANELISTS

Philipp Seidel
Freie Universität Berlin



Philipp Seidel is a Research Associate and PhD candidate in the Department of Latin American Literatures and Cultures at the Latin American Institute of the Freie Universität Berlin. He specializes in neo-Baroque Hispanic American and Brazilian literatures through the perspective of gender and queer studies. He is the author of “Cuerpos maricas, cuerpos travestis: cuerpo, performance y escritura en Pedro Lemebel,” published in *Cuerpos en oposición, cuerpos en composición. Representación de corporalidad en la literatura y cultura hispánicas actuales*, edited by Berit Callsen and Angelika Groß (Madrid: Iberoamericana, Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 2020).

Patricio Simonetto
University College London



Patricio Simonetto is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellow at the University College London (Institute of the Americas). He is the author of *Between Injury and Revolution. The Frente de Liberación Homosexual in Argentina* [Entre la injuria y la revolución. El Frente de Liberación Homosexual en la Argentina] (2017) and *Money is Not Everything. The Purchase and Sale of Sex in Argentina in the 20th Century* [El dinero no es todo. La compra y venta de sexo en la Argentina del siglo XX] (2019). He specializes in the social and cultural history of sexuality in Latin America. His new research project studies the making of "sex change" in Argentina during the 20th century. His next book *A Body of One's Own: A Trans* History of Argentina (1900-2012)* is forthcoming in 2023 with University of Texas Press.

PANELISTS

Lino Arruda

Brazilian artist, illustrator, graphic novelist, and researcher. He is known for the autobiographical comic book *Monstrans: Experiencing Hormones*, which was awarded by Itaú Cultural's Itaú Rumos fund. The work received the MixBrasil award, in 2021, in the category of best LGBTQIA+ book of the year and is a finalist for the Golden Crown Literary Society's 2022 Goldie awards, in the non-fiction category. Arruda is a trans man and often writes and researches on LGBTQIA+ topics. He earned a master's degree in Art History and a doctorate in Literature and both processes inspired his artistic productions. In addition to *Monstrans*, the artist has also published the zines *Anomalina* (2014), *Novo Corte de Peitos* (2018), *Quimer(d)a* (2015) and *Sapatoons* (2011). He currently writes the transfuturist comic *CISFORIA: The worst of both worlds* with the support of the ProAC fund.



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