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Happy Places, Unhappy Faces

Reserving Separate Amenities in Mid-Twentieth-Century Cape Province

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LUND UNIVERSITY

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HCA Graduate Research Symposium Programme

Monday 11 March 2019

Room 101, 30 Russell Square

14h30: Tea and coffee

14h40: Conveners' Welcome

Panel One: London

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| Chair: | Joseph Viscomi | |
| 14h45 | Anna Cusack | Burying Suicides in Early Modern London |
| 15h05 | Ralph Day | 'Reading for trust in records of London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard' |
| 15h25 | Jonny Matafin | 'A microhistory of the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology at Birkbeck, University of London, 1963-2003' (10 minutes) |
| 15h35 | Questions | 15 minutes |

-- Comfort Break --

Panel Two: The World Beyond London

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|--|
| Chair: | Hilary Sapire | |
| 16h00 | Caitlin Cunningham | 'A Fiend in Human Form': Child Sexual Abuse in California, 1849-1895 |
| 16h20 | Jagger Andersen Kirkby | 'Happy Places, Unhappy Faces: Segregating Recreational Amenities in Mid-Twentieth-Century Cape Province, c. 1957-1972' |
| 16h40 | Questions | 15 minutes |

16h55: Closing Remarks

After the symposium, we will be going for drinks to 'Friend at Hand', 2-4 Herbrand Street.

We hope you will join us!

HCA Graduate Research Symposium Programme

PANEL ONE

Anna Cusack

Supervisor: Brodie Waddell

'Burying Suicides in Early Modern London'

Suicide, in many ways, is that most private of deaths, often carried out in isolation, concealed by both the dying and those who discover them. In seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century London suicide was also considered the quintessential 'bad death'. Not only this, but it was considered a sin and a secular crime. A coroner and jury treated individuals who took their own lives as criminals. In the posthumous trials that followed acts of self-murder two verdicts could be given: *felo de se*, a felon against themselves and therefore a self-murderer; or *non compos mentis*, not of sound mind and hence a verdict of lunacy.

The suicide corpse was, in theory, to be interred at crossroads, on highways and in open fields with a stake thrust through the body. But despite the seemingly clear ecclesiastical proscription that no suicides should be granted Christian burial and the prevalence of excluding suicides from churchyards and burial grounds, many suicides were interred in them regardless. This paper follows individual suicide cases to their burial locations and shows the importance an individual's reputation prior to their suicide was when it came to the treatment of their corpse.

Ralph Day

Supervisor: Matt Cook

'Reading for trust in records of London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard'

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, a telephone information, advice and support service established in 1974, is at the centre of my research into LGBTQ experience in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s. I work from two main sets of primary sources: call logs, handwritten at the time by Switchboard volunteers; and oral history interviews that I am conducting now with people who called or volunteered for Switchboard in the 1970s and 1980s. Studying Switchboard's log books has led me to explore, in my first chapter, why callers and volunteers might trust each other enough to share sensitive information. In this paper, I explore how trust registers in an oral history interview with a man who called Switchboard in the late 1970s.

Jonny Matafin

Supervisor: Joanna Bourke

This PhD forms one part of a Birkbeck bicentenary research project, led by Professor Joanna Bourke, set to conclude ahead of the college's 200th anniversary in 2023.

The research is based on archival materials held at the college (basement library store), and a storage facility in Ely, Cambridgeshire; it is also set to include oral history interviews with key members of staff (active and retired), and former students.

The research aims to reveal structural shifts at Birkbeck during the period - punctuated by major reports on higher education in 1963 and 2003 - through a close analysis of everyday departmental teaching and research practices.

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PANEL TWO

Caitlin Cunningham

Supervisor: Joanna Bourke

‘A Fiend in Human Form’: Child Sexual Abuse in California, 1849-1895

In the decades following California’s admission to the Union, lawmakers, jurists, journalists, and the state’s Anglo-settler colonials worked out sexual politics in a social landscape vastly different to the urban centres to the east. These were characterised by a general imprecision around what instances of sexually violent behaviour would be recognised in law, and which perpetrators should be generally perceived as abhorrent. On one hand, assaults of women and girls over the age of consent tended to be characterised by a dissonance between hypothetical condemnation of rape and tolerance for actual instances of sexual violence, which were invariably inflected by notions of classed and raced ideologies of female sexuality. On the other, those cases where the victimised party was indisputably considered a “child,” observers were much more likely to be united in their disgust of perpetrators. In this environment of horror, Anglo commentators – inside and outside of courtrooms – expressed ideas of perpetrators of child sexual abuse that imagined them as monstrous and abhorrent, and rejected their behaviour in no uncertain terms. This paper will explore rape and sexual assault cases of girls below the age of consent, as well as the relative absence of cases involving young boys, to understand how the sexual assault of female children offered a galvanising and unionising outlet for concerns over sexual depravity and social morality in the early years of California’s statehood.

Jagger Andersen Kirkby

(visiting from Lund University, Sweden)

Supervisor: Wiebke Kolbe (Lund) | Hilary Sapire (Birkbeck)

Happy Places, Unhappy Faces: Segregating Recreational Amenities in Mid-Twentieth-Century Cape Province, c. 1957-1972

In 1957, the Parliament of South Africa passed the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, which legally enforced the then longstanding custom of reserving public amenities for the exclusive use by a particular racial group. Through a reading of a selection of sources, especially correspondence between provincial and local authorities and members of the public in apartheid-era Cape Province, I probe the ‘emotional practices’ involved in racial encounters that emerged by virtue of the provisions of the Act being implemented and applied. An analysis of the ‘emotion work’ that such practices constituted shows how recreational space came to be perceived as constituting certain ‘emotional atmospheres’ that were vulnerable to change. White ratepayers articulated feeling ‘out of place’ from inherently ‘happy’ places through emotions such as disgust, anger and fear, which in turn were perceived as having been caused by African and ‘coloured’ transgressions into these same places. ‘Coloured’ ratepayers instead articulated the same through fear of and disappointment with the increasing lack of recreational space made available to them. Under the provisions of the Act, emotional practices thus worked in a dialectic relationship with conceptions of race and space. The white authorities’ response to such qualms varied between acting on its natural sympathies with the emotional plight of its white ratepayers and protecting the interests of its ‘coloured’ ratepayers. The argument is, that the authorities were willing to further micro-segregation on the basis of racialised emotional practices provided that this did not interfere with apartheid policies at the macro-level.