

Annual Activity Report 2016-17

Research Committee on Comparative Gender Studies

International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA)

1. Statement of Purpose

The Comparative Gender Studies Committee works to further the comparative study of gender and sexuality through organizing innovative seminar programmes at the ICLA and at other conferences, such as the ACLA, and through supporting research and publication in the relatively new fields of comparative gender and comparative queer studies. We define 'comparative' in its broadest sense as an approach to the study of literature and culture that includes: a) traditional comparisons across national and linguistic borders as these relate specifically to gender and/or sexuality; b) comparative work across historical, postcolonial, and transnational contexts focusing on gender and/or sexuality; and c) scholarship using gender and/or sexuality as sites of comparison themselves, or as they intersect with race, class, ethnicity, national and religious affiliation, and other sites of difference.

We also support research on the gender and queer politics of textual and/or cultural translation in all historical periods. The work from our seminars is published in international peer-review journals and in edited collections with major academic presses. Anyone with a scholarly interest in comparative gender/queer studies is invited to join the Committee, and we especially welcome graduate students.

2. ICLA World Congress in Vienna 2016

The Committee sponsored a well-attended five-day seminar at the ICLA World Congress in Vienna in July 2016 on the topic of '(Queer) Relationality: Gender and Queer Comparatists at Work'. Chaired by William J Spurlin, the seminar featured 20 speakers, who together explored queer relationality and how to theorise the ways in which genders, sexualities, languages, temporalities, identities, and cultural spaces 'touch'.

3. Annual Business Meeting of the Committee

The ICLA Comparative Gender Studies Committee held its annual business meeting on July 26, 2016 at the ICLA World Congress in Vienna. The business meeting is open to its members and to anyone with a scholarly interest in comparative gender and comparative queer studies. Following introductions, elections were held to fill posts vacated by those whose offices expired in 2016, including the Chair and one Executive Committee Member. The Committee also discussed plans for a seminar at ACLA 2017 in Utrecht and at the Canadian Comparative Literature Association Meeting 2017, May 28 to 30, Ryerson University. Finally, publication of conference papers was discussed, as well as the possibility to collaborate with other research committees.

The Committee will hold its next Annual Business Meeting on July 8, 2017, 1-2:30pm at ACLA 2017 in Utrecht.

4. Elected Officers of the ICLA Gender Studies Committee

Officers serve a three-year term with the option to serve only one additional term of three years if they so choose. Terms of office expire at the ICLA conference in the year given in parentheses.

President/Chair (2022)

Liedeke Plate, Radboud University (NL)

Vice President (2022)

Jordana Greenblatt, University of Toronto and York University (Canada)

Secretary (renewed through 2019)

Chris Coffman, University of Alaska, Fairbanks (USA)

Elected Executive Board Member (renewed through 2019)

Elizabeth Richmond-Garza, University of Texas at Austin (USA)

Elected Executive Board Member (2022)

Rita Terezinha Schmidt, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

Elected Executive Board Member (2022)

Tegan Zimmerman, Stephens College (USA)

Past President (2017)

William J Spurlin, Brunel University London (UK)

5. Committee-Sponsored Programme at ACLA 2017 in Utrecht

The Committee will sponsor a three-day seminar at ACLA 2017 in Utrecht, entitled 'Queering the Posthuman', chaired by Liedeke Plate (Radboud University), Alessandro Grilli (University of Pisa) and Matthew Mild (University of London).

6. Other sponsored programmes

The Committee also sponsored a programme at CCLA 2017, entitled 'Defiant Bodies: Genders, Sexualities, and Literatures', chaired by Tegan Zimmerman (Stephens College), Ryerson University, 28 May 2017. It was also involved in the organization of 'Cirque 2017: What's New in Queer Studies?', L'Aquila (Italy), March 31-April 2, 2017 and its past president William J Spurlin delivered a keynote address.

7. Publications

The Committee has published a number of special issues in such journals as *Comparative Critical Studies* (2009), *Comparative Literature Studies* (2014), and *Intertexts* (2014). Additionally, the Committee has published edited volumes, such as *Translating Women* (ed. Luise von Flotow, 2010) and *Comparatively Queer* (eds. Jarrod Hayes, Margaret Higonnet and William J Spurlin, 2010). All of these works have made important interventions in the field. The committee has several other projects in line, including an edited collection based on the papers presented at recent committee-sponsored meetings.

8. Website

The Committee has its own website: <https://sites.google.com/a/alaska.edu/icla-comparative-gender-studies-committee/executive-board>; as well as a distribution list: icla-gender-studies-committee@lists.alaska.edu. To contact us, send an email to Liedeke Plate (l.plate@let.ru.nl; president) or Chris Coffman (cecoffman@alaska.edu; secretary).

Submitted June 19, 2017 by

Liedeke Plate, President