

Institution: The University of Manchester		
Unit of Assessment: 27 (English Language and Literature)		
Title of case study: Queer Arts as Activism		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2007-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Laura Doan Monica Pearl Jackie Stacey	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Doan Professor of Cultural History; Pearl Lecturer in C20 American Literature and Film; Stacey Professor of Media and Cultural Studies	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: Doan 2003-present Pearl 2004-present Stacey 2007-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013-July 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture (CSSC) is a hub for queer cultural and historical research and for creative collaborations with local and international organisations, arts centres and networks. The Centre's dual outlook of research and arts activism has created impact through two main pathways: CSSC's annual Sexuality Summer School (SSS), a forum for scholarly conversations in sexuality studies with a curated programme of queer arts events; and researchers' extensive contributions (including as curators, organisers and advisors) to a wide range of public arts activities in Manchester and beyond. The impact is demonstrated in three overlapping areas: (i) informing curatorial practice and programmes by public broadcasters; (ii) increasing LGBTQ visibility in the arts; and iii) promoting LGBTQ health and well-being through the arts.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The impact is underpinned by the research of three CSSC members: Doan, a cultural historian of sexuality, whose research locates the historical specificity of sexual categorisations of the twentieth century; Pearl, an AIDS activist since 1985 and academic researching the intersections between queer literature, the visual arts and LGBTQ health and sexual politics; and Stacey, an interdisciplinary scholar of queer and feminist visual cultures whose research facilitates an extensive level of arts activism and public engagement around sexuality, health and illness (particularly cancer). Co-founded by Doan in 2002, CSSC now houses researchers and postgraduates who have become increasingly engaged with queer and feminist creative practitioners in Manchester and beyond.</p> <p>Doan's research focuses on the historiography and history of sexuality, looking particularly at the ways in which we craft diverse accounts of LGBTQ pasts for different constituencies within the wider public realm. In Doan's monograph <i>Disturbing Practices</i> [1], her Tate Britain exhibition catalogue essay ("Portrait of an X" in <i>Queer British Art, 1861-1967</i> [2017], pp. 49-53) and her <i>Visual Culture</i> article on the 'queer portrait' [2], Doan differentiates between pathways to 'pastness', queer genealogy (a usable past to serve the needs of LGBT communities in the present) and what she terms a 'queer critical history' (historicization interested in how ordinary people 'knew' the sexual at earlier moments).</p> <p>Pearl's research tracks the emergence of queer subjectivity out of and alongside gay identity in response to the AIDS crisis and its representation in fiction [3]. Her publications focus on queer theory, New Queer Cinema and the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Pearl's co-edited collection [4] on the work of queer artist Qasim Riza Shaheen, following his participation in the SSS 2013, evidences the ways that queer arts can operate as activist interventions; the conceptualisation of the interchange between arts and activism has been central to her work.</p> <p>Stacey's research examines historical and conceptual changes in understandings of visual representations of sexuality and the body in cinema and medical science. Her co-edited collection <i>Queer Screen: A Screen Reader</i> [5] brings together the most significant articles on queer cinema published in the journal <i>Screen</i> between 1990 and 2005 (many of which she originally edited). Stacey's article with Bryson [6] establishes the connections between sexual, biological and temporal normativities, extending her previous arguments about medical and social stigmatisation (cancer as the C word and lesbian as the L word) into new fields of LGBTQ film (Barbara Hammer) and performance work (Peggy Shaw of theatre company Split Britches). Stacey's article on</p>		

Shaw's 'Butch Noir' [7] develops new conceptualisations of the temporalities of queer bodies and is the culmination of SSS collaborations with Split Britches (2012-2019).

3. References to the research

1. **Doan**, Laura. *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality and Women's Experience of Modern War* (2013). Monograph. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Reviewed widely, including in *Signs* 41 (4) 2016. The research was supported by the AHRC (AH/H004149/1, 2010, GBP34,319, PI **Doan**). Available from HEI on request (AOR).
2. **Doan**, Laura. "Then and Now: What the 'Queer' Portrait Can Teach Us about the 'New' Longue Durée", *Visual Culture in Britain* (2017) 18(1) 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14714787.2017.1310630> International peer-reviewed journal.
3. **Pearl**, Monica. *AIDS Literature and Gay Identity: The Literature of Loss* (2013). Monograph. New York: Routledge. In Previous REF. Reviewed in *GLQ*, 23 (1). AOR.
4. Hushlak, Mary Ann and **Pearl**, Monica (eds). *The Last Known Pose: Essays and Reflections on the Works of Qasim Riza Shaheen* (2018). Co-edited book. Manchester: Cornerhouse. AOR.
5. **Stacey**, Jackie and Street, Sarah (eds). *Queer Screen: A Screen Reader* (2007). London: Routledge. Essays originally published in the peer-reviewed journal *Screen*. In Previous REF. Reviewed in *Scope* (14) 2009. AOR.
6. **Stacey**, Jackie and Bryson, Mary. "Queering the Temporality of Cancer Survivorship", *Aporia* (2012) 4(1) 5-18. <https://doi.org/10.18192/aporia.v4i1.2921> O/A in peer-reviewed journal.
7. **Stacey**, Jackie. "Butch Noir", *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* (2019) 30(2) 30-71. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10407391-7736035> O/A in leading U.S. peer-reviewed journal, Duke University Press.

4. Details of the impact

CSSC's research has achieved significant reach and impact through arts activism via two complementary channels: (1) the Sexuality Summer School (SSS), an annual five-day forum for new scholarly and postgraduate research in sexuality studies, alongside a curated programme of queer public arts events, including film screenings, talks and live performances (<https://sexualitysummerschool.wordpress.com/>); and (2) CSSC researchers' extensive contributions to queer public arts as curators, organisers and advisors. Both channels have involved the development of working relationships with queer arts practitioners and cultural organisations in Manchester and nationally. Collaborations and partnerships include *Tate Britain*, *Manchester Pride*, *Greater Manchester LGBTQ Arts and Culture Network*, *Cornerhouse/HOME*, and *SICK! Festival*. Cumulatively and qualitatively, CSSC's approach to the arts as activism expresses a sustained commitment to the active mobilisation of queer research to achieve a transformative impact on the queer cultural life of Manchester and beyond.

Between 2014 and 2019, the SSS programme attracted approximately 40 postgraduate students per year, as well as larger audiences for SSS public arts events. For example, the programme for the 2019 SSS, *Queer Dialogues*, included a sold-out performance by Split Britches (78 people) and a talk by So Mayer of Club des Femmes on Queering the Film Canon (69 people). In 2020, in the context of COVID-19, **Stacey** curated an online resource on the SSS theme of *Queering the Archive [A.i]*, featuring UK and international visual artists, writers and performers, many of whom were facing significant losses of income due to the widespread cancellation of live cultural event programming. By 14 July 2020, the website had been viewed 6,570 times by visitors from 68 different countries. Ongoing publicity on social media in June 2020 achieved almost 50,000 impressions across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. In addition to the SSS programme, **Doan**, **Pearl** and **Stacey** have co-organised and contributed to 140 public arts events during the assessment period, reaching a total audience of 4,474. These include 35 on film; 33 on visual arts and performance; 25 on literature; 11 on activist debates; 17 on health and illness; and 19 on LGBTQ history (further examples are cited in sections i-iii below).

These activities and relationships have facilitated impact in three overlapping and mutually reinforcing areas: (i) informing curatorial practice and programming by public broadcasters; (ii) increasing LGBTQ visibility in the arts; and (iii) promoting LGBTQ health and well-being through the arts. An explicit challenge to homophobia and transphobia, exposing prejudice and discrimination that leads to invisibility, runs across all three areas.

i. Transforming public debates about queer sexuality by changing curatorial practice and shaping the work of broadcasters:

Doan was a consultant on new ways of conceptualising sexuality for a major international exhibition on queer art. **Doan's** research on sexual categories [1] directly influenced the curation of *Queer British Art, 1861-1967* at Tate Britain (5 April-1 October 2017; 110,000 visitors [B]). As the exhibition's curator Clare Barlow testifies, **Doan's** work transformed *Queer British Art* from "an old-fashioned attempt to identify LGBTQ people in the past", into "a nuanced exploration of the multifaceted nature of queerness in its historical context" [B]. The exhibition catalogue, which includes **Doan's** essay "Portrait of an X" (2017), sold 7,000 copies in its first year and by 2018 was in its third edition [B]. Barlow states that **Doan's** research has "gone on to have a profound impact on the sector as a whole" [B]. Barlow has given lectures in Germany, the Netherlands and Australia on the curatorial approach inspired by **Doan's** research, noting that "in a great part due to **Doan's** contribution, the exhibition has become an influential global landmark for the sector of how to approach the queer past" [B] and was cited in Maura Reilly's *Curatorial Activism* (2018).

This consultancy raised the profile of **Doan's** research [including 2] among public broadcasters. Her research on portraiture and the acquisition of a 'modern' knowledge of sex influenced the structuring and content of the 2017 BBC4 documentary *Gluck: Who Did She Think He Was?* in which **Doan** features as an expert; this programme was ranked '5' on IMDb, which lists 44 arts documentaries produced by BBC Arts Production, and is available on YouTube with 2,063 views as of 10/9/17 [A.ii]. **Doan** was a consultant for the Radio 4 'Queer Art in Britain' series (2017) and was interviewed by Simon Callow about her research on the history of 'public indecency' [A.iii]. She also spoke at the British Academy's 'History Hit Live' event (2019) with journalist Dan Snow, followed by an interview that became a podcast on 'History Hit' with over 1,000,000 listeners (*Forbes* magazine states that 'roughly 20%' of the audience for 'History Hit' comes from the USA) [A.iv].

ii. Increasing LGBTQ visibility in the arts by shaping programming, supporting queer practitioners and growing audiences for their work:

CSSC's combination of research with arts activism has promoted the making and exhibition of work by queer practitioners and influenced curatorial and organisational decisions in programming to include more queer work and build LGBTQ audiences.

Pearl's collaboration with Manchester-based queer performance artist, Qasim Riza Shaheen, promoted his work through her co-edited collection [4], which was launched at 'Asia Triennial Manchester 2018', HOME, 5-21 October, alongside Shaheen's new exhibition *The day after the day before I sinned* (260 attendees). **Pearl** and Shaheen were 'in conversation' with artistic director of HOME, Sarah Perks, and led a public debate at 'Number 70' in Manchester, 6/10/18 (30 attendees), and at the Live Arts Development Agency in London, 21/11/18 (40 attendees). Shaheen testifies that this research collaboration with **Pearl**, which emerged out of his participation in the SSS (2012), "has directly impacted the progression in my thinking as well as my practice." [C]

Stacey has supported queer creative work through the *LGBTQ Arts and Culture Network*, which is now embedded within the *LGBT Foundation*. Part of the original working group that established the need for such a network, **Stacey** has been an active participant in its activities, alongside representatives from 11 partner organisations: charities, advocacy groups and community leaders. The Network offers Arts Council England (ACE) 'funding clinics' to creative practitioners and organisations, and, at its 2020 Conference, artists pitched their work to programmers, curators and funders, including ACE [A.v].

Stacey's research on queer cinema, including [5], led to the establishment of partnerships with Rachel Hayward (*Cornerhouse/HOME*) and *Manchester Pride* in 2012 to grow and develop LGBTQ audiences. Hayward writes (2019) that "Our on-going work has increased the engagement activity for LGBTQ+ films which is a crucial part of HOME audience development strategy. The SSS partnership has provided access to guests and speakers who ordinarily would not have come to Manchester for a public event, and the HOME team values this fruitful relationship, which has helped increase audience numbers for queer films" [D]. Ticket sales have grown substantially: *Vito* on 19/8/13 (27); *Carol* 22/5/16 (159); and *The Miseducation of Cameron Post* on 7/9/18 (220). **Stacey** and **Pearl** also collaborated on the queer film mini-season POUT/fest (2015-present) at HOME [A.vi], and as part of an ongoing relationship, have "provided valuable curatorial expertise for one-off events, and advis[ed] on major seasons such as the 2019 programme *Celebrating Women in Global Cinema ... Both Jackie and Monica have provided stimulating and informed discussion during Q&As and events, and are popular speakers with our*

audiences” [D]. Via public engagement, ticket sales have increased, an LGBTQ audience has been established and queer film programming has expanded.

Stacey’s research [6, 7] led to the programming of Peggy Shaw’s performance *RUFF* about her queer life after a stroke, co-hosted by the SSS in 2014 at *Contact* theatre in Manchester (audience 320). Partnered by the *Stroke Association* (SA) and co-sponsored by The University of Manchester’s *Science, Stroke, Art* festival, the performance was followed by a public dialogue with Shaw and Consultant Stroke Physician Dr Khalil Kawafi, raising awareness about the intersections of LGBT identity and disability. **Stacey** and Chris Larkin, N.W. Director of the SA, also co-produced ‘Green Screening’, a workshop with Shaw and Lois Weaver (of *Split Britches*) at which stroke survivors reported seeing for the first time the links between taboos around illness and around sexuality [A.vii]. Larkin writes: “*Through Jackie’s introduction to Lois Weaver and Peggy Shaw, we have gone on to deliver a series of 6 workshops across England ... benefitting over 40 stroke survivors. These Green Screening workshops would not have taken place had Jackie not identified the opportunity for us to work together in partnership on...RUFF at Contact*” [E].

Stacey’s research on sexuality and cancer survivorship [6] has shaped arts programming to give greater visibility to LGBT work. *SICK! Festival* co-director, Tim Harrison, notes (2018) that “*Jackie has been a hugely valuable collaborator, advisor and contributor to SICK! Festival for several years*” [F]. **Stacey’s** work influenced the programming of 8 public debates at the 2015 festival on ‘Sex & Sexuality’ in Brighton and Manchester. Harrison writes: “*The insights that [Stacey] brought to the development of the programme informed its shape and overall approach. Jackie became a trusted critical ally, whose wealth of knowledge and experience enabled us to approach challenging issues with depth and integrity in a way that would not have been possible without her involvement*” [F]. The audience for events in 2015 in which **Stacey** was publicly involved was 518; and 5,000+ for the whole ‘Sex & Sexuality’ strand.

At the Belfast 2020 queer arts festival, *Outburst*, **Pearl** and **Stacey** used their research on queer culture [including 3] as the basis for a ‘Queer Theory for Queer Artists’ workshop for 45 participants, which was then repeated at Cultureplex in Manchester. Attendee Mark Croasdale (Manchester theatre maker) writes: “*Practically, I have gained knowledge and new language both to use in my work but also to explain to funding bodies why this work is important [and] why my methods are valid. I feel I can now communicate more effectively*” [G].

iii. Promoting health and well-being in the LGBTQ community through the arts:

CSSC researchers have educated health practitioners and medical professionals about LGBTQ issues through arts events. Their work has helped support LGBTQ cancer patients/survivors and people living with HIV by including patients’ voices in the arts. This has increased wellbeing and access to health knowledge and resources in the LGBTQ community.

Pearl’s research [3] has underpinned an increased number of public debates about HIV/AIDS in Manchester, and built links with and between artistic practitioners. Via the SSS 2014, **Pearl** organised a screening of the ACT UP documentary, *United in Anger* (2012) at Cornerhouse, and staged a public discussion with the audience and director Jim Hubbard to share strategies for challenging homophobia towards HIV-positive people (75 attendees). **Pearl** and **Stacey** organised a public lecture by the film’s producer Schulman at the SSS 2015 on *Queer Arts as Activism* (80 attendees). **Pearl** also led a post-screening discussion on challenging HIV/AIDS homophobia with representatives from the City Council at the *LGBT Foundation* in 2017 [A.viii]. **Pearl’s** own activism is the subject of an interview for the ACT UP Oral History Project in 2011: <http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/images/pearl.pdf>.

In 2018, **Pearl** was consultant for a programme of events curated by Bren O’Callaghan (curator, HOME) with ACT UP activist Avram Finkelstein to launch his publication *After Silence: A History of AIDS Through Its Images* (2018) in the UK. **Pearl** also interviewed Finkelstein at *Outburst Queer Arts Festival*, Belfast, and at HOME, in Manchester (45 attended), in conjunction with a related exhibition by artist John Walter (2019). O’Callaghan writes: “*Monica’s knowledge of the social and cultural impact of the AIDS crisis was invaluable in positioning John Walter’s extensive body of work... [She has the] ability to translate... the complex subject matter in a warm and informative manner, appropriate to all audiences of differing levels of knowledge*” [H].

Resulting directly from **Stacey** and **Doan’s** research [including 1], *Why Be Normal?* was the 2017 SSS theme. At **Doan’s** public lecture on the history of scientific ideas about ‘normal’ sexuality at the *People’s History Museum* (80 attendees), one member of the public reported how the lecture

had brought about a realisation of the historical variability of sexual norms for them and asked how this could be used to generate a challenge to homophobia.

In the SSS 2017, **Stacey's** research shaped the co-curation of a series of queer arts events with the LGBT Cancer Support Alliance (Lawrence Roberts and Benjamin Heyworth), co-funded by *Macmillan*, *The Christie NHS Foundation Trust* and the *LGBT Foundation*. These included a performance lecture 'Normal Bodies – What Are They Good For?' by Brian Lobel and queer actor and disabled rights activist, Liz Carr (of BBC *Silent Witness*), at the Manchester Royal Infirmary (75 attendees). Roberts commented that this was "*the highest attendance at a public event we have ever achieved, and the first public dialogue between LGBTQ cancer survivors and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust*" [I]. This partnership with the SSS "*led to a further collaboration between Brian Lobel and The Christie on the 100 Voices project*", an art installation at The Christie featuring voices from 100 people affected by cancer in October 2019 [A.ix].

Stacey's research [6] has directly influenced the work of queer practitioners, including performance artist Lobel, who states that her research on "*narrative, gender, and sexuality and cancer ... [was] a major influence on...my arts practice*" [J]. Lobel invited **Stacey** to participate in 'Sex, Cancer & Cocktails' (2015), as part of Manchester's *SICK!* Festival. Sponsored by the *Wellcome Trust*, 20 cancer survivors discussed the relationship between sex and cancer with a sexual health Consultant Physician and an Adolescent Clinical Nurse Specialist. Other performance events spurred by Lobel's dialogues with **Stacey's** research include: *Fun With Cancer Patients* (Contact Young Company) and the musical, *A Pacifist's Guide to Cancer*, which toured the UK (2016) and Australia (2018). **Stacey's** co-authored article with artist and academic Mary Bryson [6] on lesbians and cancer led to the UK premiere of Bryson and trans artist Chase Joyn't's video performance 'Resisterectomy' at the SSS 2014 [A.x].

Stacey's research on LGBT artistic responses to survivorship led to her curating and chairing a roundtable, 'Why Be Normal?' (2014; 100 attendees) supported by the *Wellcome Trust* as part of the national events linked to the Wellcome Library exhibition: 'The Institute of Sexology' 2014-2015. This was followed by **Stacey's** consultative role in *What Makes Me Me?* a four-day 'SICK! Lab' event in March 2016, leading to the 2017 festival. Such events, attended by doctors and nurses, were used as opportunities for **Stacey** and **Pearl** to advocate the urgency of improving medical communication to include LGBTQ patients' experiences of diagnosis and treatment.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Web links: i) Sexuality Summer School, *Queering the Archive: A Digital Prequel* (2020) <https://sexualitysummerschoolonline.wordpress.com/>; ii) Doan as expert contributor on BBC4's *Gluck* documentary (2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2e6JcJK6LM>; iii) BBC Radio 4, 'Public Indecency: Queer Art in Britain' (2017) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08y016r>; iv) History Hit live (2019) <https://player.fm/series/dan-snows-history-hit-106527/lesbian-women-during-world-war-one-with-laura-doan>; v) **Stacey's** work on the LGBT Arts and Culture Network <https://lgbt.foundation/news/update-on-the-greater-manchester-lgbt-arts-culture-network/328>; vi) **Pearl's** podcast introduction to POUTFest (2015) <https://homemcr.org/event/poutfest-2015/>; vii) Video of SSS collaboration between the Stroke Association, Split Britches and Consultant Stroke Physician (2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0RvcpNrQc0>; viii) Evidence of **Pearl's** consultancy on the LGBT Foundation's 'Let's Talk About Sex' exhibition (2017) <http://ltas-exhibition.lgbt.foundation/exhibition>; ix) *100 Voices* project at The Christie (2019) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1XeGlnf55E>; x) *Resisterectomy*: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPLdJMm0TPA>; SSS 2014 programme <https://sexualitysummerschool.wordpress.com/2014/05/06/sexuality-summer-school-2014-public-events/>.
- B. Testimonial from Curator of *Queer British Art, 1861-1967* (20 December 2018).
- C. Comments from Qasim Riza Shaheen (15 January 2019).
- D. Testimonial from Programme Manager: Film, HOME (4 January 2019).
- E. Testimonial from Zone Director - North, Stroke Association (3 January 2019).
- F. Testimonial from Creative Director, *SICK!* Festival (21 December 2018).
- G. Event feedback from theatre maker (2020).
- H. Testimonial from Curator, HOME (9 January 2019).
- I. Testimonial from Pride in Ageing Manager, LGBT Foundation (7 September 2020).
- J. Testimonial from Brian Lobel (21 December 2018).