

Seminar 16: (zoom link) LGBTIQ Homelessness in Europe

Chair: Lars Benjaminsen, DK

Robbie Stakelum and Jama Shelton, BE: LGBTIQ Homelessness in Europe: Perceptions, Attitudes & Challenges



Dr. Jama Shelton is an Assistant Professor at the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College, CUNY. They were previously the Deputy Executive Director of the True Colors Fund, a leading non-profit organization that works to end LGBT youth homelessness. Jama has worked with queer and trans youth for over 15 years and focused specifically on the issue of homelessness.

Robbie Stakelum leads on FEANTSA's work on LGBTIQ and youth homelessness. Over the past 6 years he has worked with FEANTSA's membership in sharing best practices, exchanges and research to improve services for youth and LGBTIQ people.



This workshop will present research conducted by FEANTSA, True Colour United & ILGA-Europe, validated by the Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, United States.

International evidence demonstrates that LGBTIQ homelessness gives rise to a unique set of needs for services to address. From North America we know that LGBTIQ community make up to 40% of youth homelessness¹ and are 120 times more likely to experience homelessness². The Fundamental Rights Agency estimates that 1 in 5 LGBTIQ people have experienced homelessness, rising to 1 in 3 for trans people. Our research comprises surveys with both LGBTIQ and homeless services to understand the challenges they face to working with LGBTIQ people and homelessness. This workshop will explore the research findings including the gap between homeless and LGBTIQ services, challenges in collecting data and lack of training for homeless services around discussing LGBTIQ issues. Less than 10% of homeless services said they collect information on sexual orientation or gender identity, yet 64% of organisations believe they work with LGBTIQ youth. This creates a situation where young people are often responsible for disclosing their sexuality or gender identity to services, this was recorded in 28% of services while 20% of services reported they 'just know'. Only 12% collect this information on intake forms and 5% ask the young people. Considering only 12% of respondents deliver a service designed specifically for LGBTIQ youth, and 8% for trans youth, there are many challenges in preventing and reducing LGBTIQ youth homelessness in Europe. This workshop will explore the research findings including the gap between homeless and LGBTIQ services, challenges in collecting data, lack of training for homeless services around discussing sexual orientation and gender identity.

Aideen Quilty and Michelle Norris, IE: Queer/ying Pathways through Youth Homelessness: Becoming, Being and Leaving LGBTIQ+ Youth Homelessness in Ireland



Michelle Norris is professor of social policy and Director of the Geary for Public Policy at University College Dublin. Her research interests focus on housing policy, homelessness and urban regeneration, particularly on the management and financing of social housing; the regeneration of social housing estates and inner urban areas; and comparative analysis of social housing provision and homelessness in Europe. She is the coordinator of the European Network for Housing Policy Working Group on Comparative Housing Policy and chair of the board of the government agency which finances social housing in Ireland.

Aideen Quilty is assistant professor in Gender Studies and Director of the Gender Studies Community/University Outreach Programme. A social justice advocate, she locates her undergraduate and postgraduate teaching as a form of critical civic practice and is committed to promoting access and participation



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for traditionally under-represented groups within HE. She was the recipient of a College and prestigious University Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in 2018. Recent publications include in *European Journal of Women's Studies* and the co-edited *Queer Teaching – Teaching Queer* (Routledge, 2019).

This article is based on the first national qualitative study of LGBTQI+ youth homelessness in Ireland (2018-2020). Drawing on in-depth narrative accounts of 23 young LGBTQI+ people we extend Clapham's (2002;2003;2005) housing pathways ways approach through a queer consideration of the structural challenges and agentic potentialities of young people's experiences of becoming, being and leaving homelessness. These in-depth accounts painfully attest to persistent exposure to harmful structural challenges posed by societal and internalised homophobia and transphobia. We suggest these factors shape distinctive LGBTQI+ homeless pathways which help explain the significantly higher rates of homelessness among LGBTQI+ youth compared to their cisgender and/or heterosexual peers. These accounts also reveal young LGBTQI+ people's sustained, embodied efforts to agentially challenge traditional meanings of housing and homelessness that reinscribe a privileging of reproduction and blood kinships (Bryan & Mayock, 2013; Shelton *et al* 2018). We argue for a queerly inscribed co-contextualisation of structure and agency in how we understand and address LGBTQI+ youth homelessness.

References:

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