

Queer STS Forum Birthday Party: Former contributors and friends celebrating the anniversary

Jenny Schlager



My previous connection to AG Queer STS

I am a founding member of the AG Queer STS, wrote, co-edited and reviewed for several of our Queer-feminist STS Forums, and I was most recently editor of the [8th Queer-feminist STS Forum](#) focusing on queer-feminist inclusion and visibility.

Growing Together with Queer STS

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

When professional co-working and friendship meet: I have known many of the AG Queer STS members for almost half of my life. Being part of this community from the very beginning has been both grounding and inspiring.

What happened since my contribution...

Since my first contribution, I have carried many inspirations with me—new perspectives, fruitful discussions, and a great deal of humor 😊

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

... see the importance of holding onto joy while continuing to challenge exclusions and hierarchies. From a queer-feminist STS perspective, the future is not just something to predict or manage, but something we can shape together.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

Let us celebrate and continue building spaces that nurture both thought and friendship. I hope that Queer STS remains a place where we can come together, inspire one another, and keep the conversations alive for many years to come!

Gittl Ratzler



Source: https://munster.fandom.com/wiki/Lily_Munster?file=The-Munsters-the-munsters-32602926-461-450.jpg

My previous connection to AG Queer STS

Brigitte Ratzler is a chemical engineer by training and has headed the Gender Equality Office at TU Wien for over 20 years. Her current field of interest is the inclusive design of technologies. And she states: “Personally, I really admire Lily Munster, if only because her housework consists of emptying dust bags and hanging up cobwebs.”

Look back with Joy

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

When I attended one of the annual STS conferences in Graz, I came into contact with this wonderful initiative for the first time. As I recall, at that time it was still a matter of finding our way towards what it could actually be and what perspectives it would involve. To be honest, I can't say when this was exactly, and what kind of contribution I brought to discussion.

At that time, I was however very interested in diverse masculinities, concepts related to them and different perspectives on them. I think Tanja Paulitz for the German-speaking world, Ulf Mellström and Raewyn Connell and Judy Wacjman inspired me greatly in my exploration of this topic.

All of this research was inspired by the fact that, in my work as an equality officer at TU Wien, I mainly deal with men. And that these men are not just 'men' but have very different views, needs and e.g. approaches to gender issues. It is worthwhile to engage in this activity simply to identify allies – and also to communicate on an equal footing. When I raise feminist issues, I want to do so with rhetoric that also says, 'I see you, I see your struggles, your problems, your marginalisation.' This creates a completely different basis for conversation and sometimes even a sense of complicity.

What happened since my contribution...

Woww, quite a lot! Basically, I didn't know much about gender diversity and queerness back then. That is, I had many gay friends (including in the STEM field), but I hadn't yet explored theoretical perspectives. I think the entire feminist community had to learn a

lot about new theoretical perspectives on gender, queerness and their interrelationships during that time. When we made the explanatory videos for the EU project GEECCO⁰, for example, the perspective was already quite different and suddenly so many research gaps and missing data became apparent.

Today, when I talk about the shortcomings of technologies, I would usually address this from the perspective of women and then add that we simply have no or too little data on other genders to make valid statements about what specific needs exist in relation to this technology.

In essence, my understanding of what inclusive technologies are and how we can approach them has changed significantly.

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

Well, there is still a lot to do, and in truth we haven't come very far with the goal of making technologies more inclusive. Or making the training of technicians more inclusive. Or designing research projects in such a way that we can generate missing data. Rather, I see an ever-accelerating pace of technological production that continues to completely ignore gender, queerness – and other perspectives as well. I see that we are still chasing after existing products and trying to repair at least the worst inequalities and discrimination. The booming field of AI is a clear example of this, as it involves technologies with a very large impact.

As the example of the Gendered Innovations homepage⁰ shows, the research community has learned a lot about how we need to think about gender perspectives and queerness in order to be more inclusive. But I cannot really assess how much change this has brought about outside the immediate research community. And I am not even talking about the backlash that is currently coming from the USA.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

Be excellent to each other – and party on dudes!!!⁰

⁰ <https://www.genderplattform.at/erklaervideos-gender-robotik-gender-hci/>

⁰ <https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/>

⁰ This is a meme, that I like very much 😊 see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rph_1DODXDU

Daniela Jauk-Ajamie



My previous connection to AG Queer STS

- Anita Thaler & Daniela Jauk-Ajamie (2022). Editorial for *Queer STS Forum #7 2022: [Towards Academic Kindness – A queer-feminist string figure on kinder working cultures in academia](#)*. *Queer STS Forum*, 7, 4-10.
- Daniela Jauk, Birgit Hofstätter, Anita Thaler & Magdalena Wicher (2020). *Queer STS Forum #5: [Queer-feminist issues in pandemic times](#)*. *Queer STS Forum*, 5, 4-7.
- Daniela Jauk (2016). *[Gaga-feminist Teaching](#)*. *Queer STS Forum*, 1, 16-22.

Invigorated. Inspired. Kinshipped.

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

It is impossible to say “no” to Anita Thaler’s warm, no-pressure invitations to participate in a book club, in a meeting, in an intellectually stimulating and joyful event of sorts, one of the thousands she co-creates. I said yes and was humbled to be accepted as a member into the queer STS workgroup sometime around 2015/16, about the same time when I submitted my first contribution to the Queer STS Forum.

What happened since my contribution...

I had the opportunity to play and grow in the Forum space in various roles, such as co-editor and reviewer, and to examine our work here as researchers when we started reflecting on academic kindness and reviewing our team’s work during the pandemic.

Wicher, Magdalena, Anita Thaler, and Daniela Jauk. “Publishing Queer-Feminist Voices in Pandemic Times.” *Queering STS Conference*. September 1, 2021. University College London, UK. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lgbtq-research/events/2021/sep/virtual-queering-sts-conference>. Virtual meeting.

Jauk, Daniela, Magdalena Wicher, and Anita Thaler. Publishing Queer-Feminist Voices in Pandemic Times. *NOSTS – Nordic Science and Technology Studies Conference*. May 20, 2021. Virtual meeting.

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

... am simultaneously horrified and elated. While facing the harshest attack on progress, gender justice, and dignity for all beings politically, I have experienced in my lifetime, we have never before in history been able to build on so many role models, fore-thinkers, and networks to amplify resistance and joyfully co-create social justice. The Queer STS Forum is one of the dance floors for our liberation boogie.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

Flourish – Grow – Unfold!

Susanne Sackl-Sharif



My previous connection to AG Queer STS

Same same but different. Participatory action research on social media use with young people in Austria

<https://queersts.com/forum-queer-sts/queer-sts-forum-8-2023/same-same-but-different/>

The show must go on!

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

I have known almost all the Queer STS members for a very long time. I hold them in high regard and have just realised that I have known some of them for almost 20 years. I met most of them at the Institute of Sociology at the University of Graz and others at a summer school in 2009.

Coming from a background in constructivist gender studies, I have followed the AG Queer STS from the beginning, but I have not always been sure how it fits in with my theoretical understanding. Years — or rather, decades — later, queer studies are the logical next step for me. I am glad that the group has been around for so long, implicitly reminding me, simply by its existence, to engage also with queer theories.

What happened since my awakening...

In recent years, I have been active as a reviewer for the Queer STS Forum, published a contribution in the forum, and organized a panel on “Queer Feminist Fictions and Technologies” together with Anita. In addition, I have taught courses on “Queer-Feminist, Ethnographic Analyses of Digital Identities.” And what can I say? I have very fond memories of the collaborations and activities, especially since the group not only promises “academic kindness” but also puts it into practice. :-)

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

think that the struggle for equal rights for all will require a great deal of energy in the coming years.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

Please stay active! You may not always be able to see the impact you are having, but as my story shows, your mere presence is beneficial and your persistence probably makes more people reflect than you realise.

Zoltán Bajmócy



My (Our) previous connection to AG Queer STS

Connecting different life-worlds: Transformation through kinship (Our experience with poverty alleviation), 2017

<https://queersts.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Forum-2-2017-44-58-Bajm%C3%B3cy-et-al..pdf>

Looking for ways to do meaningful research

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

As a research fellow in Graz ca. 10 years ago I had the opportunity to work together and learn from wonderful colleagues/friends, including Anita Thaler and Magdalena Wicher. They were the ones who suggested me to write a brief paper about how our work with segregated Roma communities shaped us. Later, I could also share my thought about how COVID lock-downs affected us, what kind of possibilities were opened up, and how we failed to learn from some of them.

What happened since my contribution...

Some of my colleagues (who co-authored that paper) still work with the same Roma community. Now, in some cases with the children of those we started to work with in 2011. I'm still in contact with some of the families, but it is not related to my projects or work anymore. I still attempt to carry out participatory, cooperative and action-based (research) projects, and my focus of interest is still sustainability and social justice. The community I have been cooperating the most in the past 5-6 years, has been the community of blind and visually impaired people. This has also shaped my life in many forms. I can call the chair of the local advocacy association my friend, and I was happy to accept her invitation to become an auditing board member for the Association. And without working together with blind people, I would have never thought of co-organizing a workshop with the local transportation company and experience blind people driving trams and trolley-buses, and trying it myself too.

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

...would like to keep my openness to learn about and overcome my prejudices, which I did not know that even exist.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

First of all, I would like to congratulate for the last ten years! 10 years ago, you published a manifesto, which is just as timely today as it was back then. I wish you all the energy, strength and joy to keep on questioning the reigning hegemonies of doing research, provide a forum for meeting in person and enjoying all the good vibes at the Graz conferences, and go on editing the Queer Feminist STS Forum.

Andrea Ploder



My previous connection to AG Queer STS

Author in the Queer-STs-Forum #7:

Strong reflexivity and vulnerable researchers. On the epistemological requirement of academic kindness. <https://queersts.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Forum-7-2020-25-38-Ploder.pdf>

Spreading Like Wildfire: Visions for Queer-Feminist Academia

How I became involved with AG Queer STS/Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

Back in the winter of 2021/22, I encountered a call for a panel at the STS conference in Graz. The topic was “Towards Academic Kindness – Queer-feminist working cultures in academia” and I was immediately convinced by the call. I got in touch with the awesome Dani Jauk, one of the session chairs, whom I knew from our shared connections to the sociology department in Graz. I put forward an abstract and got the chance to be on the panel. The panel (and the audience!) at the May 2022 conference were full of great people who felt that academia could and needed to do better than it currently does. We developed visions for kinder working cultures, and I started to see that there is a strong political community outside of my department, my research interests, and other academic connections. I realized that this community is important to me, to others, and to academia as a whole.

What happened since my contribution...

I had a blast turning my conference presentation into a paper for the Queer-STs Forum. The editorial team of the Queer-STs Forum showed me how a thorough, thoughtful, and kind review and editing process can go. I learnt a lot from you, and I hope that my own reviewing and editing style gets closer to yours every day.

The idea of kindness filled a conceptual gap in the work on strong reflexivity that my colleagues Angela Kühner, Phil C. Langer and I are doing for several years. Everything I wrote later on is connected to it somehow, and there is no taking it back.

Thinking about the future from a queer-feminist perspective, I...

...am convinced that we need to create more alternative spaces for research, teaching, and scholarly community beyond academic institutions. A lot of the current structures in academia are broken and hard to repair. To keep doing our scholarly work and thrive as scholars and people, we need structures that allow us to grow. And we've got to build these structures together.

My personal wishes to the AG Queer STS / for the Queer-Feminist STS Forum...

I hope your work gets more visibility and impact every year. May your spirit spread throughout academia like a wildfire. May your lives and work be filled with inspiration, happiness, health, and good relationships – academic and non-academic. Cheers to many more decades of queer-feminist STS!