

Larp as a Potential Space for Non-Formal Queer Cultural Heritage

Abstract: Queer experience has, until very recently, been invisible or significantly misrepresented in cultural and scholarly fields of record including history, sociology, and ethnography. Self-recording of our lives, communities, and culture has occurred almost exclusively through non-formal means. Queer heritage has seen recent scholarly study of these non-formal means in the form of archives of oral histories, ephemera, and ethnographies. This work emphasises the critical role safer community, social, and performance spaces play in containing, creating, and disseminating queer histories and heritage. Despite this increased visibility, the need for more grassroots expressions of nonnormative genders and sexualities remains crucial for queer people to find support.

As part of my wider work exploring the potential live action role-playing games (larps) might have for the exploration of gender subjectivity through play, in this paper I suggest that larps can also provide a space to document, disseminate, and educate on queer experience, history, and culture. Larp is a democratic form of expression that does not require performance skill or training, but rather allows people to experience empowerment, including for those who come from marginalized backgrounds, i.e., through emancipatory bleed (Kemper 2020; Baird 2021; Cazeneuve 2021). Larp has on occasion been used for non-formal education on queer history, such as in the larp *Just a Little Lovin'* (2011) about the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s, which includes educational workshops and debriefs on notable historical and cultural themes (Groth, Grasmø, and Edland 2022). Larp used this way is not dissimilar to the way queer social and performance space has been co-created as a container for both meaning-making and heritage for LGBTQIA+ people. On this basis, I argue that game design that seeks to reflect and represent this kind of queer cultural production in social and performance spaces may allow for the non-formal education on LGBTQIA+ lives and heritage, as well as opportunities for personal (gender) expression, exploration, and embodiment.

Keywords: gender, sexuality, LGBTQIA+, heritage, larp, non-formal education, emancipatory bleed

Josephine Baird

Department of Game Design
Uppsala University
josephine.baird@speldesign.uu.se

1. INTRODUCTION

Typically excluded or misrepresented by mainstream socio-historical studies and heritage records (Stein 2022), LGBTQIA+ history has until recently been most often recorded, disseminated, and communicated in alternative sites and mediums (Stryker 2008, Burns 2018). As such, accounts of LGBTQIA+ histories and heritage have had to be formed and recorded within those non-formal and informal sites; with methods reflecting the concealed nature of the subject. For example, LGBTQIA+ oral histories have recently been collected as part of the *British Library Sounds* archive, and were recorded to document often-obscured historical experience from people who had to hide their identity during times of extreme socio-cultural discrimination and legal threat. These stories and information were simply not preserved in any other way, and might have been lost without these oral histories being recorded expeditiously.

Similarly, the *Hall-Carpenter Archives* located at the London School of Economics and the recently opened *Queer Britain Museum* collect stories and artefacts from the development of LGBTQIA+ activism since the 1950s in the UK. The material gathered is in the form of non-formal and informal records such as community-created printed materials, ephemera, accounts, and stories. Other archives specifically recognise the importance of social and performance spaces to the expression and communication of LGBTQIA+ experience, heritage, and culture. For example, the Bishopsgate Institute in London hosts several archives for particularly important social, performance, and community events and venues in the UK. This includes the *Wotever Archive*, which documents queer arts and culture predominantly in London with news, magazine, and zine articles as well as other audio-visual materials

for the years 1983-2019. The Institute also hosts the *Transfabulous* archive, which documents the six-year history (2006-2012) of a highly-influential series of arts and cultural events that sought to represent trans experience and communities.

Gender and queer theorists note how social and especially performance spaces function as sites for queer cultural communication, but also production (Case 2009; Erharter, Schwärzler, Sircar and Scheirl 2015). This includes, for example, drag performance, which is positioned not only as entertainment but often as a way to communicate queer experience and culture (Volcano and Halberstam 1999, Senelick 2000, Parslow 2019). Drag has seen recent significant public attention in popular culture, for example in the worldwide phenomenon of *RuPaul's Drag Race* (2009-), as well as documentaries such as *We're Here* (2020-) on HBO and *Queer Eye* (2018-) on Netflix, all of which have been either nominated for or won Emmys. Seminal queer theorist Judith Butler (1990, 1993) uses drag and gender performance in performance spaces as the foundation of her theories on gender normativities. These theories have been highly influential on theories of gender performativities, which I have explored further in relation to live action role-playing (larp) as a way to explore these notions (Baird 2021).

In his extensive exploration of drag and queer communities, Parslow (2019) argues that performance spaces function as a site for cultural production; personal and communal communication; and *queering knowledge*. They suggest that the forms of expression, community formation, and survival strategizing that occur in these environments map very well onto the queering of academic knowledge and practice argued for by queer theorists such as Halberstam (2011) and Muñoz (2009). In this sense, queer performance spaces are understood by historians and theorists alike as sites of queer knowledge. Ethnographers of queer social/performance spaces (Volcano and Halberstam 1999; Volcano and Dahl 2008; Moffat 2009) argue that queer social/performance spaces function *both* as the site for cultural production/queer expression but also as heritage sites in and of themselves. In this sense, we understand that these venues have become critical parts of queer history.¹

These venues, the communities formed within them, and the stories that are made by people inside as well as told on stage, are in part a non-formal dissemination of knowledge, culture, and education. They are where we told our stories; expressed ourselves; shared our hopes and fears; and mourned our losses – when all of that was almost completely invisible or impossible in mainstream life. These are the spaces where we could share our truths, oral histories, and community. They were (and are) critical sites for the development of LGBTQIA+ culture, organised activism, and social support networks in many countries and times. The Stonewall Inn is famously the site where the US gay civil rights movement was sparked in 1969 (Stein 2019). The UK LGBTQ political lobby group, Stonewall, took their name from this critically important venue, which is true for a number of other organisations, such as Stonewall Housing in the UK and the Stonewall Community Foundation in the US amongst others.

In my own experience, I have been present at the formation of community and activist organisations, such the UK-based trans organisation *Gendered Intelligence*, within and through these performance spaces. Pride marches and festivals themselves are examples of the celebration and deployment of performance and social spaces to make political protest, but also to become a site of queer visibility, histories, cultural production, and heritage. In 2005 in Poland, whilst performing there myself, I witnessed the critical importance of venues like *Le Madame* in Warsaw which functioned as a cultural hub for queer people especially during violent social and political crackdowns.²

Elsewhere, I have argued that because of the still relative invisibility of LGBTQIA+ issues,

1 See Stein 2019 on the importance of the Stonewall Inn and Dunton 2015 on the official heritage listing of the UK's oldest gay pub and performance venue, The Royal Vauxhall Tavern.

2 See Chelmiński 2021 for an excellent account through images taken of the club throughout its history before its brutal closure in 2006.

experience, and histories in formal educational sites, non-formal or informal education on our lives is often required (Baird 2022). Despite recent queer scholarship and pop cultural visibility, there remains a lack of LGBTQIA+ education and particularly heritage represented in formal academies, literature, and mainstream museums (Field 2022). Indeed, there is currently an alarming socio-political movement in several countries that may lead to a significant reduction of formal recording and education on LGBTQIA+ issues, by governmental and legal decree (see ECREA 2018; Human Rights Watch 2018; Phillips 2022). Non-formal and informal sites of education have been, and continue to be, critical therefore to the record of LGBTQIA+ culture and heritage.

As such, I have argued that games and perhaps particularly larp might potentially provide a marginalised group such as trans people the opportunity to explore, express, and embody their subjectivity in safer non-formal and informal environments (Baird 2021). I have suggested that because larp can potentially provide an alibi (Deterding 2018) and safer container of play (Bowman and Hugaas 2021), they may allow someone to consider their gender subjectivity in a way that might not be possible in their everyday lives (Baird 2021). I have drawn upon theory that suggests that *bleed-out* from a larp (see Bowman 2013; Kemper 2017, 2020), namely the retention of an experience within a game might allow for a transformative experience in this regard, particularly when paired with the application thereof outside of the game. Also based on larp theory, I have suggested that a potentially useful fiction for such a game might be a fantastical version of a social/performance space, such as one like the venues I have described above – arguing that this would provide a recognisable enough site, but with the application of enough of a fiction to provide suitable alibi for play (Baird 2021; Baird and Bowman 2022.). I have also co-designed and facilitated a larp based on these principles entitled *Euphoria*, researching the responses of participants (Baird, Bowman, and Toft Thejls 2023a, 2023b). In the present paper, I also contend that a game that reproduces such spaces might provide the opportunity for the communication of, and education on, queer heritage.

2. EDU-LARP, HISTORY, AND HERITAGE

Edu-larp (educational larp) is a form of role-playing that can function as a non-formal pedagogical method. Edu-larp can be considered in relation to other interactive or co-created educational and therapeutic approaches including, psychodrama, training scenarios, education through drama/theatre, amongst others (Bowman 2014). With a focus on experiential and situated learning, edu-larp has, amongst other features, the potential to simulate scenarios that are very similar to those of real-world experience, however with less negative consequences for practice, experimentation, and mistakes (Henriksen 2004). The collection of essays, *Larp Politics – Systems, Theory and Gender in Action* (Kangas, Lopenon, and Särkijärvi 2016) features accounts by theorists and practitioners of a number of larps designed to convey specific, and quite complex, socio-cultural themes, communities, and histories. Cited therein are examples of larp recreations of the Russian revolution of 1905 (Pihl 2016), Fascism in Italy in the 1930s/40s (Trenti 2016), the financial crisis in Chile in the 1970s, and the function of the Roman Senate amongst others (Servetnik and Fedoseev 2016).

Mochocki (2021) distinguishes these kinds of larps from historical re-enactments, in that the former provides an opportunity for a “rich repertoire of modes of communication, semiotic resources, and interaction protocols,” which “create and sustain” the worlds that are “co-created, represented and collaboratively enacted” (2021, 2). This contrasts with re-enactments, which are like a “low-interaction spectator activity” (Mochocki 2021). The immersive nature of the embodied experience, as Levin (2020) suggests, allows for a rich and complex involvement with multi-faceted socio-cultural issues. From this perspective, larps that attempt to reproduce specific historical moments, or heritage, can allow for a contextualised learning environment that facilitates the modelling of complex social processes therein (Henrikson 2004).

I have noted elsewhere (Baird 2021) that there is a limited number of larps which specifically highlight LGBTQIA+ experience or issues, and this is particularly true for larps that reproduce queer heritage. A notable exception is *Just a Little Lovin' (JaLL)* (2011, Groth, Grasmø, and Edland 2021), a larp that represents a period in 1980s New York during the HIV/AIDS crisis and the impact it had on the queer community. *JaLL* can be seen to function on several levels, including the reported opportunities of players to explore queer subjectivity (Paisley 2016; Edland and Grasmø 2021). The larp also attempts to simulate a very specific and impactful period in history for the queer community, dealing with the very real rise of the HIV/AIDS epidemic at the time. The larp utilises several methods to not only allow for the co-created space of the larp itself but also activities that function in- and out-of-game, including workshops, educational opportunities, spaces to debrief and discuss, amongst others (Bowman 2015). All these engagements collectively form the whole of the larp experience and allow for the potential to convey the history and heritage of queer communal experience during, and arising from, that time period (Levin 2023).

There are, however, potential pitfalls in attempting to simulate an actual historical time-period and in attempting to provide an opportunity to enact marginalised experience and heritage. Leonard, Janjetovic and Usman (2021) warn that although role-playing marginalised experience may have positive impacts on players who may not have the same marginalised lives outside of the game in the form of potential empathy or personal self-exploration, there is also the possibility for negative outcomes of such an engagement. They draw parallels with *dark tourism*: the practice of privileged persons entering areas of recent or continuing disaster, potentially for the purpose of voyeurism or vicarious exposure, with limited consequence to themselves (Leonard, Janjetovic and Usman, 2021). In larp, they argue this practice can lead to: the commodification of marginalised experience; forms of *identity tourism* that reproduce and perpetuate harmful stereotypes rather than recreate more authentic representations of marginalised lives; misuse of cultural products and symbols; an imposition on those who are members of these marginalised groups during- or outside- of play including for information, resources, labour, or even microaggressions.

Torner (2018) notes that this was an initial criticism levelled at *JaLL* (2011) when news of its writing was reported. This was one of many reasons that Torner (2018) argues the game had to be so mindfully constructed. This is also because, as Cazeneuve (2018) notes, larp, like any other socio-cultural activity, has the potential, perhaps even the predilection, to reproduce problematic societal structures. This can happen easily if not reflected upon during the design and implementation process. From these perspectives, larps that seek to simulate a particular historical time or cultural heritage may fall prey to the problems of misrepresentation, marginalisation, and harm to the very communities they might purport to represent.

However, Leonard, Janjetovic and Usman (2021) note that the potential positive outcomes of playing marginalised characters can include outcomes such as greater empathy and less stereotypical understandings through an increased overlap of perception between the self and others. These benefits can be more readily achieved by intentionally and consciously playing with them in mind, as well as engaging in prosocial behaviour, which may also allow for engagement with emotion sharing, establish social bonds, and potentially support the well-being of others. They also emphasise the importance of the designer's role in steering play to these potential positive outcomes with a goal to encourage and facilitate bleed-out into everyday life. Finally, they note that, "Under ideal conditions, larping marginalized characters and experiences may even improve participants' ability to see the bigger picture of structural inequality" (2021, 32) and reduce prejudice. Overall, they suggest that larp can lead to greater community engagement, understanding, overlap, and cohesion outside of the game.

3. QUEER SOCIAL/PERFORMANCE HERITAGE IN LARP

JaLL (2011) features a fictionalised social and performance space as part of its narrative that reflects and represents the importance such venues served to queer communities at the time. Role-players create their own performances and enact them for each other in that environment, thus effectively co-creating fictionalised (though like real life) queer heritage (Levin 2023). *JaLL*, by including this as a central aspect of the larp, implicitly recognises the importance of these spaces in the context within which they were established and co-created. Larp, I have argued, is co-created in ways that parallel the establishment and function of many of these queer social/performance venues (Baird 2021). Simulating these queer social and performance spaces acknowledges their cultural relevance to LGBTQIA+ communities – which I have argued above. Simulating them might also allow for the education on and experience of this heritage. This education might be achieved through the recreation of a specific individual or types of social or performance spaces, but also may offer the potential positive outcomes for which Leonard, Janjetovic and Usman (2021) argue.

As noted above, reported evidence from *JaLL* (2011) has suggested there have been significant positive outcomes from role-playing queer characters in that fictionalised 1980s community. In their study of testimonials in the “queer larp studies: research group” on Facebook, Stenros and Sihvonen (2019) note that “it is easy to find testimonials online to the larp’s power.” In many such testimonials, the act structure (e.g., Torner 2018), the combination of randomness and fate play (e.g., Paisley 2015), the use of ritual (e.g., Bowman 2015), and framing activities (e.g., Waern 2012) are mentioned as particularly useful in relating the historical significance of the time period being represented.

Annika Waern (2012) discusses in detail the design features that are used to convey the personal, ethical, and historical features of the semi-fictional world, highlighting for example an act break in which characters were encouraged to engage with significant historical moments like the establishment of the “AIDS prevention campaign.” The significance of these features was further emphasised by a post-game “world brief” with activists who worked with queer, AIDS, and HIV issues. Torner (2018) recalls a testimony from a player who had been a part of the New York City gay scene, who claimed that the larp accurately captured the spirit of the time. These types of *contextualization* activities can lead to increased learning (Westborg 2022).

But of course, the larp is not a one-to-one accurate representation of what happened in that period in that city. It is a fictionalisation, designed to give a sense of what it might have been like: what Paisley (2015) calls “a past that could have been” in his testimony. Stenros and Sihvonen (2019) find similar sentiment in one of the player testimonies they gathered: a gay man who said he was able to “participate in a facsimile of important queer history.” In doing so, he was able to play out several *different* forms of gay masculinities, thus emphasising the multiplicities of experience that need to be accounted for in any understanding of queer subjectivities of the period. Bowman (2015) highlights this as well in her examination of ritual as a core function of how *JaLL* communicates queer histories, by emphasising the multiple influential subcultures of the time represented throughout (including for example, spirituality seekers, neo-tantra practitioners, drag queens, leather communities, and more). As complicated as that can become, Bowman (2015) notes, *JaLL* emphasises how the structure facilitated character relations, which is reflected in the testimonials of players she collected, who commonly noted the intensity of the connections the experience created. These relations “enhanced understanding of the struggles of countercultural movements during the period, and increased awareness about the AIDS crisis” (Bowman 2015).

On this basis, I suggest that larps that simulate a queer social and performance space specifically might allow for a greater understanding of queer communities, as well as experiential learning of the ways in which we have communicated and expressed ourselves, our culture, and lives in these sites.

Not only could specific historically located instances of such spaces be modelled to educate on history, but by engaging in the co-creative nature of these environments (through the similarly co-creative medium of larp) we might endeavour to facilitate greater understanding of the function of these spaces, educating about them and demonstrating *why* they have been so critical to our communities.

4. CONCLUSION

A queer performance tends to happen in only one time and in one place. This experience was something I discussed recently with Joe Parslow and Dr J Harrison (*It Is Complicated Episode 55*, 2023). It certainly was my own experience for a very long time. I found that most shows that I would write, produce, and perform were only ever done exactly once. This was because I would presume that the audience, who would often be the same people in the same venue, would not be interested in seeing it more than that. Or if I did it in another venue somewhere else, it was likely I wouldn't be able to go back there any time soon, presuming the event itself occurred more than just the night I was performing at. And this was very common for many of my fellow performers. I think it was also because our performances felt like they were "of the moment." During the time I performed in venues like the now heritage-listed *Royal Vauxhall Tavern*, I would notice that the shows we were doing were often related to experiences that were happening at the time, conversations we were having as a community, or reflections of our histories. In that sense, we would be making our shows together as performers, audience, and community, in constant shifting dialogue. Here now, and gone the next.

How could you capture such experiences in a traditional form of history? *You had to be there*, so to speak. But that is only true if we believe we need a literal recording of the moment in order to convey what was happening, why they were important, and why they are the sites and subject of our histories. As important as oral histories are, any account, including my own, would be subjective, after all. A video recording of a show that I did would not convey the complete significance of why I was doing that performance, then and in that venue. An ethnographer could give greater context and account, but they could not necessarily express the visceral, embodied, experience of being there, even if they happened to be in the right place, at the right time, for a given show night.

But a recreation of the kind of space that it was based on these accounts, modelling the kind of dialogue that was happening, and presenting the context that it was in might be able to communicate in an embodied way how these sites function as heritage in practice. In my wider research, I have argued that larp theory and practice suggests that a fictionalised environment that is close to lived reality, with a clearly defined container of play which emphasises respect for all attending, and integrated workshop and reflection activities, could allow players to express, explore and experiment with gender (Baird 2021; Bowman and Baird 2022). I have suggested that larp designed around a fantastical social/performance space might allow for drawing on the features of these co-creative spaces to develop the boundaries and dynamics of the play container – just as it develops a safer space for LGBTQIA+ people to exist in wider society (Baird, Bowman, and Toft Thejls 2023a, 2023b). With the understanding that larp can represent historical moments in time, socio-cultural heritage, and even educate on marginalised lives and develop empathy, I argue here that larps might also model queer social and performance spaces to allow players to experience our histories, our heritage, and how those have been co-created in these environments.

However, this practice must be done with tremendous care to avoid dark tourism and/or the reproduction of problematic social norms. I argue that this can be achieved by modelling these larps on the principles that LGBTQIA+ spaces have been using for years to achieve similar ends. As noted, nightclub and performance spaces have been sites for our cultural heritage, attempting to express and retell our histories through their expression on- and off- the stage.

By considering the careful reproduction of queer spaces in larp, we can attempt to record and convey their experiential, ephemeral, and sometimes fleeting nature. These are the principles I recommend for larp design that could show how our culture and heritage can be formed in the moment and by co-creation of its participants. I could never fully account for what happened at *Transfabulous*, one of the most relevant cultural festivals for trans people in the UK in the last twenty years, even though I was there. But were I to create a larp in which participants were encouraged to role-play the people engaging in the process of putting together the festival, in the context of the legal changes to allow trans people to change their birth certificates that had just happened at the time, in a socio-political environment that felt both hopeful and dangerous – perhaps I could convey not only what historically happened, but also the process by which our histories were made in those spaces. How and why we told our stories there, and continue to do so in places just like it, moment to moment.

REFERENCES

- Baird, Josephine. 2021. “Role-playing the Self: Trans Self-expression, Exploration, and Embodiment in (Live Action) Role-playing Games.” *International Journal of Role-playing* 11: 94-113. <https://doi.org/10.33063/ijrp.vi11.285>
- . 2022. “Learning About Ourselves: Communicating, Connecting and Contemplating Trans Experience Through Play.” *Gamevironments* 17: Special Issue: Social Justice. <https://doi.org/10.48783/gameviron.v17i17.200>
- Baird, Josephine, and Sarah Lynne Bowman. 2022. “The Transformative Potential of Immersive Experiences Within Role-playing Communities.” *Revista de Estudos Universitário* 48: 1-48. <https://doi.org/10.22484/2177-5788.2022v48id5028>
- Baird, Josephine, and J Harrison. 2023. *It Is Complicated Episode 55: Queer Voices with Dr Joe Parslow*. Podcast, MP3 format, 1:01:08. <https://shows.acast.com/it-is-complicated/episodes/queer-voices-dr-joe-parslow-breathing-together-is-complicate>
- Baird, Josephine, Sarah Lynne Bowman, and Kaya Toft Thejls. 2023a. “Courting Euphoria: Designing for Trans and Diverse Gender Exploration, Expression, and Embodiment through Live Action Role-playing.” Paper presented at *The 8th Nordic Trans Studies Conference 2023: From Transgender Rage to Trans Joy: Trans Studies through Affective Lens*, Tampere, Finland. February 25, 2023.
- . 2023b. “Euphoria: Game Design for Exploring and Expressing Gender through Role-playing.” Paper presented at *Nordic DiGRA 2023: Interdisciplinary Embraces*, Uppsala University.
- Bowman, Sarah Lynne. 2013. “Bleed: How Emotions Affect Role-playing.” *Nordic Larp Talks*. YouTube, April 18. <https://youtu.be/AtjeFU4mxw4>
- . 2014. “Educational Live Action Role-Playing Games: A Secondary Literature Review.” In *The Wyrd Con Companion Book 2014*, edited by Sarah Lynne Bowman, 112-131. Los Angeles: Wyrd Con.

- . 2015. “Love, Sex, Death and Liminality: Ritual in Just a Little Lovin’.” *Nordiclarp.org*, July 13. <https://nordiclarp.org/2015/07/13/love-sex-death-and-liminality-ritual-in-just-a-little-lovin/>.
- Bowman, Sarah Lynne, and Kjell Hedgard Hugaas. 2021. “Magic is Real: How Role-playing Can Transform Our Identities, Our Communities, and Our Lives.” In *Book of Magic: Vibrant Fragments of Larp Practices*, edited by Kari Kvittingen Djukastein, Marcus Irgens, Nadja Lipsyc, and Lars Kristian Løveng Sunde, 52-74. Oslo, Norway: Knutepunkt.
- Burns, Christine, ed. 2018. *Trans Britain: Our Journey from the Shadows*. London, England: Unbound.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London, England and New York, NY: Routledge.
- . 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. London, England and New York, NY: Routledge.
- Case, Sue-Ellen. 2009. *Feminist and Queer Performance: Critical Strategies*. London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cazeneuve, Axiel. 2018. “How to Queer up a Larp: A Larpwright’s Guide to Overthrowing the Gender Binary.” In *LARP: Geschlechter(rollen): Aufsatzsammlung Zum Mittelpunkt*, edited by Rafael Bienia and Gerke Schlickmann. Braunschweig, Germany: Zauberfeder Verlag.
- Chełmiński, Jakub. “Le Madame - krótka historia ważnego klubu w Warszawie [ZDJĘCIA].” *wyborcza.pl*, December 02. <https://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/5,54420,27871017.html>
- Deterding Sebastian. 2018. “Alibis for Adult Play: A Goffmanian Account of Escaping Embarrassment in Adult Play.” *Games and Culture* 13, no. 3: 260-279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1555412017721086>
- Dunton, Jim. 2015. “England’s Oldest Gay Pub Wins Listed Status.” *Architect’s Journal*, September 9. <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/englands-oldest-gay-pub-wins-listed-status>
- Edland, Tor Kjetil, and Hanne Grasmø. 2021. “From Larp to Book.” In *Just a Little Lovin’: The Larp Script*, edited by Anna Emilie Groth, Hanne “Hank” Grasmø, and Tor Kjetil Edland, 15-22. Frogn, Norway: Volvemål Grasmø.
- Erharter, Christianne, Dietmar Schwärzler, Ruby Sircar, Hans Scheirl, ed. 2015. *Pink Labor on Golden Streets: Queer Art Practices*. Berlin, Germany: Sternberg Press.
- European Communication Research and Education Association. 2018. “Public Statement on Removal of Gender Studies Programs in Hungary.” ECREA, November 1. <https://www.ecrea.eu/news/6883754>
- Field, Lauren. 2022. “Bryher - Lauren Field, Hull Museums” Yorkshire Mesmac. YouTube, July 26. <https://youtu.be/nPQqs9Jb5eM>.

- Groth, Anna Emilie, Hanne “Hank” Grasmø, and Tor Kjetil Edland. 2021. *Just a Little Lovin’: The Larp Script*. Drøbak.
- Halberstam, Jack. 2011. *The Queer Art of Failure*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Henriksen, Thomas. 2004. “On the Transmutation of Educational Role-Play. A Critical Reframing to the Role-Play in Order to Meet the Educational Demands.” In *Beyond Role and Play: Tools, Toys and Theory for Harnessing the Imagination*, edited by Markus Montola and Jaakko Stenros, 107-131. Helsinki, Finland: Ropecon ry.
- Human Rights Watch. 2018. “No Support: Russia’s ‘Gay Propaganda’ Law Imperils LGBT youth.” HRW.org, December 11. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/12/12/no-support/russias-gay-propaganda-law-imperils-lgbt-youth>
- Kemper, Jonaya. 2017. “The Battle of Primrose Hill: Playing for Emancipatory Bleed in Fortune & Felicity.” *Nordiclarp.org*, June 21. <https://nordiclarp.org/2017/06/21/the-battle-of-primrosepark-playing-for-emancipatory-bleed-in-fortune-felicity/>
- . 2020. “Wyrding the Self.” In *What Do We Do When We Play?* edited by Eleanor Saitta, Johanna Koljonen, Jukka Särkijärvi, Anne Serup Grove, Pauliina Männistö, and Mia Makkonen, 210-226. Helsinki, Finland: Solmukohta.
- Leonard, Diana J., Jovo Janjetovic, and Maximilian Usman. 2021. “Playing to Experience Marginalization: Benefits and Drawbacks of ‘Dark Tourism’ in Larp.” *International Journal of Role-Playing* 11: 25-47.
- Levin, Hilda. 2020. “Metareflection.” In *What Do We Do When We Play?* edited by Eleanor Saitta, Johanna Koljonen, Jukka Särkijärvi, Anne Serup Grove, Pauliina Männistö, and Mia Makkonen, 62-74. Helsinki, Finland: Solmukohta.
- Levin, Hilda. 2023. “Bridging Historical and Present-Day Queer Community Through Embodied Role-playing.” *International Journal of Role-playing* 14.
- Mochocki, Michał. 2021. *Role-Play as a Heritage Practice: Historical Larp, Tabletop RPG and Reenactment*. Abingdon, Oxon & New York, NY: Routledge.
- Moffat, Zemirah. 2009. “Queer Giving, an Audio-Visually Guided Shared Ethnography of the *Wotever* Vision (2003-).” PhD diss. University of Westminster.
- Muñoz, José Esteban. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Paisley, Erik Winther. 2015. “‘We Still Have Time.’: Experiencing the 1980s’ AIDS Crisis through Larp, Sobbing with Relief at a Funeral, Dancing, Dragging, and Kissing a Stranger out of Love for the Story.” *Medium*. June 28. <https://medium.com/@ewpaisley/they-luster-on-3f2838d6aed1>

- . 2016. “Play the Gay Away.” In *Larp Politics: Systems, Theory and Gender in Action*, edited by Kaisa Kangas, Mika Lojonen, and Jukka Särkijärvi, 170-177. Helsinki, Finland: Ropecon ry.
- Parslow, Joe. 2019. “When the Lights are Shining on Them: Drag Performance and Queer Communities in London.” PhD diss., The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.
- Philips, Amber. 2022. “Florida’s Law Limiting LGBTQ Discussion in Schools, Explained.” *Washington Post*, April 1. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/01/what-is-florida-dont-say-gay-bill/>
- Pihl, Erik. 2016. “*Larp-Poem 1905*: Re-writing Russian History.” In *Larp Politics: Systems, Theory, and Gender in Action*, edited by Kaisa Kangas, Mika Lojonen, and Jukka Särkijärvi, 17-27. Helsinki, Finland: Solmukohta 2016, Ropecon ry.
- Senelick, Laurence. 2000. *The Changing Room: Sex, Drag and Theatre*. London, England and New York, NY: Routledge.
- Servetnik, Vladimir, and Alexey Fedoseev. 2016. “Educational Larps for Political Studies.” In *Larp Politics: Systems, Theory, and Gender in Action*, edited by Kaisa Kangas, Mika Lojonen, and Jukka Särkijärvi, 65-72. Helsinki, Finland: Solmukohta 2016, Ropecon ry.
- Stein, Marc. 2019. *The Stonewall Riots: A Documentary History*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- . 2022. *Queer Public History: Essays on Scholarly Activism*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Stenros, Jaakko, and Tanja Sihvonen. 2019. “Queer While Larping: Community, Identity, and Affective Labor in Nordic Live Action Role-playing.” *Analog Game Studies* 9, no. 4.
- Stryker, Susan. 2008. *Transgender History*. New York, NY: Seal Press.
- Torner, Evan. 2018. “Just a Little Lovin’ USA 2017.” Nordiclarp.org, Feb. 19. <https://nordiclarp.org/2018/02/19/just-little-lovin-usa-2017/>
- Trenti, Lorenzo. 2016. “Larping to Resist.” In *Larp Politics: Systems, Theory, and Gender in Action*, edited by Kaisa Kangas, Mika Lojonen, and Jukka Särkijärvi, 34-42. Helsinki, Finland: Solmukohta 2016, Ropecon ry.
- Volcano, Del Lagrace, and Jack Halberstam. 1999. *The Drag King Book*. London, England: Serpent’s Tail Press.
- Volcano, Del Lagrace, and Ulrika Dahl. 2008. *Femmes of Power: Exploding Queer Femininities*. London, England: Serpent’s Tail Press.

Waern, Annika. 2012. “*Just a Little Lovin’*, and Techniques for Telling Stories in Larp.” *Persona; The Academic Homestead of Annika Waern*, June 16. <https://annikawaern.wordpress.com/2012/06/16/just-a-little-lovin-and-techniques-for-telling-stories-in-larp/>

Westborg, Josefin. 2022. “Learning and Framing.” Transformative Play Initiative. YouTube.

LUDOGRAPHY

Baird, Josephine, Sarah Lynne Bowman, and Kaya Toft Thejls. 2022. *Euphoria*. Alexandria.dk. <https://alexandria.dk/en/data?scenarie=13085>

Grasmo, Hanne, and Tor Kjetil Edland. 2011-. *Just a Little Lovin’*. Norway.

Josephine Baird is a Lecturer at Uppsala University’s Department of Game Design and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Vienna. She is a founding member of the Transformative Play Initiative. Baird’s work spans the intersection of games, identity, gender, and sexualities. Her research and recent publications present the theoretical and methodological basis for her thesis that role-playing games might provide an opportunity for people to explore their gender subjectivity. Her current research puts this theory into practice with the design and implementation of a live action role-playing game entitled *Euphoria*, with analysis of player responses after the game. Baird has co-organized events such as the Transformative Play Seminar 2022 and the Gotland Game Conference 2023 in Visby, Sweden. She is also a game designer/consultant, writer, actor, public-speaker, and co-host of the podcast *It Is Complicated*. More information at josephinebaird.com.