

# Chris Aino Pihlak

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## Education

- 2023- PhD in History with a Collaborative Specialization in Sexual Diversity Studies, the University of Toronto  
Dissertation: "Delicate Sisterhood/ Durable Borders: The Texture of Existence in 20th -Century North American Straight Trans Feminine Subcultures." Supervisor: Dr. Elspeth Brown
- 2023 Master's in History, the University of Victoria  
Thesis: "A Movable Closet: Constructions of Femininity Among Twentieth Century Transfeminine Periodical Communities." Supervisor: Dr. Rachel Hope Cleves, Second Reader: Dr. Lynne Marks
- 2020 Joint Honours in History and Political Science (Co-op), the University of Ottawa, *Summa cum laude*

## Academic Publications

- 2027 "Chapter 6: Bodies on Display." In *A Cultural History of Trans Lives in the Modern Age*. Edited by Channing Joseph and Howard Chiang. London: Bloomsbury Publishing (Winter, 2027): Forthcoming, circa. 10,000 words.
- 2025 Review of *Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco's Tenderloin*. *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 34, no.1 (2025): Forthcoming, 968 words.  
With Emily Cousens. "1970s Transvestite Taxonomies as the New Queer Frontier." Special Issue, "Queer Frontiers: Imagining New Intellectual Queer Futures," *Sexualities* (Summer, 2025): Forthcoming, circa. 7,000 words.  
With Emily Cousens. "Putting the Femme in Feminist: The Male Lesbian and Sex-Positive Trans Lesbian Feminism in the US Second Wave." *Gender & History*. Forthcoming, circa. 9,000 words.
- 2023 With Jamey Jespersen. "Special Issue Editors' Introduction: Trans Histories by Trans Historians Trans Histories." *Graduate History Review* 12, no.1 (2023): i-xi.
- 2022 "How Transgressive a Transsexual? The Contradictions in Transgression and Conformity Within Transfeminine Print Erotica." *Graduate History Review* 11, no. 1 (2022): 107-145.

## Non-Academic Publications

- 2025 "Parties/Celebrations." In *The Illustrated Queer Food Anthology* (working title). Edited by Alex D. Ketchum, and Megan J. Elias. Arsenal Pulp Press: Forthcoming, 940 words.

Queer/Trans History Subject Matter Expert. In *Understanding Myself as an Amphibian*. Directed by Maxwell Matchim. Toronto: Ontario: Hermit Rush, 2025. (forthcoming)

## Invited Academic Talks

- 2024      Guest Lecture. "A World of Many Worlds: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Trans Feminine Subcultures." GNDR 219: Introduction to Trans Histories. The University of Victoria. November.
- "A Conversation Between Natalie Zemon Davis & Shauna Sweeney." Commenter. The Women and Gender Studies Institute, the University of Toronto. September.
- ["A Constellation of Movable Closets: 20th-Century Trans Feminine Social Worlds."](#) Sex Salon Speaker Series. The Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, the University of Toronto. March.
- 2023      Guest Lecture. "A World of Many Worlds: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Trans Feminine Subcultures." GNDR 219: Introduction to Trans Histories. The University of Victoria. November.
- Panelist. "Trans Histories in Canada & Germany: A Roundtable Discussion." University of Toronto, LGBTQ Digital History Collaboratory. October.
- Guest Lecture. "What is Trans History?" GNDR 219: Intro to Trans Studies and Trans Activism. The University of Victoria. May.

## Academic Presentations

- 2025      "'Seeking CDs, Sissies, and TVs': The Historiographic Obfuscation of Heterosexual Transvestites and Erotic Cross-Dressers in Trans Feminine Herstories." Sponsored by the Canadian Committee on the History of Sexuality. Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, Toronto. June (forthcoming)
- "'Correspondence Is a Very Important Part of the Transvestite Lifestyle': Community, Discipline, and Care in Mid-20th-Century Trans Feminine Periodical Networks." Co-Sponsored by the LGBTQ+ History Association (formerly CLGBTH). American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New York City. January (forthcoming)
- 2024      "Putting the Femme in Feminist: The Male Lesbian, Sex-Positive Trans Lesbian Feminism in the Second-Wave, and the Need for Sexuality in Trans Studies." The 2nd International Trans Studies Conference. Northwestern University, Evanston, America. September.
- "'Towards an Improbable Second Wave Herstory: The Male-Lesbian and the Salmacis Society's Femme-Focused Trans Feminism." Fourth Annual Critical Femininities Conference. York University. Toronto, Canada. August.
- "'Seeing Trans Feminine Porn/Hearing Trans Feminine Porn Workers." Queer History Conference 2024. Committee on LGBT History. Fullerton, America. June.

"Food for the Meeting, Food for the Soul: The Potlucks and Parties of 20th-Century Trans Feminine Social Groups." Queer Food Conference 2024. Boston University. Boston, America. April.

"A People's History of Transgender: Trans Subcultural Discourses Against the Transsexual-Transvestite Binary." History, Classics, and Religion Graduate Students' Association (HCRGSA) Conference 2024. The University of Alberta. Edmonton, Canada. February.

2023 "Putting the Femme in Feminist: The Male Lesbian and Sex-Positive Trans Lesbian Feminism in the Second Wave." Co-Presentation with Emily Cousens. The Cambridge Gender and Sexuality History Workshop. Cambridge, UK. November.

"Male Lesbians and Heterosexual Transvestites: Provincializing the Heterosexual Matrix via 1970s Trans\* Erotic Identities." Co-Presentation with Emily Cousens. The 2023 Queer Frontiers Conference, The University of Bristol. Bristol, UK. October.

"Intimacy Across Oceans: Transfeminine Newsletter Communities and Non-Corporeal Sisterhood." 19<sup>th</sup> Berkshire Conference of Women Historians. Santa Clara, California. June.

"Transfeminine Histories at the Intersections." Moving Trans History Forward 2023, The University of Victoria. Victoria, British Columbia. March.

"Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman: Transfeminine Periodical Communities as Spaces of Transfeminine Girlhood?" The Girl in Theory: Toward a Critical Girlhood Studies Symposium. Girlhood Studies Collective. March

2022 "The Best of Both Worlds: The Benefits of an Interlinked Trans and Dress Studies." 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dress and Body Association Conference, University of Indiana. Bloomington, Indiana. November.

"How Transgressive a Transsexual? Thinking through Contradictions of Transfeminine Desirability within the Archives of Erotica." 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the Trans Philosophy Project, Goucher College. Towson, Maryland. October.

"Recovering Trans Community: 20th Century Transfeminine Periodical Communities and the Myth of Trans Isolation." University of Calgary's Free Exchange Graduate Conference. Calgary, Alberta. August.

"A Moveable Closet: Constructions of Femininity Among 20th Century Transfeminine Communities." 17th Annual Pierre Savard Conference. Ottawa, Ontario. April.

"Who Deserves to be Craved? Bodily Desirability Within Transfeminine Erotica." History in the Making Graduate Conference. Montreal, Quebec. April.

"Imagined Community, Real Sisterhood: 20th Century Transfeminine Periodical Communities and Constructing Networks of Solidarity." 19<sup>th</sup> Annual McGill-Queen's Graduate Conference in History. Montreal, Quebec. March.

“Girls Get It Done: The League of German Maidens and Third Reich Female Empowerment.” York University History’s New Frontiers Graduate Conference. Toronto, Ontario. March.

“How Transgressive a Transsexual? The Contradictions in Transgression and Conformity Within Transfeminine Erotica.” 47<sup>th</sup> Shifting Tides Conference. Parksville, British Colombia. March.

“Emerging Scholars of LGBTQ History in the Modern United States.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana. January.

## Public Talks

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| 2025 | “A Constellation of Movable Closets: 20th-Century Trans Feminine Social Worlds.” CrossDressers International General Meeting. New York City. (forthcoming).  |
| 2024 | “A Constellation of Movable Closets: 20th-Century Trans Feminine Social Worlds.” Canadian Federation of University Women Annual General Meeting. Fellowship Awardee Keynote. Ottawa, Ontario. October.<br><br>“A Constellation of Movable Closets: 20th-Century Trans Feminine Social Worlds.” Trans Week: Golden Jubilee Celebration. Provincetown, Massachusetts. October. |
| 2018 | “Youth Poverty and the Intersections of Trans and Queer Identity.” Thames Valley District School Board Lunch & Learn.  |

## Fellowships

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| 2024-2025 | Centre for the Study of the United States/Northrup Frye Centre Doctoral Fellowship, CSUS/Northrup Frye Centre, the University of Toronto (\$3,500)<br><br>Chair in Transgender Studies Research Fellowship for Visiting University-based Scholars, Chair in Transgender Studies, the University of Victoria (\$1,000) |
| 2022-2023 | University 101 Graduate Fellow, Department of Continuing Studies, the University of Victoria. (\$6,000)   |

## Grants and Awards

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| 2023- 2028 | Jeanne Armour Graduate Scholarship in Canadian History, the Department of History at the University of Toronto. (\$43,000)   |
| 2023-2026  | Canada Graduate Scholarship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (\$115,000)                          |
| 2024       | Jeanne Armour Graduate Research Grant in Canadian History, the Department of History at the University of Toronto. (\$5,500) |

- École Polytechnique Commemorative Award, the Canadian Federation of University Women. (\$7,000)
- Gold Medal for Outstanding Master's Thesis or Project in the Humanities, University of Victoria Faculty of Humanities.
- 2023 David Rayside Graduate Students Award, Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto. (\$1,000)
- Department Of History Graduate Program Recruitment Award, the Department of History at the University of Toronto. (\$1,000)
- 2022-2023 Herbert Bertram Falkenstein Graduate Scholarship in Humanities, University of Victoria Faculty of Graduate Studies. (\$10,000)
- University of Victoria Graduate Award, University of Victoria Faculty of Graduate Studies. (\$6,000)
- 1990 Learned Societies Scholarship, University of Victoria Department of History. (\$2,540)
- William Petrie Graduate Student Library Scholarship, University of Victoria Libraries.
- Faculty of Humanities Strategic Research Grant, the University of Victoria.
- 2021-2022 Canada Graduate Scholarships – Master's Program, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (\$17,500)
- President's Research Scholarship, University of Victoria Faculty of Graduate Studies. (\$10,000)
- 2021 The Chair in Transgender Studies Master's Degree Research Scholarships for Trans, Nonbinary, and Two-Spirit Students, University of Victoria Chair in Transgender Studies.

## Public Scholarship

- 2024 "The Ivory Watchtower." *Intersections* 7, no.3: Forthcoming. (795 words)
- "The University Should Become the Encampment." *Intersections* 7, no.2: 21-22.
- ["Gender/F\\*\\*\\*ing: A conversation with Dr. Florence Ashley."](#) Interviewer. LGBTQ Digital History Collaboratory. August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- ["To Be a Grad Student in Times of Crisis."](#) *Intersections* 7, no.1: 41.
- ["Trans Social History Amidst Trans Social Death."](#) *The Abusable Past*. January 22, 2024. (1559 words)
- 2023 With Jamey Jespersen. ["Special Issue Release! Trans Histories by Trans Historians."](#) *The LGBTQ Digital Collaboratory Blog*. October 20, 2023. (1040 words)

2018      [“Digital History Open House.”](#) Interviewee, *History Slam* no. 99

## Academic Work Experience

2024-2025    “HIS108Y1Y What is History?” Teaching Assistant. Department of History, the University of Toronto.

2022-2023    “Uni 201.” Principal Instructor. University 101 Program, Continuing Studies Department, the University of Victoria.

2023          “GNDR 219: Intro to Trans Studies and Trans Activism.” Teaching Assistant, Department of Gender Studies, the University of Victoria.

“GNDR 100: Gender, Power, and Difference.” Teaching Assistant. Department of Gender Studies, the University of Victoria.

2022          “Landscapes of Injustice: Esquimalt Gorge Park Pavilion Gardens Panel Proposal.” Project Member. Department of History, University of Victoria.

“HISTR 112B: The World Since 1945.” Teaching Assistant. Department of History, the University of Victoria.

“GNDR 305: Gender and International Human Rights.” Teaching Assistant. Department of Gender Studies, the University of Victoria.

“HISTR 101F: Food in World History.” Teaching Assistant. Department of History, the University of Victoria.

“HISTR 101C: Epidemics and the Modern World.” Teaching Assistant. Department of History, the University of Victoria.

“HISTR 329B: Race and Ethnicity in Canada Since 1900.” Teaching Assistant. Department of History, the University of Victoria.

2021-2023    “Four Stories about Food Sovereignty.” Research Assistant to Dr. Elizabeth Vibert. Department of History, the University of Victoria.

## Academic Service

2024-2026      Graduate Students Representative, Canadian Historical Association Executive Council.

Teaching Committee Member, Canadian Historical Association.

Jean-Marie Fecteau Prize Juror, Canadian Historical Association.

2025            Organizer, “Book Launch for *Worthy of the Event: An Essay* (Little Puss Press),” invited talk by Vivian Blaxell, the University of Toronto. (Forthcoming).

2024-2025      President, Graduate History Society, the University of Toronto.

Committee Member, Sex Salon Organizing Committee, Sexual Diversity Studies, the University of Toronto

- 2024- Peer Reviewer, *Journal of Femininities*, Brill.
- 2024 Co-Convenor, "Whorestory: A Sex Worker Speaker Series." The University of Toronto History Department.
- Panel Chair, "Making Use of the Law in U.S. Queer and Trans Histories," Queer History Conference 2024. Committee on LGBT History. Fullerton, America.
- Panel Chair. "Female Trouble: Women's History Across Eras," MA History Symposium 2024. The University of Toronto History Department.
- Organizer, "Trans Misogyny in the Colonial Archive: a Sex Worker's Counter-History," invited talk by Jamey Jespersen, the University of Toronto.
- 2023- Peer Reviewer, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, Duke University Press.
- 2023-2024 Member, Graduate History Symposium Committee, the University of Toronto History Department
- Interim Graduate Students Representative, Canadian Historical Association Executive Council.
- Executive-Member-At-Large, Graduate History Society, the University of Toronto.
- 2022-2023 Co-Editor in Chief, *Graduate History Review*, the University of Victoria.
- Co-Convenor, The *Graduate History Review* Spring Speaker Series, the University of Victoria.
- President, Graduate History Student Union, the University of Victoria.
- 2021-2022 Peer Reviewer, *Graduate History Review*, the University of Victoria.

### **Non-Academic Service**

- 2024- Member, Trans Week Organizing Committee.
- 2018- Admin, London (Ontario) LGBT Community, Facebook Group.
- 2018-2020 Volunteer and Fundraiser, Safe Space.
- 2018-2019 "Trans YouthFEAT Workshops." Co-Facilitator, London Intercommunity Health Centre.