

Lois Stone Report

ALMS 2019

I attended ALMS 2019 with Sarah-Joy Ford, with whom I run the Queer Research Network Manchester, a multi-university, interdisciplinary research network for postgraduate students. We founded QRNM in part to provide an opportunity to gather other researchers working with queer themes together for discussion and support. We are both the only people in our respective departments working with queer history, and it can be frustrating trying to have constructive conversations about research when nearly conversation with colleagues has to begin with a primer on gender and sexuality. Attending ALMS felt like what we have been trying to create in Manchester but on an international scale - an opportunity to gather as many people working with queer history in the same place as possible.

At the opening of the conference, Jean Tretter referred to ALMS as a “family reunion”, and that is how the whole conference felt. For each of the panels I attended, the questions asked from the audience were generous and encouraged discussion rather than acted as an excuse for the audience to monologue about their own research. The talks that I went to were diverse in how they approached LGBTQ history and provided new ways for me to think about my own work.

ALMS was the first conference I have attended that provided both lunch and dinner, which meant that there was ample opportunity to get to know other conference attendees as people as well as academics. At the end of the conference I left feeling invigorated in my own work. I left feeling like part of a global movement of academics and museum professionals instead of like a lone voice shouting for better LGBTQ inclusivity at heritage institutions.

Lois Stone