

Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Nally, Claire (2011) Cross Dressing and Grrly Shows : Twenty-First Century Burlesque. In: Northumbria Research Conference, 5-6 May 2011, Northumbria University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

URL:

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:
<https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/1991/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>

This document may differ from the final, published version of the research and has been made available online in accordance with publisher policies. To read and/or cite from the published version of the research, please visit the publisher's website (a subscription may be required.)



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



UniversityLibrary

'Cross Dressing and Grrly Shows: Twenty-First Century Burlesque'

Dr Claire Nally
Lecturer in Twentieth Century English Literature

In recent years there has been something of a resurgence in performative exhibitionism due to the rise of the neo-burlesque. My research confronts modern burlesque by suggesting it is an example of postfeminist culture, and employs the methodologies of recent writers such as Tasker and Negra. I maintain that burlesque has a potential for activist engagement, through cross dressing, 'boylesque', and trans-performances, as well as a more problematic and indeed 'public' face, which often reduces the form to an unreconstructed vision of feminine sexual spectacle. Therefore the paper will address high-profile figures such as Dita von Teese, and popular understandings of burlesque in make-over shows and popular music, whilst also investigating more underground or 'subcultural' materialisations of the form. For instance, accounting for the idea of the 'female gaze', many performers (such as 'Doris La Trine' and 'Empress Stah') present a complex, provoking and critical engagement with contemporary society, consumerism, ideological expectations of women, and postfeminism.

Dr Claire Nally
Lecturer in Twentieth Century English Literature
Department of Humanities
School of Arts and Social Sciences
Lipman Building, Room 401A
University of Northumbria
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8ST

Tel: 0191 227 4701
Email: claire.nally@northumbria.ac.uk