

*Queer Up!* was created with the intention of encouraging discussion and introspection about different aspects of political thought and ideology in queer communities and their allies.

It started out as a series of eight talks, workshops and discussions exploring various issues like love, sex, sexuality, gender identity, inequality, law and more:

- 1) **“Unpacking the ‘F’ Word”** with **Chayanika Shah**  
In this session, Chayanika Shah discussed the history of the feminist movements in India and their intrinsic relationship with the queer communities and queer movements.
- 2) **“How Political is Sex?”** with **A. Suneetha**  
In the second session, we discussed how politicised sex and sexuality is in society, how the government and societal norms control, suppress, regulate and produce a person’s sexual expression and freedom and how they changed after 1990 in India.
- 3) **“Making Women, Making Men”** with **Rachana Mudraboyina**  
During this session, Rachana Mudraboyina examined the narrowness of the definitions of male and female and their deleterious impact on the trans children, their education, life and livelihood.
- 4) **“Self Care and the Collective: Queer Lives and Queer Spaces”** with **Ponni Arasu**  
In an interactive session, Ponni brought in the personal and the intimate into the discussion to reflect and invite others to reflect upon care as a Queer political goal.
- 5) **“Love X Law”** with **Vasudha Nagaraj**  
Vasudha Nagaraj took the audience through the questions, challenges and dilemmas that each woman subjected to sexual violence, faces in approaching the Law and sustaining through the legal process.
- 6) **“At the Cross Roads”** with **Grace Banu** and **Pushpesh Kumar**  
The next session was a conversation with Grace Banu and Pushpesh Kumar that brought into focus the intersectionality of caste and gender in trans identities and the need for such a sensibility in the Queer movement as a whole.
- 7) **“Gender: In Progress”** with **Tashi Choedup** and **Aditya Raja**  
In this conversation, Tashi Chodeup and Aditya Raja explored, through personal narratives, the idea of gender as a dynamic identity in a person's life and how Queer and other movements should enable the space for fluidity and flexibility.
- 8) **“Queer representation in the Media”** with **Madhumeeta Sinha** and **Tashi Choedup**  
In the final discussion of the series, Madhumeeta Sinha argued for the need to decentre the heterosexuality in films while viewing and spoke of the ways in which the queer movement claimed and transformed into queer icons, precisely those heroines who were considered 'ultra feminine' or 'catering to male gaze' as they actually demonstrated the 'artifice' of femininity and the constructed-ness of gender.

The eight week course was attended by a steady audience of 35 to 45 people of whom nearly 20 sought a course participation certificate, having attended at least five sessions. As a non-academic space with a lot of time devoted to audience participation, the discussions were free flowing and vigorous. As there was a lot of interest in continuing the sessions, *Queer Up!* continued as monthly sessions which we hope to continue in the future.