

GENDER DYNAMIC

Gender & Sexuality Studies Program, Northwestern University, 2018-19

Patricia Williams

Delivers Keynote at A Jurisprudence
of Generosity: A Celebration of
The Alchemy of Race and Rights

SPAN Workshop

Sexual ReVisions: Sexualities through a Transnational Lens

One Book One Northwestern

A year of programming surrounding *The Handmaid's Tale*

Brock Colyar & Julian Kevon Glover

Interviews with featured students

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Mary Dietz
Acting Director (2018-19)

Greetings to All and Welcome! Whether you're reading the *Gender Dynamic Newsletter* for the first time or you're already familiar with Northwestern's vibrant Gender & Sexuality Studies Program (GSS), I'm very pleased that you are here. This issue of the Newsletter heralds the start of the new academic year, with all the anticipations and excitements that come with new beginnings. But it's also the occasion for me, as the now former "Acting Director of GSS," to savor parts of the past academic year by bringing to mind in the present some of the many people, talks, conferences, events, and performances that—in addition to our many challenging and inspired course offerings—filled the year with excitement and made it a resounding success.

Before going there, however, I want to say "thanks." Thanks for the skillful leadership of previous GSS Director Jan Radway, for the sanity and solidarity of the members of the GSS Advisory Board, for the affable organizational efficiency of our Program Administrator Eliot Colin, and for the strategic stoicism and determined resolve with which the Program has been responding to the stresses placed upon us by the University's financial situation. "Planned shrinkage," as one of my colleagues calls it, is not something we are inclined to legitimate, much less readily accept. Thanks also to the invaluable guidance, counsel, and program coordination of last year's Executive Committee of GSS: Associate Director Amy Partridge; Director of Graduate Studies Jennifer Nash; Director of Undergraduate Studies Nick Davis; and Program Administrator Eliot Colin. I want to express appreciation to the faculty, students, staff, university co-sponsors, and campus workers whose dedication, funding, sustained labors, and attendance made our courses come alive and the events we sponsored unforgettable. On the latter score, gratitude is due to Weinberg College Associate Dean for Academic Initiatives Ann Bradlow and, especially, to the invaluable Kreeger Wolf Endowment for funding that supported so many of our 2018-19 program initiatives.

Here I can only gloss some highlights of a year full of activities; so if you want more, read on!

Our academic year of events began in October with a day-long, abundantly co-sponsored, and fully attended conference in honor of Patricia J. Williams's pioneering text, *A Jurisprudence of Generosity: A Celebration of The Alchemy of Race and Rights*. The groundbreaking critical race and feminist theorist Mari Matsuda (Professor of Law, William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawai'i) energized the conference with an opening keynote address. She was joined at the end of the day by Williams (James L. Dohr Professor of Law, Columbia University), who gave a moving talk of deep historical, intellectual, and spiritual conviction about her life and work as a black feminist legal scholar. Between the bookends of the keynote addresses were two thought-provoking panels devoted to *Alchemy*, each with distinguished scholars in the fields of feminist and critical race studies. Hats off to our GSS colleague Jennifer Nash, who was both the creative spark behind this conference and the primary "force of production" who brought it into being.

The accolades for the Williams conference were still sounding when another auditorium-overflow gathering in October. With all the credit due to the ceaseless energies of our colleague and One Book One Northwestern Faculty Chair Helen Thompson, GSS partnered with OBON in hosting the novelist Margaret Atwood, author of *The Handmaid's Tale*, for an evening of conversation in a sold-out Pick-Staiger Concert Hall. Thanks to interlocutor Helen's disarmingly gentle and incisive dialogic skills, the event with novelist Atwood was rich in rewards, laced with surprises, and not free of contention, as might be expected when *The Handmaid's Tale* gets put to the test of "Question and Answer" by our students, all so well-versed in feminist, gender, and sexuality studies. Our partnership with OBON continued through the year with the three part "Keyword Series." The Series was structured around a particular word of relevance to *The Handmaid's Tale*, to which panels of scholars, educators, and activists responded from different intellectual and political perspectives. The first was "Consent" (Oct 15); the second "Reproduction" (Feb 5); the third "Pleasure" (May 14).

Yet another GSS initiated connection to OBON's year of Atwood was "Reproductive Justice Projects: A Panel Discussion," inspired, organized, and moderated with her usual ease and enviable composure by GSS Associate Director Amy Partridge. The panel discussion featured five activists and GSS alumni working on issues of reproductive justice in Chicago, each of whom shared accounts of their political and personal experiences in urban projects that variously coalesce with the reproductive justice movement, including the Chicago Abortion Fund, the Community Bond Fund, and Northwestern's Center for Awareness, Responses, and Education.

In November, truly a month for thanksgiving, GSS hosted the renowned American studies literary critic and Black feminist scholar Hortense Spillers (Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor, Vanderbilt University),

who gave a stunning talk, “To the Bone: Some Speculations on the Problem of Touch” to a large, enthusiastic, and evidently rapt (but by no means voiceless) interdisciplinary audience in packed-to-the-rafters Harris Hall 107. This time the debt of gratitude is owed to our GSS colleague Nick Davis, who not only generated the invitation and helped organize the logistics of the Spillers visit, but also gave an introduction that was nearly as memorable as his former teacher’s densely lucid, literarily demanding, and erotically illuminating reflections on the ambivalence of “touch.”

One might reasonably think that, with winter closing in, our activities might have stilled and the energies that sparked them would have gone into temporary hibernation. Not so. On the cusp of the end of the quarter, we bade farewell to Distinguished Weinberg Visiting Fellow, Marlon Bailey (School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University) on the occasion of his ethnographically engrossing, theoretically stimulating, lecture, “It was like something I had never seen before”: Black Gay Sexual Spaces and ‘Situations’ in the Age of AIDS.” Thanks here are due to our GSS colleague E Patrick Johnson both for his efforts in bringing Marlon to Northwestern and for the beautiful introduction he crafted in recognition of his groundbreaking scholarship on the ways in which protocols of sexual health and politics of sexual practices bear upon the autonomy of black gay men. Then, from the deepest depths of Winter Quarter, GSS continued its co-sponsorship activities with E Patrick and African American Studies in hosting Dr. Anne Balay (Visiting Assistant Professor, Haverford College) whose talk, “It gets you off your high horse, really: Queer Truckers and Rolling Sexualities” demonstrated her distinctive intersectional capacities for melding oral histories, participant observation, queer sexualities, and social class analysis into a study of the gender radicalism of truck stops.

A major visiting lecture on April and a splendid workshop in May marked two of the most visible events in the year’s end line-up of activities in Spring Quarter. First, the lecture: Along with OBON, the Department of English, and the Program of Legal Studies (with special thanks to Director Laura Beth Nielsen), on April 25 GSS sponsored an afternoon with the distinguished feminist theorist and scholar of law Catharine MacKinnon (Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law, University of Michigan Law School) on the occasion of the publication of her new book, *Butterfly Politics*. No stranger to controversy on matters of sexuality, pornography, and jurisprudence, MacKinnon commanded Hardin Hall with a lecture on the history and politics of sexual harassment law, the ongoing struggles to address the violations of equality rights for women and all minoritized populations in the United States, and the political, legal, and cultural accomplishments of the #MeToo movement. I was especially pleased to be able to welcome Peggy Gordon and Melissa Fridstein, members of the Kreeger Wolf family, to this public event and express our gratitude to the Kreeger Wolf Endowment for supporting activities that bring the accomplishments of women in the fields of scholarship, the arts, public service, and the professions to Northwestern.

Second, the workshop: Under the imaginative visions and intellectual guidance of Co-Directors Héctor Carrillo and Gregory Ward, the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN) held its annual workshop, “Sexual ReVisions: Sexualities Through a Transnational Lens” on May 9-10. The celebrated sociologist in feminist, postcolonial, and sexuality/queer studies, Jyoti Puri (Sociology, Simmons College), gave a compelling keynote address, “From Decriminalization to Decolonization: India’s Anti-sodomy Law and Radically Queer Projects” and then fielded many questions from members of the energized audience, to dazzling effect. Puri was followed the next day by a series of panels and papers from diverse and consistently thought-provoking guest speakers, each of whom were matched with our excellent graduate student commentators from SPAN. The workshop was both a showcase of academic talent at every level and a stimulating representation of the exciting scholarship underway in new areas of transnational research and sexualities studies.

To conclude this “Note,” I extend congratulations to two colleagues who published important books this past academic year: E Patrick Johnson, *Black. Queer. Southern. Women. An Oral History* (U North Carolina Press, 2018); and Jennifer Nash, *Black Feminism Reimagined: After Intersectionality* (Duke UP, 2019). Also, a word of welcome to Dr. Alyssa Garcia, who will be joining Northwestern as an Academic Advisor in the Undergraduate Advising Office (WCAS) and Assistant Professor of Instruction in GSS. And (truly), finally, a word of “welcome back!” to Jan Radway, as she returns to the helm as Director of GSS, in company with our fine colleagues Tessie Liu (Director of Undergraduate Studies) and Paola Zamperini (Director of Graduate Studies).

In the name of “what’s past is prologue,” I wish you all an inspired and energized academic year within the classroom and beyond.



Acting Director of GSS, Mary Dietz, introducing Catherine MacKinnon at Northwestern (April 25, 2019)

The Gender & Sexuality Studies Program at Northwestern is an interdisciplinary program, with faculty affiliates drawn from more than 25 departments across four of the University's schools.

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CONTENTS

FACULTY

- 5. Kreeger Wolf Endowment
Lecture Series with Patricia J.
Williams, Hortense Spillers, and
Catharine MacKinnon
- 9. Faculty Updates

SPAN

- 10. Year in Review; Curricular Fellows
- 11. SPAN Workshop–Sexual ReVisions
- 12. Winter Reading Group
- 13. Postdoc Talks
- 14. Dissertation Fellows; Summer
Funding Recipients

ONE BOOK ONE NORTHWESTERN

- 15. Keyword Series: Consent, Reproduction, and Pleasure
- 19. Library Exhibitions
- 21. Film Screening with Judith Arcana

UNDERGRADUATE

- 23. Year in Review; Senior Theses;
Award Recipients
- 24. Q&A with Alum Brock Colyar
- 25. Featured Alumni Series on
Reproductive Justice Projects

GRADUATE

- 27. Year in Review; Queertopia
- 28. Introducing the 2019-20 TAs
- 29. Q&A with Julian Kevon Glover
- 30. Graduate Student Updates

KREEGER WOLF ENDOWMENT LECTURE SERIES

A Jurisprudence of Generosity: A Celebration of *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*



Patricia J. Williams



Mari Matsuda

BY ZACHARY NISSEN (PHD CANDIDATE, ANTHROPOLOGY, GSS)

October 25, 2018—A Jurisprudence of Generosity: A Celebration of *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* was opened with a keynote by Mari Matsuda, professor of law at the University of Hawaii, and was closed with a keynote by Patricia J. Williams, James L. Dohr Professor of Law at Columbia University. Matsuda, and the panels that followed, offered a reflection on the profound legacy that William's book, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*, has had since it was published in 1991. In her closing keynote, Williams described *Alchemy* as a book of questions that, as evidenced by this event, stimulated a network of scholars and rhizome of inquiry into thinking more holistically about the problem of what to do with "the people who don't fit in." Williams transitioned from this reflection on *Alchemy*'s legacy to a discussion of archives and her more recent work on materials pertaining to her own family's history. What followed was a consideration on the social life of this archive, from the historical forces that render black women such as her maternal grandmother invisible in documentary sources, to omissions created through the very process of selecting materials to be archived. To combat these omissions, Williams called for an embrace of the full body experiences encountered when engaging with archival sources. At the same time, Williams grappled with the complexity of characters documented by the archive and the betrayals they may experience when those who lack intimate knowledge of their history and experiences engage with the materials. Ultimately, Williams argued that through the process of dwelling and living with the fragmented lives documented in the archive, we can learn to walk with those who disappear and bring the omissions that result in these disappearances to light.

BY LAUREN HEROLD (PHD CANDIDATE, SCREEN CULTURES, GSS)

October 25, 2018—In between the two keynote talks of the conference, eight prominent scholars across various disciplines offered reflections on the significance of Patricia Williams’ *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* to their work and to their respective fields.

In the first panel, “The Evidence of Experience,” Sarah Jane Cervenak, Assistant Professor of Women’s and Gender studies and African American and African Diaspora Studies at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, opened the panel by offering lyrical and poetic musings on the symbolism of alchemy and worldmaking in William’s book. Brittney Cooper, Associate Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies and Africana Studies at Rutgers University, next reflected upon her experience reading *Alchemy* in graduate school; she recalled the shame and alienation she felt as one of the only Black women in her program, and the way in which Williams’ book empowered her to use the “evidence of experience” to challenge white Western epistemologies of academic thought and practice. Ann Cvetkovich, Professor of English and Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, discussed how William’s attention to emotion and feeling—depression in particular—as well as her use of creative nonfiction as a genre for academic writing made possible Cvetkovich’s own work on similar topics and genres. Finally, Avery Gordon, Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, spoke about the importance of vulnerability in *Alchemy*—the stories Williams’ recounts are so affecting in part, she argued, because Williams recalls individual experiences in which she was vulnerable and perhaps even unreliable as a narrator.



Audience Q&A

B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, provided an indictment of Trump-era rhetoric, capitalism, and politics, calling *Alchemy* a “prophetic” work that encourages us to return to the 1970s and ‘80s for historical antecedents and lessons that can help us understand our contemporary moment. Finally, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Assistant Professor in the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University, lauded *Alchemy* for extrapolating how race and racial violence come to be through personal vignettes and for demonstrating the continuity of racial oppression in the U.S. from slavery onward. Both panels ended with lively exchanges between the speakers and audience members, facilitated by Northwestern Professors Nick Davis and Celeste Watkins-Hayes.

Organized by the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies

October 25, 2018
Hardin Hall - Northwestern University
9am-6pm
Reception to Follow

A JURISPRUDENCE OF GENEROSITY
A CELEBRATION OF THE ALCHEMY OF RACE AND RIGHTS

KEYNOTES
MARI MATSUDA 9:30 AM
PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS 4 PM

THE EVIDENCE OF EXPERIENCE 11:30 AM
SARAH JANE CERVENAK
BRITTNEY COOPER
ANN CVETKOVICH
AVERY GORDON
NICK DAVIS MODERATOR

THE POLITICS OF CRIMINALIZATION 2 PM
KHIARA BRIDGES
SARAH HALEY
BRITT RUSERT
KEEANGA-YAMAHTTA TAYLOR
CELESTE WATKINS-HAYES MODERATOR

Hortense Spillers:

"To the Bone: Some Speculations on the Problem of Touch"

EXCERPTED FROM PROF. HELEN THOMPSON'S
NOVEMBER 17, 2018 BLOG POST (FACULTY CHAIR OF
OBON, 2018-19)

November 15, 2018—As Black feminist literary theorist Hortense Spillers forcibly and lyrically reminded us, the American family romance intractably intertwines intimacy and violence. A guest of the Gender & Sexuality Studies Program, Spillers spoke on Thursday, November 15 to a packed auditorium in Harris Hall. Her talk, "To the Bone: Some Speculations on the Problem of Touch," offered a searching and searing frame for the problematic of touch in American history and American literary history. In its absolute resistance to abstraction, touch, Spillers suggested, marks the most horrifying aspect of American slavery. As a concrete imposition on the body and as the power to haunt those, like Sethe in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, on the nominally free side of the Ohio River, the violent career of touch extends to the master's family as well as his "shadow family," to the touch imposed on female slaves by the master and also to dominant white familial forms. What, Spillers wondered, was it like to be manhandled, to be ready to hand? Does the unsentimental touch of forced cross-racial contact derail—or condition—the entire institution of American intimacy? Today, can we reanimate our critical sensitivity to touch against the grain of our technologically mediated perceptual lives? Spillers proposed an American metaphysics of touch—by that, I mean an account of US slavery as the inescapability of direct fleshly contact, of fleshliness as the horror of being ready to the master's hand.



Hortense Spillers

The Gender & Sexuality Studies Program
and the Kreeger Wolf Endowment Present

HORTENSE SPILLERS



TO THE BONE: Some Speculations on the Problem of Touch

Thursday, November 15, 2018

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Harris Hall (Room 107)

Northwestern University

This project takes up the question of the ambivalence of touch and what the latter might reveal about the uses of power, both as a boon to freedom in its erotic and affective register and, contrastively, the first step toward unfreedom. GSS will hold a reception following the lecture in Harris Hall 108.

Hortense Spillers is an American literary critic, a leading black scholar, and the Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor at Vanderbilt University.

For more information, contact Eliot Colin at gender@northwestern.edu.

GSS STUDENTS RESPOND TO Catharine MacKinnon: “Butterfly Politics”

“On April 25th, feminist legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon gave a lecture at Northwestern on her 2017 book, *Butterfly Politics*. ... MacKinnon used the #MeToo movement as a case in point to demonstrate the concept of butterfly politics and traced the ‘butterfly effect’ from Anita Hill to Tarana Burke and from President Trump to Harvey Weinstein. Importantly, MacKinnon argued that Justice Kavanaugh’s confirmation hearings demonstrate that, while in a legal context Kavanaugh’s past accomplishments and future promise outweighed Dr. Ford’s testimony, the hearings themselves also represented a shift in our culture’s conception of sexual assault and harassment; what was once a privilege of power has become a disgrace with which political elites do not want to be associated. In this sense, MacKinnon argues, the #MeToo movement surpasses the reach of the law by directly challenging cultural norms and established hierarchies. In other words, the #MeToo movement was able to do what litigation could not.” — Marissa Levy (SESP ’22)



Catharine MacKinnon

“...The #MeToo movement was something I had a lot of interest in. I liked how women could advocate for their rights, share their stories, and support one another, in a space (the internet) that was easily accessible to everyone. But I never really knew about the legacy behind it. MacKinnon’s talk, which pointed to the ways in which the #MeToo movement built on MacKinnon’s decades of legal advocacy to make sexual harassment a form of sex discrimination, changed that. It is so fascinating to me that a tech-savvy movement is so dependent on something that happened forty years ago. This is fascinating to MacKinnon too, and is the basis for *Butterfly Politics*, which argues that seemingly minor interventions in the legal system, even those that occurred long ago, can influence major cultural and social transformations in the future (even forty years later!). This concept is very inspirational, and I think will influence others to enact small changes in their own community that may one day have a bigger impact. ... I think we all have something to learn from MacKinnon about the change we as individuals can enact. If you want change, you can make it happen!” — Gabriella Boone (GSS & Global Health Studies ’21)



Book signing at MacKinnon lecture

“... My favorite part of MacKinnon’s lecture were her reflections on the Kavanaugh confirmation hearings, something that had made me incredibly upset at the time. ... She pointed to the toxic masculinity at play in the hearings when Kavanaugh details his resume as if to say: ‘No, but I matter. Look what I’ve done. I’m too good for this.’ I wrote in my notebook in big letters MacKinnon’s point that this amounted to the claim that, “what he did to her is not as bad as what would be done to him if he was held responsible.” That, according to MacKinnon, seems to be what everyone has agreed on in courts of law... I left with four pages of my notebook filled with quotes that I hurried to write verbatim. The things MacKinnon said about the

#MeToo movement, the current political climate in the U.S., and the Kavanaugh hearings were all things that I couldn’t believe I hadn’t heard before. I pulled out my phone as I left and immediately texted my best friend about everything I had heard. I appreciate that it wasn’t just a lecture; it felt like the beginnings of a discussion in which I am eager to engage.” — Meghan Johnson (Theatre ’22)

FACULTY UPDATES

HÉCTOR CARRILLO (Sociology and GSS) received numerous awards for his recent book *Pathways of Desire: The Sexual Migration of Mexican Gay Men* (University of Chicago Press, 2017), including book awards from three sections of the American Sociological Association (ASA): the Section on Sex and Gender, the Section on Latina/o Sociology, and the Section on International Migration. For its 2019 annual meeting, the ASA also selected *Pathways of Desire* for an Author Meets Critics session—one of only a dozen among the many books that are nominated every year.

SARAH M. CUSHMAN (History) received the Professor Shulamit Reinharz Research Award from the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute in 2018 for her research on the Auschwitz women's camp. She has a number of forthcoming publications including: "Sexual Violence and Sexual Agency in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Women's Camp," in *Special Publication*, Thomas Kühne and Mary Jane Rein, Editors, Palgrave MacMillan (forthcoming); "The Auschwitz Women's Camp: An Overview and Reconsideration," in *Palgrave Handbook on Holocaust Literature and Culture*, Victoria Aarons and Phyllis Lassner, Editors, Palgrave (forthcoming), and "Comment on Primo Levi, 'The Grey Zone'" for Yehuda Kurtzer and Claire Sufrin, ed., *The New Jewish Canon* (forthcoming, 2020).

NICK DAVIS (English and GSS) presented a paper about theoretical and representational issues in recent transgender cinema at the Society for Cinema & Media Studies conference, delivered an invited keynote lecture on queerness, disability, and race in contemporary television for a symposium in Tours, France, and presented a third paper about actress Bette Davis and playwright Adrienne Kennedy here on Northwestern's campus, all during the 2018-19 academic year. He will begin a year-long research leave in fall 2019 to work on a book manuscript about US and world film in 1999, including a chapter on cinematic representations of transgender and gender non-conforming subjects.

SCOTT DE ORIO (SPAN Postdoctoral Fellow) was awarded the 2019 John D'Emilio LGBTQ History Dissertation Award from the Organization of American Historians and was featured in an article on TIME.com ("15 Unsung Moments from American History That Historians Say You Should Know About.") In addition, he presented on a panel of emerging scholars in the field of legal history, organized by the American Society for Legal History. He is currently at work on his first book, "Bad Queers: LGBTQ People and State Power in Modern America."

MICAELA DI LEONARDO (Anthropology) published *Black Radio/Black Resistance: The Life & Times of the Tom Joyner Morning Show* (Oxford University Press, 2019), which chronicles an underappreciated but wildly successful syndicated drive-time variety show for an adult working-class audience that has had distinctly feminist and LGBTQ-friendly politics—as well as antiracist, pro-immigrant, and economically populist stances—for its entire quarter-century run. di Leonardo will participate in a special Author Meets Critics session at the Anthropology Meetings in Vancouver in November, 2019.

RYAN DOHONEY (Music) was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor.

ALICE EAGLY (Psychology) received the SAGE Award for Scholarly Contribution, from the Academy of Management, Division of Gender and Diversity in Organizations, August 2018. Her recent publications include: Eagly, A. H., Nater, C., Miller, D. I., Kaufmann,

M., & Sczesny, S. "Gender stereotypes have changed: A cross-temporal meta-analysis of US public opinion polls from 1946 to 2018." *American Psychologist* (2019, online first).

JILLANA ENTEEN (GSS) completed a research trip to Thailand, where she also gave several presentations about her work at Chulalongkorn University, during the summer. During the 2018-19 academic year, she served on the Provost's GQNBT Task Force, the Steering Committee of the Organization for Women Faculty, and served as a Faculty Fellow at the Women's Residential College. She will be on sabbatical in fall 2019 and will return to Thailand, where she will present her research at Chiang Mai University and the UNDP Asia Pacific.

STEVEN EPSTEIN (Sociology and Science & Human Culture) published an essay on "Governing Sexual Health: Bridging Biocitizenship and Sexual Citizenship," in Kelly Happe, Jenell Johnson, and Marina Levina (eds.), *Biocitizenship: The Politics of Bodies, Governance, and Power*. He also participated in a plenary session on the "Past, Present, and Future of Sexuality Studies" at a conference organized by the Section on Sexualities of the American Sociological Association (ASA).

ANN FELDMAN (Visiting Scholar, GSS) organized a reunion of women religious leaders from the *Ties That Bind* documentary, which she produced in response to 9/11, in July 2019. "From Interfaith to Intercommunity" brought together women religious leaders from Chicago's Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities to build connections during these divisive times. She is also currently writing LOST & FOUND, about the thirty-year history of creating media for social change through Artistic Circles.

LOUISE KNIGHT (Visiting Scholar, GSS) delivered a talk on Jane Addams in February 2019 at the Flagler Museum in Palm Beach, Florida that was also simulcast on the museum's website and currently working on the biography of the Grimke sisters.

JEFFREY MASTEN (English and GSS) was awarded the Elizabeth Dietz Memorial Award for best book in the field of early modern drama studies at the Modern Language Association convention in January 2019 for his book on the history of sexuality, *Queer Philologies: Sex, Language, and Affect in Shakespeare's Time*. His article "Philology's Queer Children: Imitation, Authorship, and Shakespeare's 'Natural' Language" was published in Stanford's online journal ARCADE in November. He has also recently given talks at Louisiana State, Penn, UCLA, Yale, and the Shakespeare Association of America.

TONY SILVA (SPAN Postdoctoral Fellow) recently signed a book contract with NYU Press. He also presented at the American Sociological Association in August 2019 and published "'Daddies,' 'Cougars,' and Their Partners Past Midlife: Gender Attitudes and Relationship and Sexual Wellbeing among Older Adults in Age-Heterogenous Partnerships" in *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* Vol. 5 (2019).

GREGORY WARD (Linguistics, Philosophy, and GSS) continues to serve as Co-Director (with Héctor Carrillo) of the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN).

SEXUALITIES PROJECT AT NORTHWESTERN

SPAN: YEAR IN REVIEW



Héctor Carrillo and Gregory Ward
SPAN Co-Directors

The 2018-19 academic year marked the ninth year of operation for the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN) and the first of our third cycle of funding from the Northwestern Human Sexualities Endowment, established to fund sexualities research and education in the social sciences and the health sciences. We are happy to report that, last year, the Provost's office renewed our project for an additional three-year period through AY 2020-21, allowing us to continue overseeing and coordinating the many activities and events that SPAN has been able to support since 2010.

In addition, we are pleased to be able to continue supporting our new pedagogical component to the Project, which promotes the creation of new undergraduate courses

related to sexualities. We are particularly interested in links with departments and programs that have not yet included relevant sexualities-related courses in their curriculum, and also in supporting the fine-tuning of sexualities courses offered by GSS. This coming year our second faculty cohort includes two faculty members: David Moskowitz (Medical Social Sciences, Feinberg), who will develop a course on sexual health, and Stephen Thrasher (Medill School of Journalism), who will offer a course on journalism and frames of war.

The past academic year also brought changes to SPAN's leadership and administration. Founding Co-Director Steve Epstein (Sociology) stepped down after eight years of extraordinary service to and leadership of SPAN. Succeeding him this past academic year was Gregory Ward (Linguistics/GSS/Philosophy), who joined Prof. Héctor Carrillo, who continues in his capacity as SPAN Co-Director. Finally, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank our program assistant, Cassilyn Ostrander, who joined SPAN last Fall and whose organizational skills and commitment have kept the project running smoothly and efficiently. It has been a pleasure working with her.

SPAN CURRICULAR FELLOWS (2018-19)

The SPAN Fund for Curricular Innovation is designed to develop courses across a broad range of disciplines to provide undergraduate students with a solid interdisciplinary foundation in sexuality studies. These courses are meant to complement existing offerings in the Gender & Sexuality Studies Program (GSS), as well as to foster links between GSS and departments/programs that have not traditionally co-listed undergraduate courses with GSS. Each SPAN Curricular Fellow serves a three-year, non-renewable term.



Nathalie Bouzaglo (Spanish and Portuguese)
"Sexual Kingdoms:
An Archeology of Spectacular Masculinities"



Noelle Sullivan (Global Health Studies)
"Human Sexuality"

Nick Davis (English/ GSS)
"Senior Capstone
in Gender and Sexuality Studies"



SPAN WORKSHOP

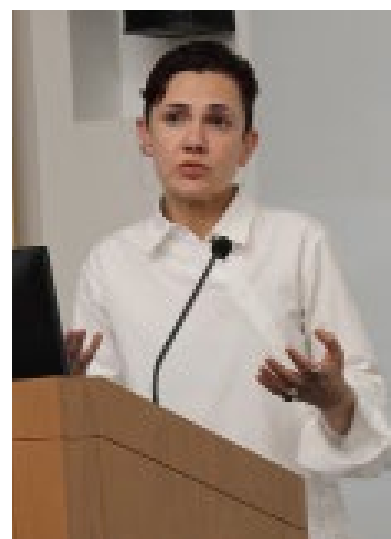
Sexual ReVisions: Sexualities through a Transnational Lens

Keynote with Jyoti Puri

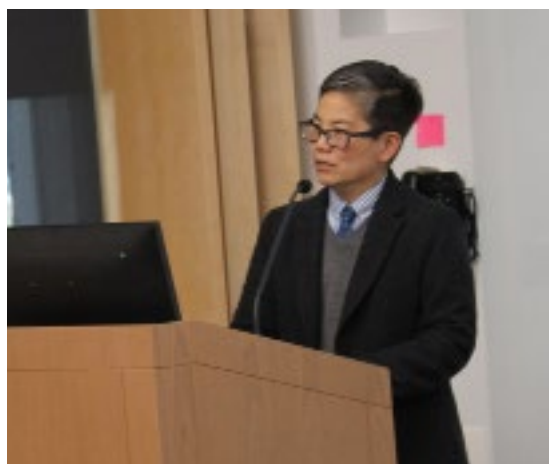
“From Decriminalization to Decolonization: India’s Antisodomy Law and Radically Queer Projects”

BY KYLE KAPLAN (PHD CANDIDATE, MUSICOLOGY, GSS)

May 9, 2019—The SPAN workshop provides an annual forum to entertain a rather complex inquiry: how do we speak to the immediate strains that press upon sexual life, and how do we do so within the various disciplinary and geographic boundaries that structure sexuality studies. This year’s prompt to approach sexualities with a transnational lens drew particular attention to methodological challenges faced when addressing queer politics at a global scale, themes which Professor Jyoti Puri explored in her keynote address “From Decriminalization to Decolonization: India’s Antisodomy Law and Radically Queer Projects.” Visiting us from Simmons University, Puri addressed the need for more robust transnational frameworks by providing a timely addendum to her most recent book, *Sexual States: Governance and the Struggle over the Antisodomy Law in India* (Duke UP, 2016). Speaking some seven months after the Supreme Court of India decriminalized homosexuality, Puri described the historical and legal context of the case and presented its varied reception by activists. Puri especially echoed those who chose to frame the ruling not as a marker of progress enacted by an increasingly nationalist state, but rather a decolonial act that cast off a remnant of the British-imposed penal law. By carefully tracing the different rhetorical and legal strategies that surrounded the case, Puri drew attention to the power of these progress narratives within the market of competing nationalisms as well as academic discourse itself. Especially during the vibrant discussion following the keynote, Puri expanded her comments to address the imperial tendency of theory and the figure of the “migrant” as a prophet for our time of racialized queer politics.



Jyoti Puri



Amy Sueyoshi



Julian Glover, Oscar Cornejo Casares,
Steven Epstein, and Julio Capó

Sessions by **Julio Capó, Amy Sueyoshi, Ghassan Moussawi, and Víctor Macías-González**

BY BENSON ZHOU (PHD CANDIDATE, RHETORIC AND PUBLIC CULTURE, GSS)

May 10, 2019—Four guest speakers presented projects centered on the study of sexualities through a transnational lens. Julio Capó, Professor of History at University of Massachusetts Amherst, began by discussing his work on (un)desirable subjects in the history of U.S. immigration policy. Before World War II, when homosexuality had not yet crystalized as an identity, Capó demonstrated that the evaluation of “normalcy” at the border was primarily based on gender presentation rather than sexual identity through his archival work in Miami on Black and Latinx immigration from countries like the Bahamas. He concluded by highlighting the fact that “immigration issues have always been queer issues.” The second talk was given by Amy Sueyoshi, Professor of Sexuality Studies and Race and Resistance Studies at San Francisco State University, who directed our attention to the West coast. Their presentation deconstructed “phallogocentric” historical accounts of the formation of Asian American studies and offered a new genealogy of queer Asian America focused on three “Ps”: poetry, patriots, and potlucks.

The third speaker Ghassan Moussawi, Professor of Gender & Women’s Studies and Sociology, at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, contested representations of Beirut as a gay friendly city in the Western press and used his ethnographic work with queer communities in Beirut to demystify this narrative and to recuperate their strategies of queer world-making that disrupt a singular, Western model of “queerness.” Moussawi also introduced the concept of “fractal Orientalism” to point out that Orientalism simultaneously works at the global, regional, and local level. The last speaker Víctor Macías-González, Professor of History and Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, recuperated the lesser known history of homophile activism in Latin America by examining the life trajectory of Gonzalo ‘Tony’ Segura, whose transnational activism connected the U.S. and Mexico. The case of Segura, Macías-González argued, reveals Mexico City to be at the center, rather than on the periphery, of a transnational homophile network.

In her closing remarks, Jyoti Puri, Professor of Sociology at Simmons University, reemphasized the importance of using a transnational lens to understand non-Western sexuality studies and to reevaluate Western approaches to the field. Puri also raised the question of how transnationalism could work as an effective conceptual framework. In addition to the guest speakers’ talks, eight graduate students from different disciplines at Northwestern commented on their papers and presentations.

SPAN READING GROUP

Intersectional Work: The functions and constraints of intersectionality in LGBTQ+ research

COORDINATED BY ASHLEY WALKER (PHD CANDIDATE, MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY)

Intersectionality has become a touchstone in many discussions around LGBTQ+ issues. However, intersectionality is complicated and it can be tricky to know how best to apply it in research contexts. This year’s faculty and graduate student reading group engaged in cross-disciplinary discussion about the theoretical background of intersectionality, what intersectionality looks like across various kinds of research projects, the practical implications of doing research that expands beyond normative models, and what ethical commitments using the term “intersectional” might call us to. We also discussed the limitations of the term “intersectionality,” where to make it explicit and where work may have an intersectional sensibility without using the term.

Readings in this group drew on the development of intersectionality as a concept, before moving into how different areas of research, including the humanities, social sciences, and health sciences use intersectionality in current research, how to incorporate intersectional approaches into a range of methodological practices, and the ethical issues raised by taking intersectional approaches. The group brought into conversation researchers who focus on different aspects of the LGBTQ+ experience to discuss the theoretical underpinnings that make intersectionality so foundational to our current understandings of LGBTQ+ issues, while identifying ways to operationalize intersectionality in a variety of research contexts.



SPAN Reading Group Members (2019)

POSTDOC TALKS

Scott De Orio: “Bad Queers: LGBT Americans and the Carceral State, 1948–2003”



Scott De Orio

November 27, 2018—Scott earned his doctorate in History and Women’s Studies from the University of Michigan in 2017. His presentation examined the history of what he calls the war on sex offenders—an American campaign against sex crime that began in the 1930s—and the changing ways in which that war has criminalized LGBT people. While historians have examined the policing of queer sexual and gender practices earlier in the twentieth century, it has been more difficult to do so the closer their narratives get to the present. This has been the case at least in part due to the fact that historians have been under the same pressure as LGBT activists to represent LGBT identity as “good” and distance it from any association with sexual “deviance.”

Yet as Scott shows, “bad” queers were central to LGBT history during this period as well as the history of the carceral state.

Particularly during the pivotal decade of the long 1970s, a groundswell of social movement activity transformed the war on sex offenders into a new and even more expansive phase by legalizing a category of “good” LGBT subjects while doubling down on many other “bad” ones. Even as LGBT activists managed to legalize a category of “good” gay sex between consenting adults in private, the architects of the war on sex offenders shifted gears by ramping up the criminalization of underage sex, sex involving HIV, trans people, and much else besides.

Whereas LGBT historians such as Margot Canaday have characterized the late twentieth century in terms of the consolidation of a legal hierarchy between homo- and heterosexuality, Scott reframed that period as a time of multiplication and proliferation of queer legal personages. He also re-conceptualizes the period as one in which LGBT rights were following not only a path of progress but a redistribution of legal stigma; and in which state interest in LGBT people was getting more, not less, intense. While queer theorists such as Michael Warner have blamed the conservatism of mainstream LGBT movement leaders, Scott highlighted how a sex panic about minor-attracted people in the late 1970s made it necessary for the movement to stop defending “bad” queers.

Tony Silva: “Straight Identity and Same-Sex Desire: Embeddedness in Straight Culture”



Tony Silva

November 27, 2018—Tony is a sociologist and a newly minted PhD from the University of Oregon, where he worked with CJ Pascoe. His presentation focused on research from his first book project (in production) about straight-identified men who have sex with men (MSM) living in rural areas and small towns. Drawing on 60 interviews, Tony found that the reason why rural MSM engage in what he calls “bud-sex” is not simply because they’re closeted; many of them are attracted to women as well. Rather, they have been embedded in straight communities and local institutions their entire lives—their childhood family, school, religion, and marriage—and these socialized them as straight and masculine. These communities and institutions

collectively comprise straight culture. Thus, Tony reveals heterosexuality to be not an innate property of the psychology or biology of individuals but rather a cultural phenomenon and as a “way of living in and relating to the world.” From his quantitative research he finds that there are about 360,000 men who identify as straight but have had two or more male sexual partners—approximately the size of St. Louis—aged 15–44 in the U.S. He also finds that about half of men in this population are not overtly homophobic or conservative in terms of gender attitudes, further cementing his argument that straight culture is what ties these individuals together.

DISSERTATION FELLOWS (2019-20)

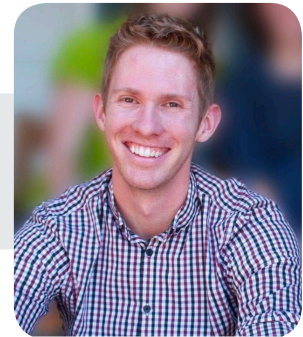


Dominique Adams-Santos (Sociology)
“Queer Women of Color, Intimacy and Digital Placemaking in Chicago”



Keegan Terek (Anthropology)
“Linguistic Entailments of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Asylum in Amman, Jordan”

Erik Lovell (Sociology)
“Pathways of LGBTQ+ Homeless Youth into Adulthood: Navigating Resource Brokers”



SUMMER FUNDING RECIPIENTS (2019)

Dominique Adams-Santos
“Queer Women of Color, Intimacy & Digital Placemaking in Chicago”

Brandon Alston
“From the Cradle to the Grave: Tracing the Ways Carceral Surveillance Enforces Sexual Humiliation of Urban, Poor, Black Men”

Michael DeVito, Julia Fernandez, & Ashley Walker
“Participatory Design to Center LGBTQ+ Community Values in Social Platforms and Algorithms”

Carlos Gustavo Halaburda
“Pleasure and Duty: Melodrama, Queer Sexualities, and the Futures of Reproduction in Latin America (1880-1910)”

Erin Hughes
“Invalidation of Same-Sex Partners’ Couple Identity”

Erik Lovell
“Pathways of LGBTQ+ Homeless Youth into Adulthood: Navigating Resource Brokers”

Alyssa Lynne
“Gender, Medicine, and Standardization: Gender-Affirming Health Care in the U.S. and Thailand”

Mirna Nadia
“Maintaining the Erotic Pyramid: Victimless Crimes and the Deployment of Sexual Knowledge in Indonesia”

Whitney Pow
“Stored in Memory: Recovering Queer and Transgender Life in Software and Video Game History”

Wayne Rivera-Cuadrado
“Understanding Violence through Vicarious Exposure: Confidants of Victims and the Impact of Sexual Assault Disclosures”

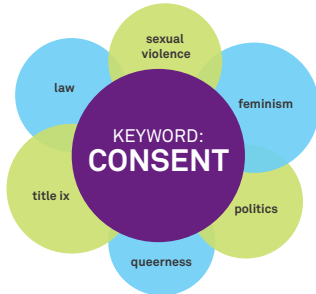
Zorimar Rivera Montes
“Colonial Myths: Crisis and Neoliberal Culture in Puerto Rico”

Addie Shrodes
“‘Being Unapologetically Out Online Helps a Lot’: Social Media as a Mediator for Learning, Identity, and Resilience in Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Adolescents”

Enzo Vasquez Toral
“Drag, Folklore and Activism in Bolivia’s Fiesta del Gran Poder”

KEYWORD SERIES

In 2018-19, the Gender & Sexuality Studies (GSS) program, in collaboration with One Book One Northwestern (OBON), revived its quarterly Keyword Series and brought the GSS community together to explore the terms: “consent,” “reproduction,” and “pleasure.”



Leslie Harris



Mary Dietz



Helen Thompson



Sekile Nzinga-Johnson and Audience



Deborah Tuerkheimer



Julian Kevon Glover

FALL | Keyword: Consent

EXCERPTED FROM PROF. HELEN THOMPSON'S OCTOBER 21, 2018 BLOG POST (FACULTY CHAIR OF OBON, 2018-19)

October 15, 2018—Our inaugural Gender & Sexual Studies/One Book keyword panel, on “consent,” could not have been more timely. Panelists from History, Political Science, and the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN) discussed historical, theoretical, and disciplinary dimensions of “consent” that foreground its limits and liabilities—“consent” was not, in American history, an action available to many people. The history of consent in America attests to the restricted set of persons with the power to perform this act; the conceptual underpinnings of consent, the lynchpin of social contract theory, reveal a surprisingly low bar—for example, the notion of “tacit consent” equates actions like using a highway and implicit consent to obey a country’s laws. Panelists from Northwestern’s Center for Awareness, Response and Education (CARE) and Sexual Health Assault and Peer Educators (SHAPE) offered a more local and immediate aspiration for “consent” as the standard of actively consensual sexual reciprocity upheld for our Northwestern community. The gulf between America’s less-than-active or less-than-inclusive histories of consent and the standard of consent upheld by CARE and SHAPE illuminates the ongoing contradictions and complexities sustained by “consent” in the midst of #MeToo. How do we mobilize active consent as an ideal today when it was not, historically, realized by the majority of Americans?

“In the fall, we came together to discuss ‘consent,’ a timely topic in the age of Trump, Weinstein, and Kavanaugh. The panel was moderated by Professor of English and faculty chair of OBON in 2018-2019, Helen Thompson. Professor of History Leslie Harris offered the first reflection on the term and referenced Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemings to point out the complexity of establishing a simple understanding of consent, freedom, or autonomy, especially in the “shadow of slavery.” SPAN postdoctoral fellow, Scott De Orio similarly critiqued simplistic notions of consent by asking who has historically had access to the concept and referencing his own work around sex offender registries, queer folks, and the carceral state. Mary Dietz, interim Director of the GSS program, looked directly to *The Handmaid’s Tale* for her analysis, discussing the salvaging scene and the blurring of express and tacit consent in the novel. Carrie Wachter, the Director of CARE, and Serene Singh, a student activist with SHAPE explored the importance of ‘consent’ to campus activism responding to sexual assault. Both stressed the importance of standing by survivors as the legitimacy of sexual misconduct is continually questioned in the media and by the public, and discussed the full range of ‘non-consensual’ conduct that needs to be addressed.

“The ‘consent’ keyword discussion was a fruitful opportunity for faculty and students and activists and scholars to come together to look more closely at the tension points in our various uses of the term ‘consent’ in everyday life at the university.” — Brock Colyar (GSS & Journalism ’19)

WINTER | Keyword: Reproduction

EXCERPTED FROM PROF. HELEN THOMPSON'S FEBRUARY 10, 2019 BLOG POST (FACULTY CHAIR OF OBON, 2018-19)

February 5, 2019—This quarter's Gender & Sexuality Studies/One Book keyword panel, dedicated to the keyword "reproduction," took place before a packed audience last Tuesday. The panel comprised a dream team of Northwestern University feminist scholars, activists, pedagogues, and practitioners of structural (legal, medical, political, economic) reform—and this cluster of terms applies to each individual speaker.

Dr. Sekile Nzinga-Johnson, Director of the Women's Center and Faculty Affiliate in Gender & Sexuality Studies, claimed as her point of departure Margaret Atwood's reply to the final audience question floated during her Q & A at Pick-Staiger Auditorium last October 30, a question asking Atwood to reflect on the racially inclusive casting of *The Handmaid's Tale* Hulu series (perhaps most notably, the casting of African American actress Samira Wiley as Offred's college friend Moira) in relation to the apparently white-supremacist totalitarian regime in the book. Reflecting on Atwood's reply, during which Atwood remarked that in the mid-'80s, when *Handmaid* was published, the USA was less diverse, Nzinga-Johnson expressed some surprise at its obvious inadequacy—was Atwood intimating that there weren't people of color in the USA in the '80s? Taking this lost opportunity for dialogue as symptomatic, Nzinga-Johnson offered a framework for the history of reproductive oppression in America extending to women of color, indigenous women, and transnational women. It is politically lazy, she argued, to assume that female fertility has been unilaterally valued in the American historical context: what about North Carolina's government-sponsored eugenics program, which performed sterilizations upon poor women of color without their consent? What about the forced or economically coerced labor of surrogacy performed by women of color, which provides the historical ground for Atwood's speculative construction of Gilead? In the present moment, Nzinga-Johnson showed us, an intersectional lens on reproduction is imperative, because racial and reproductive inequities sustained by incarceration, border cages, the child welfare system, and transnational flows of feminized labor cannot be captured by a univocal focus on patriarchy.

Feinberg Medical School professor, lawyer, and recent author (*Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion* with Oxford University Press) Katie Watson, then called our attention to the vividly dramatized persecution of abortion providers represented in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Stressing the very recent genealogy of women's status as American citizens—the Fourteenth Amendment enfranchised only African American men, Watson noted, and women's legal personhood was annulled by marriage well into the twentieth century—Watson surveyed a set of landmark contraception cases from 1965 to 1977 that foreground evolving understandings of heterosexual intercourse. Contraception and abortion delink sexual pleasure and the prospective birth of a baby, illuminating the profound power at stake in ongoing efforts to tether women's sexual agency to pregnancy. In this analysis, fetal rights claims become a proxy for antifeminism—the viability paradox or the question of potential life adjudicated in the *Roe v. Wade* decision as a matter of the viability of an embryo is jettisoned in favor of an indefinitely capacious definition of fetal personhood. Watson stressed that abortion rights must be viewed as an issue of economic justice—women without the means to obtain a private procedure are the most vulnerable to economic coercion.

"What struck me most about the keyword panel on 'reproduction' was the different ways in which the term was framed, used, and analyzed by the panelists in their own work. For example, fertility clinician Angela Lawson discussed how if a woman is unable to reproduce it is assumed there is something wrong with her, revealing how childrearing is still understood as woman's 'purpose.' Director of the NU Women's Center, Sekile Nzinga-Johnson framed the term historically and focused on women of color, whose reproductive freedom has been controlled by the state since our arrival in the United States, to explore how reproductive policies can be used as a mode of oppression. Feinberg professor Katie Watson also discussed how the state often uses laws governing reproduction as a means to promote others agendas (e.g. control of women; the preservation of heterosexual marriage; or the promotion of 'fetal personhood'). Northwestern student Sloane Scott focused on reproductive rights today and discussed Trump's proposed changes to Title X and its likely impact on our ability to access contraceptives and abortion in 2019."
— Gabrielle Boone (GSS & Global Health Studies '21)

SPRING | Keyword: Pleasure

BY MICHAEL-ELLEN WALDEN (THEATRE '21)

May 14, 2019—The keyword panel on “pleasure” invited scholars from multiple departments and disciplines to discuss the “charged and contested meanings of ‘pleasure.’” Héctor Carrillo (GSS & Sociology), Julian Glover (African American Studies), Anna Michelson (Sociology), Jennifer Nash (GSS & African American Studies), and Deborah Tuerkheimer (Law) each offered an analysis of pleasure. The sexual connotation that usually accompanies the word “pleasure” was present, but so were examinations of pleasure that went beyond the sexual. The implicit and explicit definitions of pleasure present in each talk revealed the political weight of the concept and, though never openly addressed, raised the issue of what “pleasure” means for different individuals and groups.

For example, Héctor Carrillo gave what could be considered the most straightforward examination of “pleasure:” a dissection of the culturally specific passion that exists in casual sexual encounters between gay men in Mexico. Carrillo proposed that the existence of this “instant intimacy” held the possibility for restructuring pleasure for a new generation, not only for gay men but for everyone. Anna Michelson’s analysis of the appeal of romance novels, on the other hand, did not emphasize sexual pleasure (which was not denied as part of the appeal, but rather placed as a less important factor) but instead focused on the emotional pleasure of the romance novel formula and the guarantee of a happy ending. Michelson’s definition of pleasure revolved around the cis, straight, white, middle-class female demographic to whom romance novels cater and spoke of this “pleasure” as a form of comfort rather than as a liberatory tool, but she expressed hope that the genre would become increasingly diversified to give a wider range of people access to it. Julian Glover, however, posited the pursuit of pleasure for queer/trans/GNC Black folks as a choice that can provide access to otherwise unobtainable power. Glover spoke to pleasure as a political act, an act of defiance for queer/trans/GNC Black folks who are systematically told they should not exist in the first place, much less obtain pleasure from life, whether sexual or not. Jennifer Nash also explored the pleasure of performative political action but ended up critiquing current Left politics for its tendency to police language rather than forge new political formations, specifically citing the Amherst common language guide and her own “Traditions in Feminist Thought” course as examples of a pervasive problem. Finally, though Deborah Tuerkheimer stated that her views “dovetail nicely” with those of Catherine MacKinnon (see p. 8), Tuerkheimer spoke more pragmatically about making affirmative consent a legal standard in rape legislation and posited this as a possible avenue for liberation, defining herself explicitly at a sex-positive legal theorist. . . . The variety of interpretations of what pleasure is and how it interacts with pervasive forces that impact people’s lives displayed the range of academic and personal viewpoints of the panelists.

“Pleasure, a seemingly simple concept, becomes complicated in ways that move us forward as an intellectual community when we allow them to be redefined by the experiences of the people who have historically been denied it. For example, Julian Glover focused on his queer, trans of color interlocutors and the ways in which they have learned to survive and thrive in a world systematically built to harm, hinder, and even kill them. Many of his interlocutors are sex workers of some kind. Although many had previously held different jobs, they turned to sex work because it was the service industry job in which they had the most control. In other words, they found ways to leverage their service skills without relying on an already oppressive capitalist system. A particularly interesting part of Glover’s talk considered the act of finding pleasure in manipulating systems to the benefit of the oppressed. Many of his interlocutors mentioned, in talking to Glover, that they found great pleasure in the act of robbing, duping, or conning their client, which struck me as a revolutionary way to define and reclaim pleasure in a world so actively built to deny pleasure to certain peoples.” — Lydia Weir (Theatre ‘21)

Students in our GSS courses also contributed to the One Book One Northwestern Programming this year! Particularly noteworthy, were the winter and spring exhibitions of student research conducted across four GSS courses, each making use of the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections in collaboration with NU archivist Jason Nargis, and exhibited in the main library. The winter exhibition, “Feminist Periodicals in the Year of *The Handmaid’s Tale*: Women’s Solidarity and the Backlash in 1985,” featured research findings from students in Helen Thompson’s freshman seminar “*The Handmaid’s Tale*: Women, Speculative Fiction, and Dystopia.” Students in GSS TA Kyle Kaplan’s research seminar “Queer & Feminist Archives” also contributed to the winter exhibition and GSS senior



“Queer & Feminist Archives” Exhibition



“Constructing a Timeline of Reproductive Politics in the U.S.” Exhibition

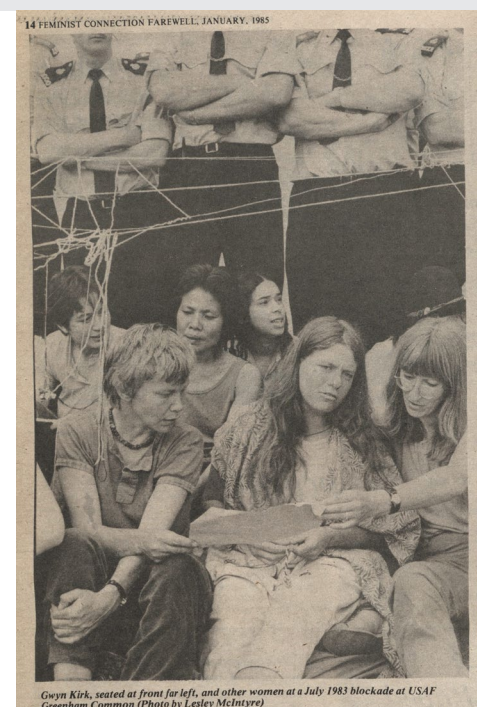
Emma McDonnell’s research paper for this course on the Chicago Women’s Liberation Union’s (CWLU) Abortion Task Force (ATF) won the Casey Prize this year (see p. 23). The spring exhibition, “Constructing a Timeline of Reproductive Politics in the U.S., 1960–2019: a collective research project” featured research findings and projects by students in Amy Partridge’s freshman seminar “Our Bodies/Ourself(s): The Women’s Health Movement(s) Then & Now” and her research seminar “Reproductive Health/Politics/Justice.”

FALL EXHIBITION | Feminist Periodicals in the Year of *The Handmaid’s Tale*: Women’s Solidarity and the Backlash in 1985

BY HELEN THOMPSON (EXCERPT FROM EXHIBITION STATEMENT)

The goal of this exhibit is to offer visual and archival testimony to *The Handmaid’s Tale*’s engagement with the situation of feminism in mid-80s America and beyond. That situation can be evoked in one word: backlash.

Deployed by Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist Susan Faludi in her book *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women* (1991), “backlash” is a cultural and political repudiation of feminism that embraces women’s domesticity, women’s retreat from the workforce (or lack of equity within it), and women’s lack of bodily self-determination. The 80s in America began with the election of conservative President Ronald Reagan, the ascendance of the evangelical Moral Majority, and a surge of anti-feminist activism led by women like Phyllis Schlafly. By 1985, mainstream American politics and culture vilified feminists as lonely, selfish, workaholic spinsters whose fight for women’s liberation cost them normative forms of familial love. ... However, the images and text in this exhibition, selected by first-year students from periodicals in the Femina Collection at Northwestern’s Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, vividly demonstrate the ongoing critical and collective energies of feminist women and men during this period. In spite of the backlash, the American and international feminists who built the journals on view forged an inclusive, increasingly globalized, and structurally expansive political movement.



The Feminist Connection, January 1985
(SPC: L1 Femina Serial Am F32911)

FALL EXHIBITION | Queer & Feminist Archives

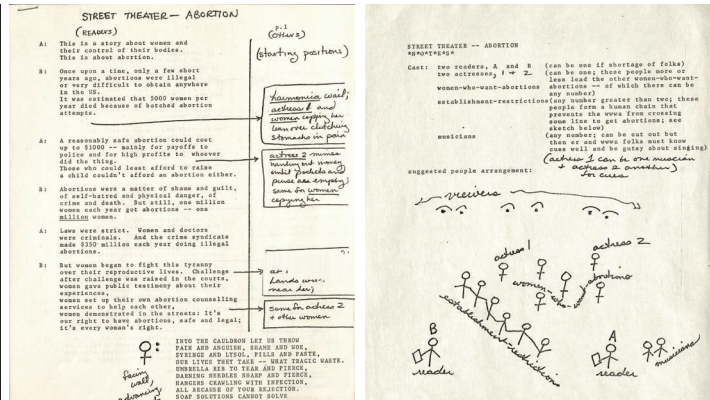
BY KYLE KAPLAN (EXCERPT FROM FINAL ASSIGNMENT PROMPT)

The broad goal of the final research project is to produce an argument about how an archival object is relevant to contemporary issues and audiences. I ask that you engage in original archival research by exploring the holdings of Northwestern Special collections, locating an item (or limited selection of related items), and preparing a short exhibition card and 10-12 page final paper.

Abortion Task Force

On March 8th, 1973 the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) convened for their annual convention in Chicago. Outside the convention, they were met with a group of women performing what they described as “guerilla street theater.” These women were members of the newly formed Abortion Task Force (ATF), an offshoot of the Chicago Women’s Liberation Union. Many of the members had spent the past 4 years as members of Jane, an underground abortion service. They argued for their vision of what abortion services could be amidst a moment of transition. The surviving script of this theatrical protest, with its hand-written stage directions and harmonica and tambourine cues, demonstrates a style of abortion activism that bears both intense similarity and difference to today’s debates. The script articulates a similar basic claim: that abortion is a vital component of women’s autonomy and must be legalized. But the performance focuses on developing accessible abortion services without contending with religious objections or engaging with the concept of fetal viability later used by pro-life movements. In a moment where Roe v. Wade may no longer be the law of the land, turning back to the activism of our forebears can provide valuable insights as to how our abortion climate evolved, and what actions we might prepare to take.

Emma McDonnell (McCormick School of Engineering, 2019)



Emma McDonnell's Contribution on the CWLU's Abortion Task Force

SPRING EXHIBITION | Constructing a Timeline of Reproductive Politics in the U.S., 1960-2019: a collective research project

BY AMY PARTRIDGE (EXCERPT FROM EXHIBITION STATEMENT)

The Handmaid's Tale ends with a satirical account of a fictional academic conference, “the Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies,” held long after the demise of Gilead. This final section of the novel is framed as a “transcript” of a Professor Pieixoto’s talk ... in which he speculates on the conditions of possibility for the emergence of Gilead present in “the immediate pre-Gilead period,” the United States of the mid-1980s. By ending the novel in this way, Atwood situates Gilead as a dystopian future possible from the perspective of 1985, the year the novel was published. This was the inspiration for the research seminar “Reproductive Health/Politics/Justice,” which investigated the changing contours of reproductive politics in the U.S. from the late-1960s to the present. ... As feminist scholar Michelle Murphy points out, “how we constitute reproduction shapes how it can be imagined, altered and politicized,” reminding us that “reproduction is not self-evidently a capacity located in sexed bodies”; it is instead a site (or formation) that joins, “cells, protocols, bodies, nations, capital, economics, freedom, and affect as much as sex and women into its sprawl.” Thus, the goal of our collective research was to investigate a range of past and present reproductive justice projects and organizations that conceptually reimagine what we mean by the term “reproduction,” the scope and content of “reproductive politics,” and the kinds of demands that can be made in the name of reproductive health, rights, freedom and justice.



Student-Produced Pamphlets

Film Screening of *Jane: An Abortion Service* & talk-back with Judith Arcana

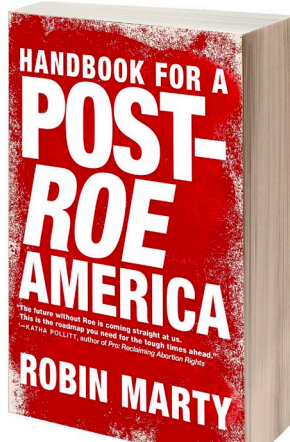
EXCERPTED FROM PROF. HELEN THOMPSON'S FEBRUARY 3, 2019 BLOG POST
(FACULTY CHAIR OF OBON, 2018-19)

February 2, 2019—Happy February! Congratulations for making it to the other side of the polar vortex. A special greeting to those intrepid enough to slog through yesterday's slush to see the Block Cinema screening of the documentary film *Jane: An Abortion Service* (1995, dir. Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy), with a special visit by Judith Arcana, former Jane and writer, teacher, and reproductive rights activist. *Jane: An Abortion Service* documents the incredible story of Jane, formally known as the Abortion Counseling Service of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, an underground female cooperative of counselors and abortion providers that operated illegally from 1968 until 1973 (when *Roe v. Wade*, which decriminalized abortion in the USA, passed). Before we settled in to watch the movie, Arcana reminded us that we'd experience three historical moments simultaneously—the years when Jane served women in the Chicagoland community and beyond; the mid-90s, when the film was made; and today, a moment when *Roe v. Wade* hangs in the balance, contingent on the judgment of a US Supreme Court whose anti-abortion majority was clinched by the confirmation of Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Arcana encouraged us to “try to hold all three time periods in our heads as we watch,” advice that resonated through the vital Q & A session moderated by Amy Partridge (Gender & Sexuality Studies) after the gripping hour-long film.

... One of the most moving aspects of Arcana's talk-back with the audience was her account of her own transformative experience. To move into her own power, to do valuable feminist work in the world, blew her mind, Arcana said. The lesson for us today is that Jane really happened, and Arcana invited us to deploy the useful thinking: if she could do it, I can do it! *Jane* the film offered mind-blowing testimony indeed to the expertise and gentleness of women who possessed no official medical training, who were taught dilation and curettage methods by the man who initially offered his paid services to the group (whose own credentials were, as the Janes came to learn, shaky). The film affirmed the tremendous connection and compassion exercised between women in unmediated relation to each other's bodies. The doula movement today builds on this critical breakthrough. But whereas Jane was, Arcana noted, an open secret in Chicago (until a late-breaking bust; charges were dropped after passage of *Roe v. Wade* and after nobody agreed to testify against the defendants), today's anti-abortion climate is far more dangerous. Abortions are still being performed, however, and political activism post-Jane—perhaps most urgently expanded under the banner of the Reproductive Justice movement—is, Arcana insisted, cause for optimism. She referred the audience to Robin Marty's comprehensive, resource-rich manual *Handbook For A Post-Roe America* (you can buy it on Amazon, but why not head down to Women and Children First in Andersonville?). I know I'll get my copy soon, while reflecting on Arcana's advice to figure out what actions we each are willing to take and find others who want to take them too.



Judith Arcana



"I really noticed throughout watching the film that abortion was never discussed by these women as something to be ashamed of or to feel guilty about, and they were not afraid to talk about it. This alone was such a different feeling from what society is like right now and what I've experienced in my own life time — with so many people hesitant to speak of abortion, ashamed of the topic, even though it is 'legal.' I have to believe that this social stigma just drives more pregnant women away from getting abortions, even if it is the best choice for them and they can access it. In the documentary, however, the Janes were supportive of women's decision to abort and felt it was a good thing, rather than something shameful. But many of the Janes being interviewed had on sunglasses and/or headwear and used fake names to protect their identities too. At some point during the documentary, I realized that this was because they were protecting themselves from violent anti-abortion activists. Realizing this really put the historical moment in which the film was made [1995] in context for me." — Eden Berke (SESP & Art Theory and Practice '21)

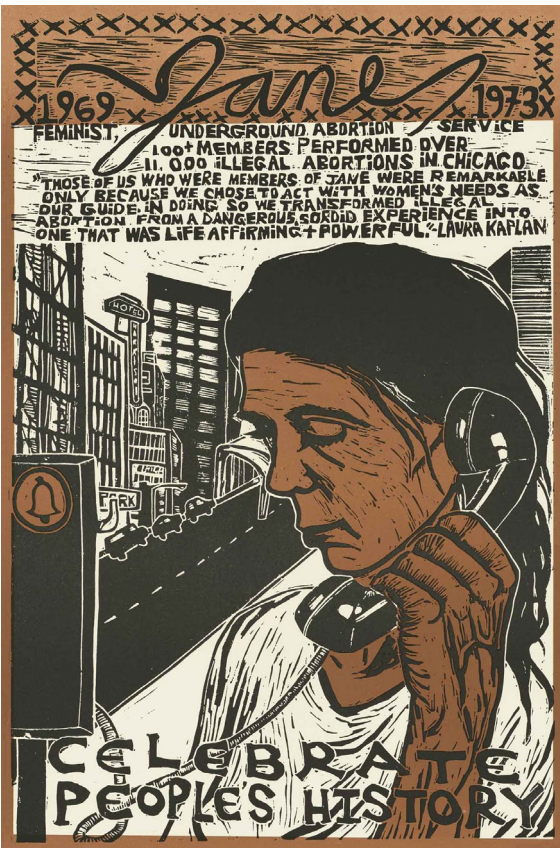
“Before the screening, Judith Arcana prompted the audience to keep in mind three different eras: the 1970s when Jane existed, the 1990s when the film was made, and today in 2019 when we watched the film. ... Throughout the Q&A after the screening, Judith Arcana reflected on her experiences using this framework. During the Jane era, abortion was illegal, but not as shameful as it is today. Now, after decades of anti-abortion movement activism, abortion has been villainized. Judith Arcana pointed to the euphemistic labeling of the ‘pro-choice’ movement to demonstrate how this new commonsense has seeped into both sides of the debate. Her aversion to the word ‘choice’ interested me because I personally think that the fight over semantics and definitions can be divisive and distract from the true goals of the reproductive justice movement. However, members of the Jane Collective focused on abortions during a time when abortions were illegal and I understand how these experiences molded earlier generations of activists to see reproductive rights through a different lens than I do today.” — Tara Cornwell (Biomedical Engineering & Global Health Studies ‘19)

JANE: AN ABORTION SERVICE

A film by Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy



WMM A WOMEN MAKE MOVIES RELEASE



... “One take away from the event is how much things have changed since the time Jane was active, and since the film’s creation. When the film was produced in the 1990s, 84% of US counties had no abortion provider. This already seemingly dire statistic has gotten worse, as 90% of counties now face the same predicament. The fact that abortion providers have declined since the 1990s, when the documentary was made, seems shocking, but upon further reflection in the context of what we have learned in class, this change makes sense. As we discussed, clinic violence committed by the ‘pro-life’ movement was (and is) a strategy to limit access to abortions. There have been decreases in the number of doctors willing to provide abortions and people willing to staff clinics as a result. Beyond this, there are higher insurance rates for abortion providers and fewer landlords are inclined to lease space to clinics that provide abortions. In this way, the ‘pro-life’ movement has been successful in limiting access to abortions.

“What struck me the most, though, was the major shift in the public attitude towards abortion that Judith Arcana described. She said she did not see the level of shame experienced by women seeking abortions then, as a Jane, as she does in her fieldwork now. Today, she argued, there is a widespread perception that abortion is inherently evil, that women who choose it are either to be reviled or understood as victims of ‘abortion mills’ who need to be ‘saved.’ This alteration of public perception over time can also be considered as an effect of skillfully orchestrated ‘pro-life’ clinic protests and propaganda materials like *The Silent Scream* (1984) that have been employed to call into question the morality of women who choose abortions.” — Alexis Rakochy (Sociology & Global Health Studies ‘21)

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM: YEAR IN REVIEW



Nick Davis
Director of Undergraduate Studies

In the 2018-19 school year, eight seniors graduated from Northwestern with a major in Gender & Sexuality Studies, and 14 more finished with a minor in our program. Not only were these students affiliated with a wide range of colleges on the Evanston campus (including Arts and Sciences, Journalism, Education and Social Policy, Communications, and Engineering), but, for the first time, two of our minors completed their degree on Northwestern's campus in Qatar. Within WCAS alone, GSS majors and minors simultaneously earned degrees in such wide-ranging fields as African American Studies, Biology, Economics, and Psychology. Next year's cohort of GSS majors and minors is even larger, encompassing students who are also working in Asian American Studies, Dance Studies, English, Legal Studies, Neuroscience, and Vocal Performance. We remain very proud of the rigorous and diverse intellectual work of all our majors and minors, and of the valuable energies they devote to spreading knowledge and fighting inequality on our campus and in the world at large.

GSS SENIOR THESES



Toni Akunebu

"Black Women Healers: Sexual Trauma, Spiritual Healing, and Reclaiming Sexual Agency in the 21st Century Chicagoland Area"

Black women spiritual healers exist within the intersectional space of race, gender, and spirituality. This boundless space rests at the center of a particular experience that encapsulates all that I am as well; Black, spiritual, and a woman. My own quest to self-discovery led me to the five unique narratives of Chicago-based Black women healers in the 21st century. This community provides the necessary space to learn more about the generational aspects of trauma, and ways that the community can come together to heal collectively.

Mattlyn Cordova

"Walking the Borderlands: A Framework of Trans* Latinx World-Making in Film"

This project brings together scholarship from Latinx Studies, Trans* Studies, and Film Studies (fields which historically have not intersected), offering critical analysis of the intersection of marginalized racial and gender identities as presented on screen. The project spans three case studies (*Afuera*, *Whittier Boulevard*, and *Gun Hill Road*), each a trans*-Latinx film on which I employ a close reading with my own theoretical framework, "walking the borderlands." Walking the borderlands acknowledges the violence that exists within the kinds of geographically and culturally liminal spaces conceptualized by Gloria Anzaldúa, but also thinks of them as productive spaces for disidentificatory queer and trans* world-making processes. From these close readings, I show how walking the borderlands highlights particular intersections of transness and Latinidad and how filmmakers are using formal elements of film to make these experiences and feelings palpable for the audience.



UNDERGRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Brock Colyar

Rae Arlene Moses Leadership Award

Neil Dixit

Rae Arlene Moses Leadership Award

Mattlyn Cordova

Betty Jo Dobbs Outstanding Senior Thesis Prize
"Walking the Borderlands: A Framework of Trans* Latinx World-Making in Film"

Emma McDonnell

George C. Casey Prize for Best Undergraduate Essay
"Building an Affective Repertoire around the Abortion Task Force"

Samuel Berston

Honorable Mention, George C. Casey Prize
"Florida Man: The Post-human Drag Superstar"

Ruby Gibson

Honorable Mention, George C. Casey Prize
"A Field Guide to Queer Ecology"

A Conversation With Brock Colyar

BY MATTLYN CORDOVA (GSS '19)

What inspired the creation of the *Queer Reader*?

The creation of the *Queer Reader* was inspired by several things — with the first being the fact that despite having many campus publications, Northwestern did not have a queer or feminist magazine. Furthermore, after two years at Northwestern, I felt that the queer community was too often fragmented, and that the general campus population was poor at engaging in productive activism and critiques of the institutions we live within, such as the university and the Greek system. The *Queer Reader* became an opportunity to not only attempt to unite more LGBTQ+ folks on campus, but also engage in feminist, queer, and anti-racist conversations and art with other students.



Brock Colyar & Mattlyn Cordova

What was the process of creating the *QR* like? What challenges have you faced?

Unfortunately, starting a publication at Northwestern, where many of the student writers and journalists are already devoted members of other magazines or papers, was a rather difficult task. Therefore, I focused on reaching out to friends, and friends of friends, to submit articles and pitches to the magazine, working as the sole editor on each of the pieces. In the face of few designers and writers willing to form an official club that meets once a week, I focused on creating an archive of essays and stories that would be able to reflect a queer, feminist moment at Northwestern in the latter half of our decade. Taken together, the pieces tell a story about our school in 2018 and 2019, and what it was like for queer folks and women and students of color to be in the world at that time.

What do you see for the future of the *QR*?

I am hoping that other students from Medill and the Gender and Sexuality Studies program will be able to keep the *Queer Reader* alive in the coming years, and join forces with the other identity-based magazines that have been able to establish themselves on campus. In the past, there have been other publications on campus similar to this one, like *Mountain Moving*, a feminist magazine started a couple of decades ago. If anything, I hope that the *QR* will at least serve as inspiration for the next students who come along and hope to create progressive, social-justice-oriented art in the future.

Were there any pieces that came out of this that you found particularly interesting and/or surprising?

The first piece we published was one of my very favorites: a personal essay from a male student on campus called “Beyond Masculinity.” The piece, a reflection on his experience trying on his girlfriend’s clothes for the first time, is a beautifully honest work in which he was also able to reflect on his changing sexuality as he wrote. Seeing someone change through their writing was really special. As a queer person from the South, I was also blown away by an anonymous piece submitted to the magazine called “How to Be Queer and from the South, Step Three, Beads,” a poetic essay that discussed the writer’s coming to terms with her sexuality after moving to an elite university far from her home. Other pieces I am proud to have published discussed the myth of the vaginal organism, feminist mentorship, gender roles within queer relationships, bisexual (in) visibility on campus, and a “field guide to queer ecology.”

You can read these pieces for yourself at www.thequeerreader.com.

GSS FEATURED ALUMNI SERIES

Reproductive Justice Projects: a panel discussion

EXCERPTED FROM PROF. HELEN THOMPSON'S MARCH 10, 2019 BLOG POST (FACULTY CHAIR OF OBON, 2018-19)

February 28, 2019—One Book and Gender & Sexuality Studies hosted a panel discussion among five activists (four of them Northwestern alums) on the Reproductive Justice Movement from the front lines of Chicagoland. Contributing to this conversation, which demanded that we appreciate how comprehensive the politics entailed by reproductive justice are, were

alum Devin Sizer of the Chicago Abortion Fund (CAF); alum Megan Jeyifo of CAF; alum Sarah Daoud, a therapist at the Howard Brown Health Center, former reproductive justice educator at Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, and former intern at Chicago Women's Health Center; alum Kyra Jones, staff member at Northwestern's Center for Awareness, Response, and Education (CARE) and advisor to NU's Sexual Health and Assault Peer Educators (SHAPE); and Lavette Mayes, an Advocate with the Chicago Community Bond Fund.

This riveting series of presentations resists a fine-tuned synopsis, so instead I'll gesture to the range of interconnected crises and structural injustices whose urgency our speakers brought to life—in part through the narratives of how their organizations are enacting change in venues and registers that exceed the conventional parameters of liberal politics and liberal feminism. We heard from Devin and Megan about the Chicago Abortion Fund as first and foremost a site of compassion—and of compassion, inversely, as a form of political action that leads with storytelling. Rather than treating abortion as a shameful but defensible right, CAF moves beyond the reproductive rights framework to align itself more broadly with the structural struggles of women of color and low-income women. CAF gives \$100 – \$400 increments of funding to support community abortion access. But as a member of the National Network of Abortion Funds contiguous to midwestern (and, more distantly, southern) states where abortion availability is nonexistent and fetal personhood amendments encroach profoundly on reproductive rights, CAF does far more than pay for a medical procedure: it makes possible transportation, childcare, lodging, and other forms of holistic sustenance crucial to the feasibility of women's long-distance travel to Chicago. CAF activists must be case managers, Devin and Megan affirmed, to sustain the complex needs of women as far away as Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Iowa, and Wisconsin. ...

Kyra, an NU alum who works for CARE, challenged us to think more expansively about the mandate and reach of this Northwestern confidential sexual awareness and response center. More than an invaluable source of counseling for survivors, CARE should be considered a resource hub broadening the boundaries of what might constitute Northwestern community support for healthy sexuality in all forms. Just as Kyra suggested that the restriction of educational resources is a mode of sexual violence, Lavette Mayes of the Chicago Community Bond Fund extended the political framework of reproductive justice to include mass incarceration. Mayes exemplified the politics of storytelling as a critical foundation for reproductive justice politics by sharing her own harrowing experience: jailed for 571 days after she could not pay \$25,000 bail on a bond of \$250K, even after the bail was lowered to \$9,500, Mayes lost her business, her house, and sustaining contact with her own children. Speaking for the urgency of the Chicago Bail Bond Fund's mission as an integral facet of reproductive justice extending to pretrial incarceration perpetrated against mothers, Mayes asserted that about 1,900 women are currently incarcerated in Cook County because they are unable to pay bail. ... As Mayes demonstrated with her powerful testimony, for women who are heads of families, jail time means the effective incarceration of entire families. Reproductive justice extends to decarceration—and certainly to the decarceration of women convicted of no crime.

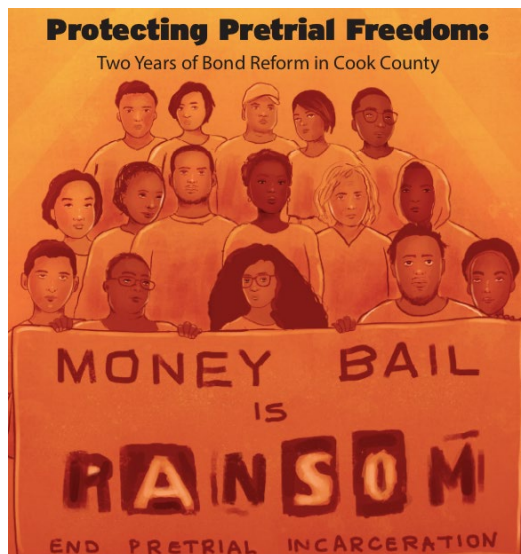


“Devin Sizer and Megan Jeyifo’s descriptions of their work with CAF directly related to our class discussions about access and the kinds of difficulties women face when seeking out services that allow them to terminate their pregnancies. Reflecting on the work of CAF in the context of our readings—from Murphy’s ‘Immodest Witnessing’ on the pre-Roe self-help movement to *Radical Reproductive Justice*—we can see that even though the right to safe and legal abortion was granted in 1973, access is still a large barrier for many women in America, even in 2019. As a result, the right to reproductive autonomy remains almost meaningless for many poor and working-class women, especially those living in rural areas. Hearing about how CAF helps women access the reproductive care they want and deserve by arranging for their travel to Illinois from other states in the Midwest, like Missouri, that have more restrictive laws, showed me how it is possible to work towards reproductive justice by marshalling support from the community.” — Caroline Forbess (WCAS ’22)



from the Chicago Abortion Fund

Murphy, “Immodest Witnessing: The Epistemology of Vaginal Self-Examination in the U.S. Feminist Self-Help Movement” *Feminist Studies* Vol. 30 No. 1 (Spring 2004)
 Ross et al, *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundations, Theory, Practice, Critique*. Feminist Press (2017)



from the Chicago Community Bond Fund

“On February 27, the Trienens Forum Room was home to a panel discussion on the topic of Reproductive Justice (RJ) which featured five activists who work with reproductive justice projects in the Chicago area. . . .RJ is a feminist movement, led by women of color, that promotes, ‘the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.’ In other words, the RJ movement insists that women have the right to have children or to be ‘child-free’ and that women who do choose to have children be able to raise them in supportive of healthy communities. The RJ movement is also committed to bringing the needs of the most marginalized women to the forefront to ensure that all women have access to these rights.

“While the entire panel discussion seemed to fit almost seamlessly into what we have been discussing all quarter, Lavette Mayes’ story truly highlighted what reproductive justice and our freshman seminar are all about. Mayes spent fourteen months in Cook County Jail and five months on house arrest because she could not afford bail. Mayes was a mother and a new business owner who had to give up over a year of her life because the system failed her. It might be difficult to see how the mass incarceration crisis can be related to women’s health but, if one takes a RJ approach, the connection is clear. Not only do women who are incarcerated have little or no access to adequate health care, depriving them of the right to maintain their own wellbeing, being incarcerated also infringes upon the rights of women to parent their children. Mayes now works as a reproductive justice advocate with the Chicago Community Bond Fund (<https://chicagobond.org/>).” — Sara Ungerleider (WCAS ’22)

Sister Song, “Reproductive Justice.” <https://www.sistersong.net/reproductive-justice>

GRADUATE PROGRAM: YEAR IN REVIEW



Jennifer Nash
Director of Graduate Studies

Our graduate students had a productive and engaged year! The graduate colloquium was marked by vibrant and generative conversations about the academic job market, feminist pedagogy, and the racial politics of gender and sexuality studies. We formed a cross-disciplinary community sustained by a commitment to feminist and queer theory, politics, and practice. Benson Zhou, Lauren Herold, Kyle Kaplan, and Zachary Nissen served as the program's dedicated Teaching Assistants and offered their own classes that expanded our curriculum in exciting ways. Julian Glover, Rhiannon Auriemma, and Erin Andrews were our delegates to the Duke Feminist Theory Workshop. I loved having the opportunity to serve as the Director of Graduate Studies this year, and getting to know our amazing, talented, intellectually curious, and politically engaged students.

Queertopia: LGBTQ+ Media Cultures



BY LAUREN HEROLD (PHD CANDIDATE, SCREEN CULTURES, GSS)

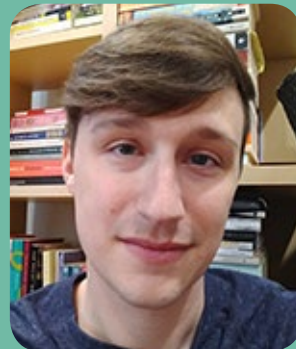
March 2, 2019—The Queer Pride Graduate Student Association (QPGSA) hosted Queertopia, its 12th annual graduate student conference, co-sponsored by the Gender and Sexuality Studies program. The theme of the 2019 conference was “LGBTQ+ media cultures.” The conference opened with a keynote from Fran Tirado, the Deputy Editor of *OUT Magazine*, who discussed the history of the magazine as well as its recent rebrand to focus on marginalized LGBTQ communities. Panels throughout the day featured graduate and early stage scholarship from the humanities and social sciences that investigated visibility, representation, community, and connection through film, literature, television, and digital media. The conference closed with a screening of *Happy Birthday Marsha!* (2018), a short film that imagines a day in the life of iconic transgender activist Marsha P. Johnson. Aymar Jean Christian, Assistant Professor of Communications Studies, moderated a post-screening discussion that included Julian Glover, PhD Candidate in African American Studies at Northwestern, Bea Cordelia, artist, activist, and Northwestern alumna, and Chase Joynt, a Postdoctoral Fellow and filmmaker at the University of Chicago.

INTRODUCING THE 2019-20 GSS TAS



Cara Dickason

Cara Dickason is a PhD candidate in Screen Cultures in the Department of Radio/TV/Film and a Mellon Cluster Fellow in Gender and Sexuality Studies. Her research focuses on the intersection of surveillance and spectatorship in girl's and women's television. Her work on this topic has been published in the edited collections *Mediated Girlhoods* and *ABC Family to Freeform TV*. She received her Master's degree in English from Georgetown University and taught writing at Trinity Washington University and Prince George's Community College.



Eric James

Eric Andrew James is a PhD student in Rhetoric and Public Culture. He studies how grammars of hate operate in code, user interface, and cultures of use for always-on digital technology. His dissertation focuses on the prevalent language of “networking” and its implications for intimate contact with and through that technology. Eric has published in *Transformative Works and Cultures*, *In Media Res*, and a special issue of *Game Studies* focused on queer game studies. His aim is to reimagine modern always-on digital media using feminist design and practice.



Courtney Rabada

Courtney Rabada is a PhD student in Religious Studies. Her research interests include contemporary American religions, black and white feminist theory, gender/sexuality, and ethnography. Her work focuses on the role of Audre Lorde as a devotional figure for African American women and the ways in which black feminist theory informs and impacts the study of religion in the United States. She earned her B.A. from Indiana University, Bloomington in English Literature and her M.A. from Claremont Graduate University in Religious Studies.



Benjamin Zender

Benjamin Zender is a PhD student in Performance Studies. For their dissertation research, they ask how people and communities forge identities through, and how are they disciplined by, their orientations toward shared objects. In their ethnographic work, they speak with individuals about their own “object management” practices of hoarding and minimalism as well as makers of minoritarian archives and museums, drawing a continuum between these individual and collective practices. Considering the ways that minoritarian archivists have curated objects as part of a praxis for worldbuilding, they ask how we might develop a radical, community-based approach toward the care, management, and publicizing of everyday documents and ephemera.

A Conversation With Julian Kevon Glover

Julian Kevon Glover is an academic, activist, performer, and current PhD Candidate in African-American Studies at Northwestern University with a certificate in Gender & Sexuality Studies. They were awarded a Franke Fellowship at Northwestern's Kaplan Institute for the Humanities and their work appears in publications including Harvard Kennedy School's *LGBTQ Policy Journal*, *American Quarterly*, *Souls* and *Text & Performance Quarterly*. She was also recently inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society at Yale University and is currently a Visiting Scholar at Virginia Commonwealth University. His dissertation is a performance ethnography chronicling the experiences of transgender women in the ballroom scene in Chicago and London.

How would you describe your current work and what drew you to it?

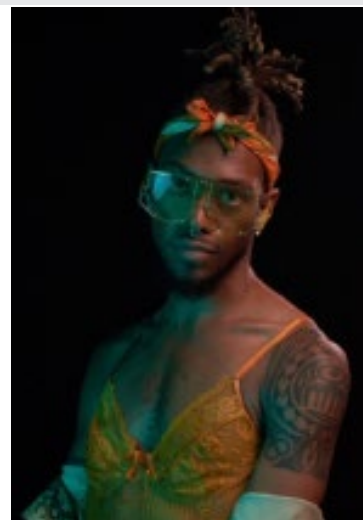
My current work seeks to provide a corrective to existing scholarly literature about Black and Latinx transwomen which currently theorizes and understands their existences through annihilation using examples that include their (often violent) deaths or disproportionately high HIV risk. To be clear, it is extremely important to examine the relationship that Black and Latinx transwomen have to annihilation as their plight reveals so much about white supremacy, regimes of gender, capitalism and anti-blackness. However, such an inquiry should not stop there; rather, it is also critically important to investigate how Black and Latinx transwomen navigate a world that remains hellbent on their destruction/erasure by using strategies, tactics and tools—some of which may be illegible to those with a different social location—and make meaning of their lives. Thus, my work seeks to delineate some of the aforementioned strategies, tactics and tools in order to demonstrate how Black and Latinx transwomen ingeniously resist annihilation and to uphold the myriad cultural contributions which stem from the productive and reproductive (i.e. queer kinship and family structures) labor of Black and Latinx transwomen.

How did GSS influence your career trajectory? How does it affect your work today?

Some people may not know, but I've changed careers twice (Entertainment Public Relations and Queer Nonprofit Management) and it was not until I took my first graduate level GSS course, with the illustrious Marlon M. Bailey, that I finally saw a career trajectory with which I could be fulfilled long term. The GSS courses that I took were nothing short of intellectually, spiritually and emotionally transformative for me as the texts that I read challenged me to not only sharpen my theoretical acumen, but also to develop a praxis that is deeply informed by my theoretical investments. Indeed, my work is deeply informed by the aforementioned transformative experiences and I remain in pursuit of a relational ethic (following Audre Lorde and Jennifer C. Nash) that aims to bring to fruition a queer world that acknowledges, affirms and celebrates the myriad ways that QTPOC use their embodied knowledge to pursue a life in which we can be satisfied and have joy.

For those passionate about feminism/LGBTQ issues and discouraged by the current political climate, what advice do you have?

I am a pragmatist whose orientation to the world is one of dutiful suspicion and thus, I've come to the conclusion that humanity may not be redeemable (given evidence that spans well over 400 years not just our current political climate). However, such a plight does not absolve us from taking care of those in our communities. That said, the current political climate suggests that the most important way I can harness my passion for feminism/LGBTQ issues is by doing everything in my power to acquire the material and human resources that members of my community need. The current political climate signals that not only is the government untrustworthy of catering to any of our basic or specific needs (knowledge that black and brown queer people have known for centuries), it is clear now that they desire to hasten our annihilation. Whether it be opening up my residence for someone to stay, buying a meal or groceries, advocating for employment, an equitable honorarium for creative/artistic/intellectual services rendered or simply listening to a person in need and providing advice, now is the time to take stock of the various material and human resources that we have at our disposal and strategically share them with those in our communities. While this is admittedly a flawed "solution", it is also a tangible one that holds the potential to stave off the successful annihilation of yet another member of our community and thus, it is totally worth doing in my humble opinion.



Julian Kevon Glover

GRADUATE STUDENT UPDATES

KARLIA BROWN (Sociology & GSS Cluster Fellow) received research support from SPAN, the Dispute Resolution & Research Center at Kellogg School of Management, and the Dept. of Sociology. She presented her research at the American Sociological Association Annual Conference and the Association of Black Sociologists Annual Conference. Karlia has also been working as an Institute for Policy Research graduate research assistant under Andrew Papachristos at the Northwestern Neighborhood & Network Initiative.

AUSTIN BRYAN (Anthropology & GSS Cluster Fellow) was awarded a Department of Anthropology Lobban Grant and TGS Summer Language Grant to conduct preliminary fieldwork and language study in Kampala, Uganda this summer. Recent publications include: Bryan, Austin (2019), "Kuchu Activism, Queer Sex-Work, and 'Lavender Marriages,' in Uganda's Virtual LGBT Safe(r) Spaces," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 13 (1):90-105.

IVAN BUJAN (Performance Studies & GSS Certificate) presented at the Second International Symposium on Men and Masculinities in Istanbul. This summer he designed and taught a new undergraduate course entitled "The Intersectionality of AIDS," which hosted an interactive workshop by Chicago-based activist, artist, and Black liberationist Charles Ryan Long, and resulted in an article that includes examples of student work from the course (<https://visualaids.org/blog/the-artist-registry-as-living-archive-an-undergraduate-perspective>).

KELLY COYNE (Screen Cultures & GSS Certificate) published a review of John Alberti's *The Killing* in *The Journal of Popular Television* and two articles—"The Confessional Peep Show: Pleasure, Pornography, and The Deuce" and "Queering the Language of Friendship in Juliet Lapidus's *Talent*"—in *The Los Angeles Review of Books*. She also presented at Yale's Film and Media Studies Graduate Student Conference and at The Society for Cinema and Media Studies' annual conference.

CARA DICKASON (Screen Cultures & GSS Cluster Fellow) presented work on how Smart TV surveillance technology rewrites the gendered meanings of privacy at the Popular Culture Association national conference and the annual meeting for the Society for Social Studies of Science. She was also elected as the graduate student representative to the Board of Directors of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies and was selected to be a GSS TA for the 2019-20 academic year.

JULIAN KEVON GLOVER (African American Studies, GSS Certificate) published a short essay in *American Quarterly* on anti-respectability as methodology with S. Tay Glover entitled "She Ate My Ass and My Pussy All Night: Deploying Illicit Eroticism, Funk and Sex Work Amongst Black Queer Women Femmes." Julian was also recently inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society at Yale University and was appointed as a Visiting Scholar at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) for this academic year and will begin a tenure track position at VCU the following year, with a joint appointment in Dance and Choreography & Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies.

JESSICA HOUGH (Art History & GSS Cluster Fellow) presented a paper titled "Haunting in my House: Performing Queer Utopia in the Work of Jacob Lawrence" at University of California Santa Barbara's Media Fields Conference. Additionally, her article addressing the gendered body in Italian Futurist cinema was published in *Rutgers Art Review*. This fall, she will present papers at University of Kentucky's Gender and Women's Studies Conference and at the Midwest Popular Culture Association. She received the COSI Mellon Curatorial Fellowship, and will join the Department of Photography at the Art Institute of Chicago for the 2019-20 academic year.

ALYSSA LYNNE (Sociology & GSS Cluster Fellow) presented at the Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Chicago Ethnography Conference, and American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. She received an honorable mention for the Best Graduate Student Paper at the Northern Illinois University 2019 Southeast Asian Studies Student Conference for her paper "Paired Double Consciousness: A Duboisian Approach to Gender and Globalization in Thai Kathoey Self-Formation." In spring 2019, she received a SPAN Summer Research Grant to begin a new research project entitled "Gender, Medicine, and Standardization: Gender-Affirming Health Care in the U.S. and Thailand."

C. TOVA MARKENSON (Theater and Drama) was awarded research fellowships from SPAN and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, published a performance review of Argentine director Sebastián Kirsznér's new play *La Shikse* in *Theatre Journal*, presented at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education's national conference, and took part in a Digital Yiddish Theatre Project workshop. This summer, she also participated in a research institute on the topic of migration at Harvard University's Mellon School for Theatre and Performance Research.

MYRNA MORETTI (Screen Cultures & GSS Certificate) presented a paper on "The AIDS Movie of the Week: Representing the Epidemic in 1980s Primetime" at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies annual conference in Seattle.

BAHRAM NADERIL (Anthropology & GSS Certificate) is the recipient of the Arryman Scholarship Award and received numerous grants to support his ethnographic research on the religious lives of transgender sex workers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, including a SPAN summer research grant, Northwestern TGS graduate research grant and summer language grant, and a Buffett Institute graduate research grant. He also presented work at the Engendering Change Conference at the University of Chicago and at the Stanford Anthropology Graduate Conference.

YASMIN S. PORTALES-MACHADO (Spanish & Portuguese & GSS Cluster Fellow) published "The LGBTIQ March on Havana" in *Dissent* (https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/the-lgbtqi-march-on-havana). She also presented "The Future of the Left in the Americas" at *Dissent* magazine and the New School panel "Learning from the Cuban Experience"; "Of (under covert) white patriarchal survival and queer resistance in Cuba" at the Cuba Youth Conference; "Tales of an alternative family under patriarchal socialism" at the 4th Graduate Conference in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Studies; and "Ser una geek con consciencia de raza y género en Cuba" at the LASA2019 Congress.

TAYLOR ROGERS (Philosophy & GSS Certificate) gave papers at the University of Oregon, Villanova, and at both the Central and Eastern American Philosophical Association meetings that focused on how we might combat emotional numbness towards marginalized agents through art and other practicing of feeling, and received a grant from Northwestern's Center for Interdisciplinary Research in the Arts to make an audio-visual album that takes up this research.

DYLAN ROLLO (Rhetoric & Public Culture & GSS Certificate) published on Kevin Spacey's rhetorics of transparency in *QED: A Journal in LGBTQ Worldmaking*, a review of Susan Fraiman's *Extreme Domesticity* in *Women & Language*, and "Just Wait Here Ten Minutes: Mobility's Masculinism within Urban Exploration" in *Women's Studies in Communication*. He also presented at the National Communication Association, earned a Writing Place fellowship, and was granted funding for the Doctoral Honors Seminar, the Summer Institute in Cologne, and in the Rhetoric Society of America's summer institute and their Project in Power, Place, and Publics.



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