

Consortium for  
Graduate Studies in  
Gender, Culture,  
Women, and Sexuality

2021-2022

# Annual Report



617-324-2085  
MIT Building 14N-224  
gcws@mit.edu  
www.gcws.mit.edu

Compiled by:  
Stacey Lantz, Program Manager

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# Board of Directors

## **Boston College:**

Andy Crow, Department of English

## **Boston University:**

Sandra McEvoy, Departments of Political Science and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## **Brandeis University:**

Gannit Ankori, Departments of Fine Arts, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and Schusterman Center for Israel Studies (Fall 2021)

&

V Varun Chaudhry, Departments of African and African American Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (Spring 2022)

## **Harvard University:**

Linda Schlossberg, Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## **MIT:**

Catherine D'Ignazio, Department of Urban Studies and Planning (Fall 2021)

&

devin bunten, Department of Urban Studies and Planning (Spring 2022)

## **Northeastern University:**

Gloria Sutton, Department of Contemporary Art History

## **Simmons University:**

Suzanne Leonard, Departments of English and Critical Race, Gender, and Cultural Studies

## **Tufts University:**

Tasha Oren, Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies

## **University of Massachusetts, Boston:**

Thea Quiray Tagle, Departments of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Critical Ethnic and Community Studies

## **Co-chairs:**

Sandra McEvoy, Boston University & Suzanne Leonard, Simmons University

# Mission Statement

The Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality housed at MIT brings together feminist scholars and teachers from nine Boston area institutions for the purpose of advancing interdisciplinary, intersectional feminist scholarship and teaching in the areas of women's, gender, and sexuality studies. The consortium is committed to the following:

- Exploring the intersections of power and identity, including but not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, class, physical ability, nationality, religion, and language
- Cultivating collaborative intellectual communities across fields and disciplines
- Supporting innovative pedagogical practices
- Contributing to the professional development of students and faculty
- Providing a sustainable model of institutional collaboration

In line with the history of women's studies, GCWS relies on shared expertise, wisdom, and vision to work toward a more just and equitable future for all people.

## The Mother Board & Past Faculty

The 'Mother Board' consists of the six founders, feminist faculty who conceptualized and brought the GCWS into existence: Carol Hurd Green (BC), Joyce Antler (Brandeis), Alice Jardine (Harvard), Ruth Perry (MIT), Laura Frader (NEU), and Christiane Romero (Tufts). We continue to rely on their institutional knowledge, insight, and expertise in feminist scholarship as the GCWS evolves. We draw on the Mother Board and other past faculty members as we continue to respond to the changing needs and opportunities within the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

# 2021-2022 Courses

## Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

- Fall and Spring semesters: Tuesdays, 5:00-8:00PM; September 14, 2021 – May 3, 2022
- Carla Kaplan, Professor, Department of English and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Northeastern University

## Comedy and Gender in the U.S.: Counterpublics, World-Making, and the Politics of Pleasure

- Fall semester, Wednesdays, 3:00-6:00PM; September 8, 2021 – December 8, 2021
- Ginger Lazarus, Senior Lecturer, Department of Theatre Arts, UMass Boston
- David Sherman, Associate Professor, Department of English, Brandeis

## Feminist, Queer, and Indigenous Methodologies

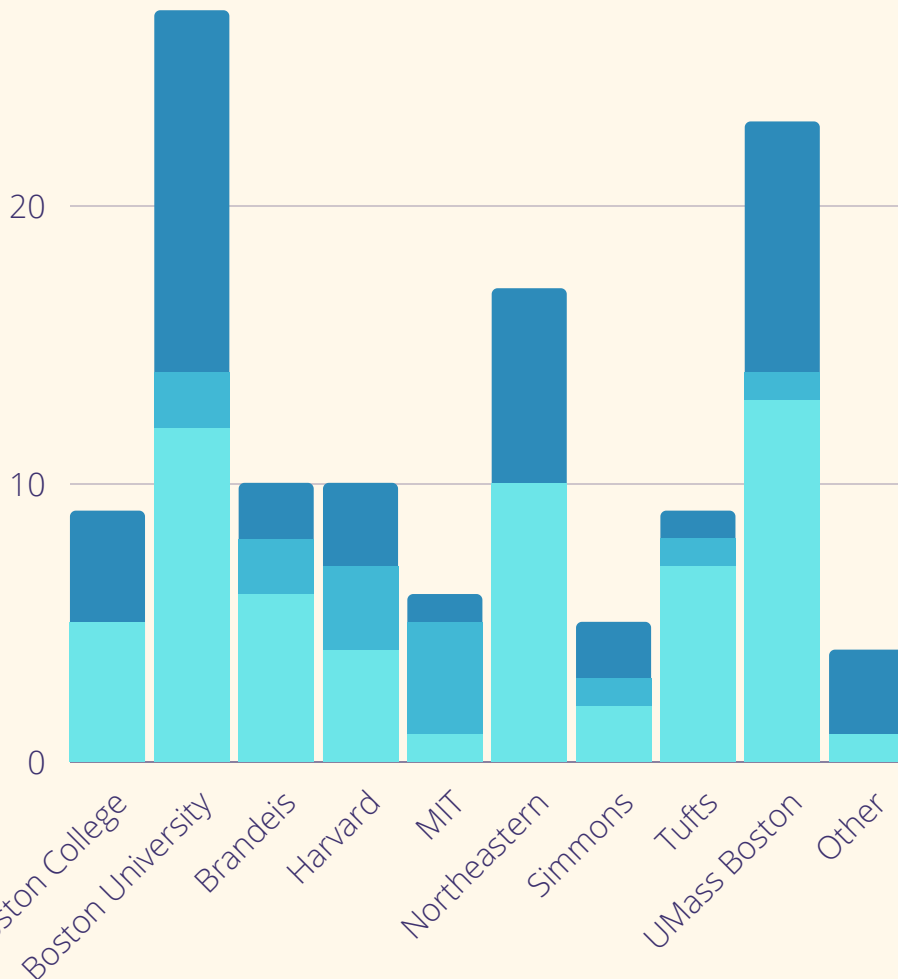
- Spring semester: Tuesdays, 4:30-7:30PM; January 25, 2022 – May 3, 2022
- Summer semester: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 3:00-6:00PM; May 31, 2022 – July 7, 2022
- Sandra McEvoy, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Boston University

## Race, Sex, and the Ethics of Collection at the Peabody Museum

- Spring semester: Wednesdays, 5:00-8:00PM; January 26, 2022 – May 4, 2022
- Caroline Light, Senior Lecturer, Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Harvard
- Meredith Reiches, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, UMass Boston

## Student Enrollment by Institution

■ Applied   ■ Accepted   ■ Completed



### Student disciplines included:

- American & New England Studies
- Anthropology
- Business
- Conflict Resolution, Human Security & Global Governance,
- Counseling, Developmental, & Educational Psychology
- Critical Race, Gender, & Cultural Studies
- Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Program
- Education
- English
- Fine Arts
- Health & Social Behavior
- Health Sciences & Technology
- History of Art & Architecture
- History
- Library Sciences
- Music
- Nursing
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Public Policy
- Religion
- Social Policy & Management
- Sociology
- Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies



# Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

FALL AND SPRING SEMESTERS - TUESDAYS, 5:00-8:00PM  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021 – MAY 3, 2022

This workshop is designed for feminist dissertators from all disciplines and at all stages of the dissertation process. We will combine theories of interdisciplinarity and intersectionality as well as histories of academic writing and its protocols (as well as its secret rules) with practical instruction in how to become better/more comfortable writers and get more writing done. Readings, which will also cover important related topics such as balancing writing and activism, the racial, sexual and gender politics of the academy, the politics of acknowledgement, feminist voice, women's anger and self-care, will be varied and total approximately 30-35 pages every two weeks. We will work together to both build a supportive community and to break down the process of a dissertation into short, tangible, manageable activities and task; short writing exercises will include practical training in those tasks. Each semester we will workshop writing.



Over the course of the year, we will provide guidance on preparing publications, presenting conference papers, and the academic (and non-academic) job market. We will be discussing specific pressures on universities and colleges in the wake of the nation's overdue racial reckoning, the Covid-19 pandemic and lingering impacts of an anti-intellectual and anti-scientific presidency. Questions for discussion might include how the academy has changed, how it is changing, and what we would like to see it become. We may also discuss the limits and advantages of online learning and teaching, if that is relevant to members.

## Faculty

Carla Kaplan, a professor of English and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, holds the Davis Distinguished Professorship in American Literature and writes on modern, African-American, and women's history and culture. She has published five books, including the award-winning *Miss Anne in Harlem: the White Women of the Black Renaissance* (HarperCollins) and *Zora Neale Hurston: A Life in Letters* (Doubleday/Anchor), both New York Times Notable Books, and writes occasionally for such publications as *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, and *The Nation*. Forthcoming books include *Queen of the Muckrakers: the Life of Jessica Mitford*, also with HarperCollins and a Norton Critical Edition of Nella Larsen's *Passing*. Kaplan founded the Northeastern Humanities Center and has been a resident fellow at numerous humanities centers and institutes, including the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York City Public Library, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the W.E.B. DuBois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University, and the Los Angeles Institute for the Humanities. Kaplan has received teaching awards and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and elsewhere. She is a recently elected Fellow of the Society of American Historians. Kaplan has decades of experience leading writing workshops, was an original editor of the *Black Maria* collective, and serves as the Editorial Board Chair of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*.

“

Professor Kaplan was very enthusiastic about writing, feminist research, and supporting us in the classroom. Her guidance made me feel less daunted about writing about and for feminist research.

”

# Comedy and Gender in the U.S.: Counterpublics, World-Making, and the Politics of Pleasure

FALL SEMESTER: WEDNESDAYS, 5:00-8:00PM - SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 – DECEMBER 8, 2021

This course investigates comedy as a strategy for feminist and queer critique, counterpublic formation, and imaginative world-making. Our interdisciplinary approach to the cultural politics of laughter will address satire, carnival, the absurd, joke-telling rituals, the grotesque, farce, camp, the aesthetics of profanity, creative subversion, and transgressive play. Students will have opportunities to do academic and creative projects to engage these phenomena. Our guiding questions will include: how can we understand the tension between the ephemerality of laughter-pleasure and fixedness of gendered and racialized hierarchies? What do theories of comedy offer theories of subject formation, and vice-versa? How does reading laughter help us read mechanisms of oppression? How do controversies over offensive humor function, and what are their stakes? How does a focus on comedy and laughter sharpen concepts in public sphere theory? In what sense does comedy have the power to subvert white supremacist, patriarchal institutions? Primary context is the U.S., but students working in other regions and all disciplines are welcome.



“ That this course even exists is monumental. Comedy is the most used genre in all of media and it's always ignored in higher circles. I am so happy that classes like this exist, and want to encourage more classes like this through a gender lens because there are important aspects that are out there that people want to discuss. ”

## Faculty

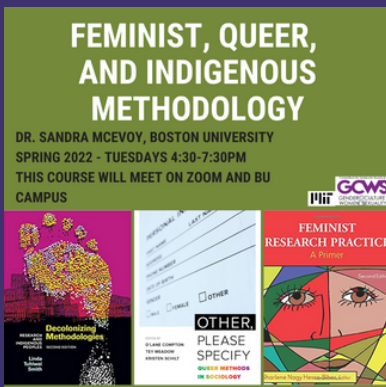
Ginger Lazarus is Senior Lecturer II in Theatre Arts at University of Massachusetts Boston. She is an award-winning playwright and the author of comedies *Matter Familias* and *The Embryos*. Her areas of research include military sexual assault, Russian artists under Stalin, and theater and social justice.

David Sherman is Associate Professor in English at Brandeis University. His research focuses on global modernism, public sphere theory, comedy, mortuary and commemorative practices, and literature in the criminal justice system. He is co-organizer of the Brandeis Justice Initiative, which expands educational opportunities for people impacted by the criminal justice system.

## Feminist, Queer, and Indigenous Methodologies

SPRING SEMESTER: TUESDAYS, 4:30-7:30PM; JANUARY 25, 2022 – MAY 3, 2022

SUMMER SEMESTER: TUESDAYS/THURSDAYS, 3:00-6:00PM; MAY 31, 2022 – JULY 7, 2022



While academic inquiry and research from the west/global north has been responsible for some of civilization's greatest achievements, it has also been a powerful tool of domination, oppression and erasure. This interdisciplinary graduate seminar seeks to explore non-normative research methodologies that are robust, ethical, and culturally informed to counter this history and to enhance our own comprehension and awareness. The seminar also trains students to interrogate the ways that normative approaches to knowledge production - especially in Western contexts - contribute to a blunting of understanding and a silencing of already vulnerable communities. A special focus of the course is to help students gain skills for application to their own research inquiries/projects.

“ I'm glad to have found this Methods course, I had been looking for something like this for 2 and a half years of doctoral studies. This course will be fundamental for my dissertation work. ”

## Faculty

Sandra McEvoy is a Clinical Associate Professor of Political Science and Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Boston University. McEvoy's primary research interests include the dynamics of political change including women's participation in political violence; and gender-focused strategies that incorporate perpetrators of political violence into long-term conflict resolution strategies. She has written extensively on the Northern Irish conflict including, the gendered motivations for women's participation in political violence and the impact that such participation has on notions of men and masculinity. McEvoy's secondary area of interest explores the vulnerabilities of LGBT+ populations during conflict and natural disasters. Her current project is as coeditor of *The Oxford Handbook on Global LGBT Politics* (expected fall 2019). The Handbook is one of the earliest collections that uses sexuality as a critical lens through which to understand global politics.

# Race, Sex, and the Ethics of Collection in the Peabody Museum

**SPRING SEMESTER: WEDNESDAYS, 5:00-8:00PM; JANUARY 26, 2022 – MAY 4, 2022**

Convened at Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology, this course examines how historical relations of gender, sex, sexuality, and imperial/racialized power continue to be narrativized, hidden, and excavated in historical and contemporary anthropological projects. Using an interdisciplinary feminist lens, we will enter the urgent and complex web of conversations, within the Peabody and between the museum and its publics, about how to reckon with its past and how to move, with ethical alertness and rigor, into the future. Our shared questions include: What does it mean to collect human cultural and biological history? What are the roles of gender, sex, and race in shaping the politics of anthropological collection and study? How are human differences measured, and what do these systems of measurement say about the process of scientific knowledge production? Whose voices hold authority in adjudicating museum collections, and what forms of knowledge and authenticity govern their disposition and interpretation?

**Faculty:** Caroline Light is Director of Undergraduate Studies and Senior Lecturer on Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Harvard University. Her scholarship focuses on the racialization and heteronormativity of lethal self-defense in the United States. Her practice engages her in racial and gender justice work at the University and beyond.


Meredith Reiches is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She studies the way race and sex are mutually constitutive in the construction of evolutionary narratives of human origins. The sleight-of-hand in these accounts, she argues, naturalizes historical and contemporary social hierarchies.

**RACE, SEX, AND THE ETHICS OF COLLECTION IN THE PEABODY MUSEUM**

Dr. Caroline Light, Harvard & Dr. Meredith Reiches, UMass Boston

Wednesdays, 5:00-8:00PM

Spring 2022



"Duchess of Mecklenburg excavating at Magdalenska gora", Courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 40-27-40/14326.15.4.1

Pending COVID restrictions, this course will take place at the Harvard Peabody Museum.

**GCWS**  
GENDER CULTURE WOMEN SEXUALITY

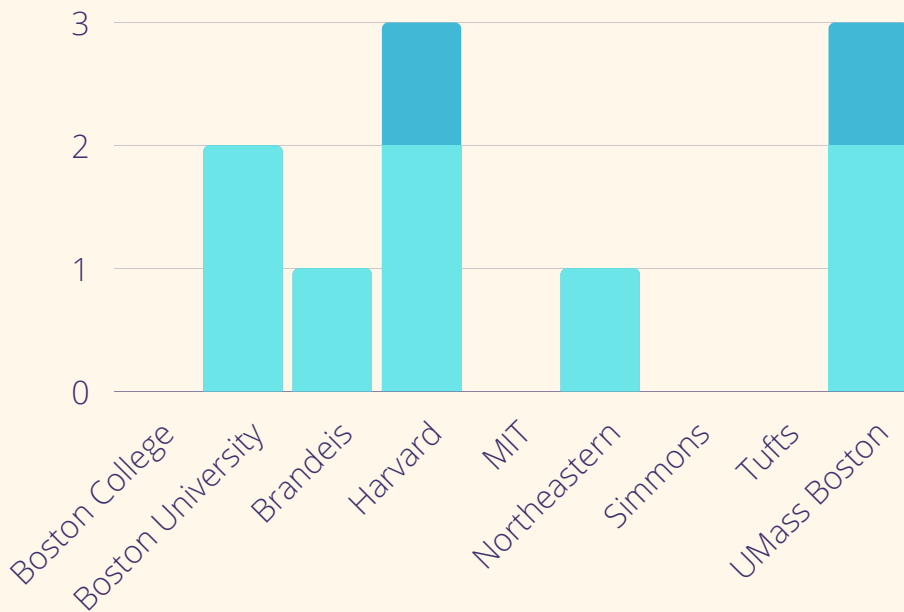
“

This is one of the best courses I have taken in graduate school, and I have done multiple MAs and currently sit in a PhD program. It was a fantastic course, and should Dr. Light and Dr. Reiches wish to teach again it absolutely should run every time.

”



# Teaching Faculty in GCWS



Course  
Microseminar

## Disciplines represented:

- American Studies
- Anthropology
- English
- Political Science
- Spanish
- Theatre Arts
- Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
- Writing

## 2021-2022 Microseminars

### The Mediated Self: Doing Gender, Race, and Sexuality in the 21st Century

FALL SEMESTER: WEDNESDAYS, 4:00 - 6:00 PM;  
AUGUST 25, 2021 - SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

What does it mean to perform the self in today's media climate, especially if that self lies beyond the white/male/straight hegemonic order? What happens when these marginalized subjects go mainstream? And what happens when the self becomes nothing more than a capitalist commodity, easily exploited or appropriated for monetary or other gain? Taking works by Erving Goffman, Judith Butler, bell hooks, and others as a theoretical foundation and adopting an intersectional approach to the material, this mini-course explores these and related questions. Together, we'll analyze how selfhood and subjectivity is performed in a variety of media genres, from contemporary memoirs to reality TV to social media. We'll read literature and essays by Carmen Maria Machado, Ocean Vuong, Jia Tolentino, Roxane Gay, and Sarah J. Jackson, and we'll consider new media phenomena like Netflix's *Queer Eye*, *Harry & Meghan*, Instagram influencers, and the curious case of Hilaria Baldwin. We'll explore, more broadly, how subjects and selves not only become legible through these media but how these media forms, in turn, dictate or regulate the parameters of who becomes legible in the first place. In sum, the course suggests that if the gendered/racial/sexed self has always been a construct, then the vicissitudes of the 21st century and its technologies have helped to de- and re-construct it in profound ways that demand our further attention.

#### Faculty

Dr. Alexandra Gold is a Preceptor in the Harvard College Writing Program. She has, since 2018, taught a first-year writing course on feminism, art, and social media, for which she has been recognized with four Certificates of Teaching Excellence from Harvard's Office of Undergraduate Education. She earned her Ph.D. in English and a Graduate Certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Boston University. Her research and teaching interests include post-1945 American poetry and visual art, women's studies, popular culture, and critical pedagogy. Her research and writing have appeared or are forthcoming in *Contemporary Literature*, *Genre*, *Word & Image*, *Feminist Pedagogy*, and *Women's Studies*, and she is currently at work on a book that explores collaborations between 20th and 21st century poets and painters in artist's book form.

GCWS MICROSEMINAR  
2021-2022



THE MEDIATED SELF:  
DOING GENDER, RACE,  
AND SEXUALITY IN THE  
21ST CENTURY

Dr. Alexandra Gold, Harvard

AUGUST 25-SEPTEMBER 22  
WEDNESDAYS, 4:00-6:00PM

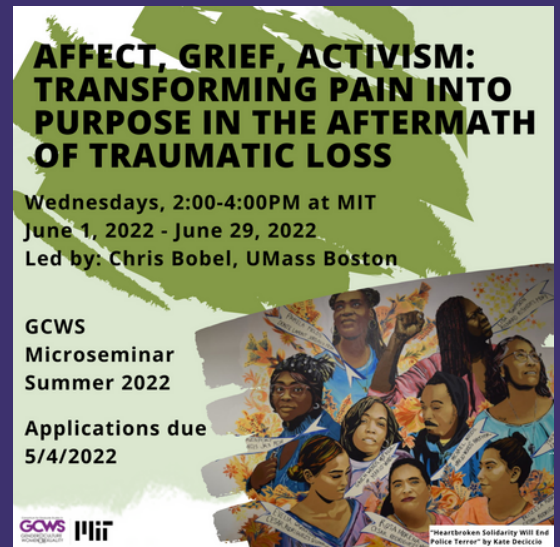
We plan to offer this microseminar in person on the MIT campus pending COVID restrictions.



# Affect, Grief, Activism: Transforming Pain into Purpose in the Aftermath of Traumatic Loss

SUMMER SEMESTER: WEDNESDAYS, 2:00 - 4:00 PM;  
JUNE 1, 2022 - JUNE 29, 2022

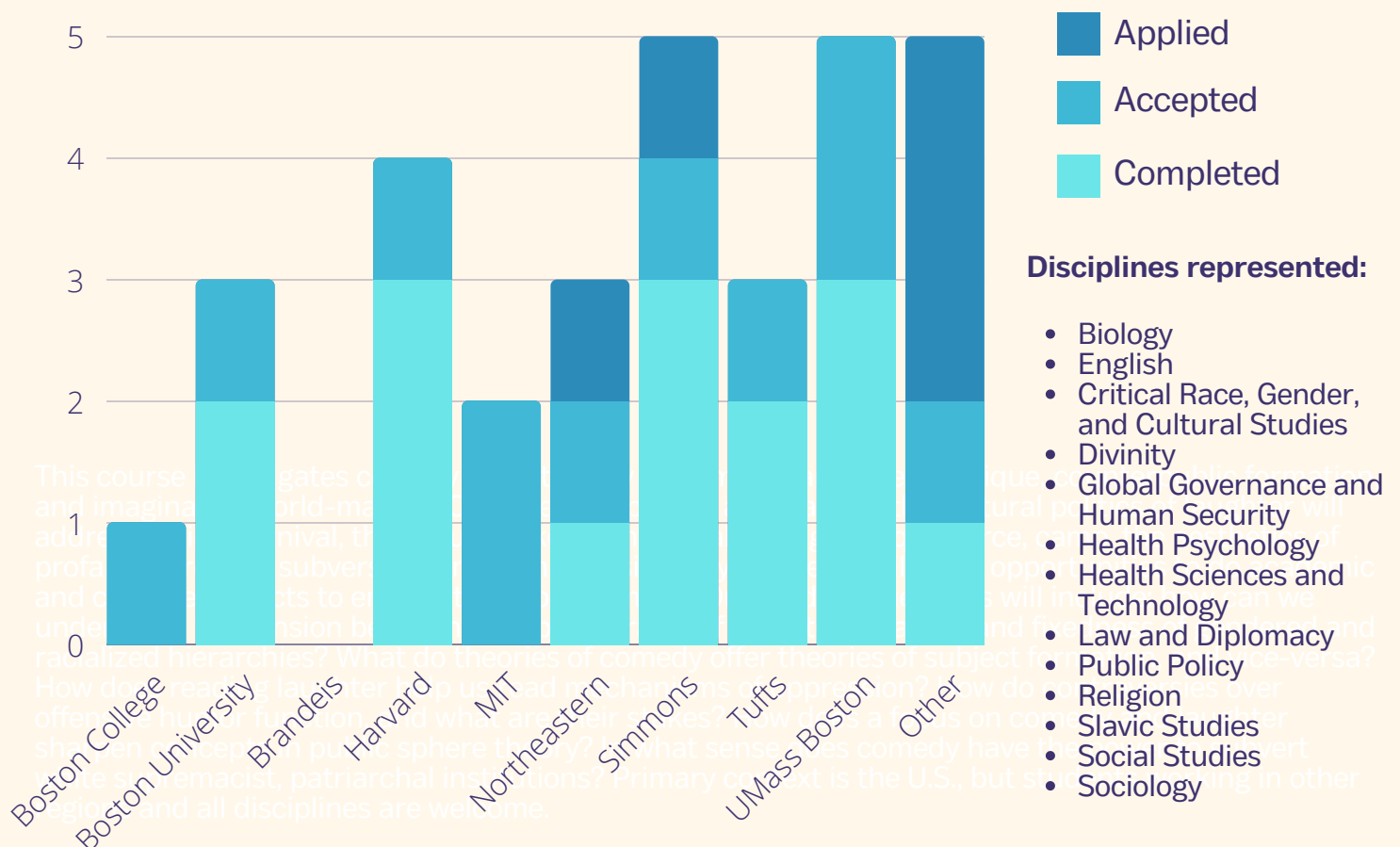
In this microseminar, we consider what Ann Cvetovich calls “public feelings” --emotional expressions assumed to be a private, personal experience--and how they influence social movement work as well as and notions of social belonging and intimacy. What happens when grief following traumatic loss is intentionally named and channeled in various times and places? What is gained (and perhaps lost) when the cultural mandate of ‘closure’ is resisted and instead, trauma and grief are centered, especially for members of marginalized communities? What is the impact of ‘holding on’ instead of ‘letting go’? How does activism itself transform when emotions are authentically expressed in and through social change work? Using affect theory as a conceptual foundation, we will consider specific examples of grief and trauma-driven activism to explore how memory and emotion can be mobilized to not only agitate for social change but also trouble the boundary between the private the public.



## Faculty

Dr. Chris Bobel is Associate Professor of Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her scholarship lies at the intersection of social movements, gender, health, embodiment, and a new area---trauma and grief. Her most recent monograph is the book *The Managed Body: Developing Girls and Menstrual Health in the Global South*.

## Microseminar Student Enrollment by Institution



# 2021 -2022 Workshops, Events, and Initiatives

## Mother Board Writing Prize

In 2006-2007, the GCWS Board proposed an annual student support initiative: The Mother Board Writing Prize. The Prize commemorates the founders of the GCWS: carrying on the spirit of intellectual leadership that the Mother Board modeled when they created the GCWS in 1992. It is awarded annually for outstanding student research and writing in the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. All graduate students matriculated in GCWS member institutions and who have taken or are currently taking a GCWS seminar are eligible for this prize. Starting in 2021-2022, we will award one prize to a Masters student and one prize to a PhD student.

The 2021-2022 prize was awarded to the following students:

- Ph.D Winner: Amirah Fadhlina, Sociocultural Anthropology, Boston University: "Carpool Dakwah: Queer Mockery, Social Media Preacher, and Discourses of Gendered Expertise in Indonesia"
- Masters Winner: Mira Revesz, Gender & Cultural Studies, Simmons University: "The Transformation of Victim Impact Statements in the #MeToo Era: A Body of Literature Worth a Reckoning"

This year's prize committee included:

- Suzanne Leonard, Simmons University
- Kristin Peters, Boston College
- Linda Schlossberg, Harvard University

## Women Take the Reel: A Film Festival Celebrating Women's History Month

March 4 - 29, 2022

This annual film festival, now in its eleventh year, is a collaborative effort among Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies departments involved in the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality (as well as select institutions/universities aligned with its mission) that features films directed by women and about issues relating to gender, race, sexuality, class, and/or feminism. All films are free and open to the public. The focus on intellectual investigation of these issues, as well as visibility for women directors, meant most films are accompanied by a Q&A and discussion with either the film director, producer, or a faculty member from the film screening's host institution.



### “Passing” directed by Rebecca Hall

- Online film screening hosted by Northeastern: March 4, at 7:30PM
- Online panel discussion hosted by Northeastern: March 7, at 6:00PM
  - Carla Kaplan, English and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Northeastern
  - Régine Michelle Jean-Charles, Cultures, Societies, and Global Studies, Northeastern
- Online film screening hosted by Boston College: March 14, at 6:00PM
- Online panel discussion hosted by Boston College: March 15, at 6:00PM
  - Martin Summers, History, Boston College
  - Kourtney Senquiz, Afro-American Studies, UMass Amherst

### “Ma Belle, My Beauty” directed by Marion Hill

- In-person screening and discussion hosted by MIT: March 10, 2022 at 6:30PM
- Discussion after film led by The Network/LaRed

### “Writing with Fire” directed by Sushmit Ghosh, Rintu Thomas






- In-person screening and discussion hosted by MIT: March 15, 2022 at 6:30PM
- Discussion after film led by Sulafa Zidani (Assistant Professor, Global Civic Media, MIT) and Dolly Arjun

**“Four Days in May” directed by Deborah Thomas, Deanne M. Bell, and Junior “Gabu” Wedderburn**

- Online film screening and panel hosted by Lesley: March 21, 2022 at 1:00PM
- Discussion after film led by Deanne M. Bell

**“Picture a Scientist” directed by Sharon Shattuck & Ian Cheney**

- In-person screening and discussion hosted by MIT: March 29, 2022 at 6:30PM
- Discussion after film led by Kristen Dorsey, MLK Visiting Associate Professor, Media Arts and Sciences, MIT

	<b>FRIDAY MARCH 4</b> <b>PASSING</b> 7:30PM VIRTUAL SCREENING NORTHEASTERN		
	<b>MONDAY MARCH 7</b> <b>PASSING</b> 6:00PM VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION NORTHEASTERN		<b>THURSDAY MARCH 10</b> <b>MA BELLE, MY BEAUTY</b> 6:30PM BARTOS THEATRE MIT
	<b>MONDAY MARCH 14</b> <b>PASSING</b> 6:00PM VIRTUAL SCREENING BOSTON COLLEGE	<b>ALL SCREENINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC</b>	<b>TUESDAY MARCH 15</b> <b>WRITING WITH FIRE</b> 6:30PM BARTOS THEATRE MIT
<b>TUESDAY MARCH 15</b> <b>PASSING</b> 6:00PM VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION BOSTON COLLEGE		<b>MONDAY MARCH 21</b> <b>FOUR DAYS IN MAY</b> 1:00PM VIRTUAL SCREENING LESLEY	
			<b>TUESDAY MARCH 29</b> <b>PICTURE A SCIENTIST</b> 6:30PM BARTOS THEATRE MIT

# **Women Take the Reel:**

an annual film festival celebrating  
Women’s History Month



THIS EVENT SERIES IS COLLABORATIVELY PRODUCED AND CO-SPONSORED BY: THE MIT PROGRAM IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES; THE CONSORTIUM FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN GENDER CULTURE WOMEN & SEXUALITY AT MIT; THE BOSTON COLLEGE WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM; THE MIT PROGRAM IN MEDIA, ARTS, & SCIENCES; THE NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES PROGRAM; AND LESLEY UNIVERSITY.

**[TINYURL.COM/WTTR2022](https://tinyurl.com/WTTR2022)**



# Feminisms Unbound

Feminisms Unbound is currently in its eighth year and continues to gain popularity as a panel series across the member institutions and the greater Boston feminist academic and activist communities. This series, organized by GCWS affiliated faculty, features debates that focus on feminist concerns, theories, and practices in this contemporary moment. The goal of Feminisms Unbound is to foster conversations and community among Boston-area feminist intellectuals and activists. The series, in its open configuration, endeavors to allow the greatest measure of engagement across multiple disciplinary trajectories, and a full array of feminist investments.

This year, we held three virtual Feminisms Unbound panels. Over 250 people attended our virtual Feminisms Unbound panels, including faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as members of the public.

The Feminisms Unbound series is curated by a faculty team, all of which are affiliated with a member institution. The current team includes Kareem Khubchandani, Mellon Bridge Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies and in the Program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Tufts University; Faith Smith, Associate Professor of African and African American Studies and English at Brandeis University; and Elora Chowdhury, Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at UMass Boston.

## 2021-2022 Panels and Speakers

### Fashioning Futures

- Genevieve Clutario, Professor of American Studies, Wellesley College
- Meera Sethi
- Rachel Afi Quinn, Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Houston
- Siobhan Carter- David, Associate Professor of History and Women's and Gender Studies, Southern Connecticut State University
- Thea Quiray Tagle, Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Critical Ethnic and Community Studies, UMass Boston

### Erotic Methods

- Asli Zengin, Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Rutgers University
- Jallicia Jolly, Assistant Professor of American Studies and Black Studies, Amherst College
- Jorge Sánchez Cruz, Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish, Harvard
- Rajiv Mohabir, Assistant Professor of Poetry, Emerson

### Return(s)

- Brandon Callender, Assistant Professor of English, Brandeis
- Harleen Singh, Associate Professor of South Asian Literature and Women's Studies, Brandeis
- Rinaldo Walcott, Professor of Black Diasporal Cultural Studies, University of Toronto
- Shahla Talebi, Associate Professor of Religions Studies and Anthropology of Religion, Arizona State University

# Fashioning Futures

NOVEMBER 17, 2021  
VIRTUAL

2021-2022  
**FASHIONING FUTURES**  
GCWS FEMINISMS UNBOUND PANEL SERIES  
MODERATED BY:  
ELORA CHOWDHURY, UMASS BOSTON

Nov 17, 2021  
6:30-8:30PM  
Zoom

Another day, another outfit, my inner  
self, abundant today to walk. For  
the house to try to find a mask  
and to try to find a mask  
Another five started last night,  
who just minutes from my home,  
the stores are sold out for good  
last? The answer is not good  
On our walk, Raja is a playful  
spaces, and slowly lose their  
I ask. This is very unusual,  
I got to the store, she  
I got to the store, she  
I got to the store, she

Sin Sol / No Sun, 2020  
by: micha cárdenas

Register at  
[gcws.mit.edu/upcoming](http://gcws.mit.edu/upcoming)

This panel starts with the premise that experiences of subjugated peoples have been rooted in a representational apparatus of vicious modernity. Subaltern histories and lives within this apparatus are narrated through the lenses of dispossession, disenfranchisement, and social disposability. Feminist and queer cultural production nevertheless while conjuring such normative representational aesthetics simultaneously reimagine suffering, futurity, and human aspirations. Beyond representational revision, correction or uplift, expressive cultures have the capacity to call into question the very grounds of knowledge that make them possible and at the same time hint at new horizons of surviving and thriving.

We invite panelists to think through

- What are the substantive, symbolic and structural preoccupations of representational practices across genres that simultaneously trouble our modes of knowledge yet fashion a more joyful future?
- In what ways can we conceptualize desires of subjugated peoples to devise and complicate a future beyond a singular traumatic narration?
- How can art, photography, fashion, and other expressive cultural genres gesture towards an alternate apparatus that is embodied, relational, and forward-thinking but captures aesthetically and ethically the ruinous present?

## PANELISTS

### Genevieve Clutario, Wellesley College

Genevieve Clutario is the Andrew W. Mellon Assistant Professor of American Studies at Wellesley College. She specializes in interdisciplinary and transnational feminist approaches to Filipinx and Asian American histories. Her work is especially interested racial and gendered formations and U.S. empire building in the global south. She is currently completing her first book, *Beauty Regimes* (Duke University Press, forthcoming), a book that examines the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of fashion and beauty systems that lay at the heart of modern empire and Philippine nation-building projects. She published, "Pageant Politics: Tensions of Power, Empire, and Nationalism in Manila Carnival Queen Contests," in the anthology, *Gendering the Trans-Pacific World* (Brill Press, 2017) and "World War II and the Promise of Normalcy: Filipina Lives Under Two Empires" in *Beyond the Edge of the Nation: Transimperial Histories with a U.S. Angle* (Duke University Press 2020). Before arriving at Wellesley, Clutario was an assistant professor in History and History and Literature at Harvard University. She continues to pursue research and teaching interests focused on Asian American narratives in global perspectives; Filipinx studies; comparative histories of culture and modern empire; transnational feminisms; and gender, race, and the politics of fashion and beauty.

### Meera Sethi

Meera Sethi is an interdisciplinary visual artist whose affective, research-based practice explores fashion, dress, garments, and materiality from critical, feminist, and anti-colonial perspectives. She engages drawing, painting, fibre, social practice, and performance to think through migration and its relationship to memory, cloth, and care with a special interest in the histories of South Asia. Meera's work is in the permanent collection of the Royal Ontario Museum and the Wedge Collection and has been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Art Gallery of Mississauga, and the L'Oréal Melbourne Fashion Festival among other venues. She is the recipient of multiple awards from the Toronto, Ontario and Canada Arts Councils, the Textile Museum of Canada, University of Toronto, Inter Access, and the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Her work has been featured in NBC, NPR, The Toronto Star, The Globe&Mail, The Fader, VICE, VOGUE India, CNN, MTV and numerous other print and online publications.

## **Rachel Afi Quinn, University of Houston**

Rachel Afi Quinn is an associate professor in the Program in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies and the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Houston. She received her doctorate from the Program in American Culture from the University of Michigan. Her transnational feminist cultural studies scholarship focuses on mixed race, gender and sexuality, social media and visual culture in the African Diaspora. Her first book, *Being La Dominicana: Race and Identity in the Visual Culture of Santo Domingo* (2021) was published by University of Illinois Press. Quinn was part of a filmmaking team that produced the documentary "Cimarrón Spirit" (2015) about contemporary Afro-Dominican identities, and her related essay "'No tienes que entenderlo, solo respetalo': Xiomara Fortuna, Racism, Feminism and Other Forces in the Dominican Republic" was published in *The Black Scholar*. Her essay, "Spinning the Zoetrope: Visualizing the Mixed-Race Body of Dominican Actress Zoe Saldaña" was published in *Latin American & Latinx Visual Culture*. She has also written about queerness and the Dominican Republic for *Small Axe* and on Africanness and photography for *Burlington Contemporary*. She is a recipient of the Ross M. Lence Award for Teaching Excellence in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, a co-creator of the UH Critical Disability Studies Initiative and co-founder of the social justice feminist collective South Asian Youth in Houston Unite (SAYHU). She received a 2018-19 Career Enhancement Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.

## **Siobhan Carter-David, Southern Connecticut State University**

Siobhan Carter-David is Associate Professor in the Department of History and affiliate faculty in Women's and Gender Studies at Southern Connecticut State University. She teaches in the areas of cultural studies, women's studies, and African American/Diaspora and contemporary United States histories. As a public historian, she has worked with museum and special collection curators on projects involving various facets of African American and broad-based United States cultural history. She is author of several chapters and articles in edited volumes, exhibition catalogues, and academic journals, and is completing her book manuscript, *Issuing the Black Wardrobe: Magazines and Fashion Post-Soul*.

## **Thea Quiray Tagle, UMass Boston**

Thea Quiray Tagle, PhD is a Filipinx femme writer, scholar, teacher and curator whose research broadly investigates socially engaged art and site-specific performance; visual cultures of violence and waste; urban planning and the environment; and grassroots responses to political crises and ecological collapse in the expanded Pacific Rim. Across her various research and creative projects, a question that drives Thea's work is: how can socially engaged art and performance move us, collectively and individually, to work towards more just and livable futures that are anti-capitalist, feminist, and queer? How can art and performance model practices of right relation with other humans and non-human life, that might impact how we choose to live in the day-to-day?

Thea is a transdisciplinary feminist scholar and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the Program in Critical Ethnic & Community Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She received her PhD in Ethnic Studies from the University of California, San Diego, and holds a BA in Political Science and Human Rights Studies from Barnard College, Columbia University. She was the Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Associate in Asian American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from 2015-2016. Her research has been published in academic journals including *American Quarterly*, *Critical Ethnic Studies*, *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, and *Asian Diasporic Visual Cultures and the Americas*. Thea currently sits on the editorial board of *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society*, and is on the board of the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women & Society (GCWS).

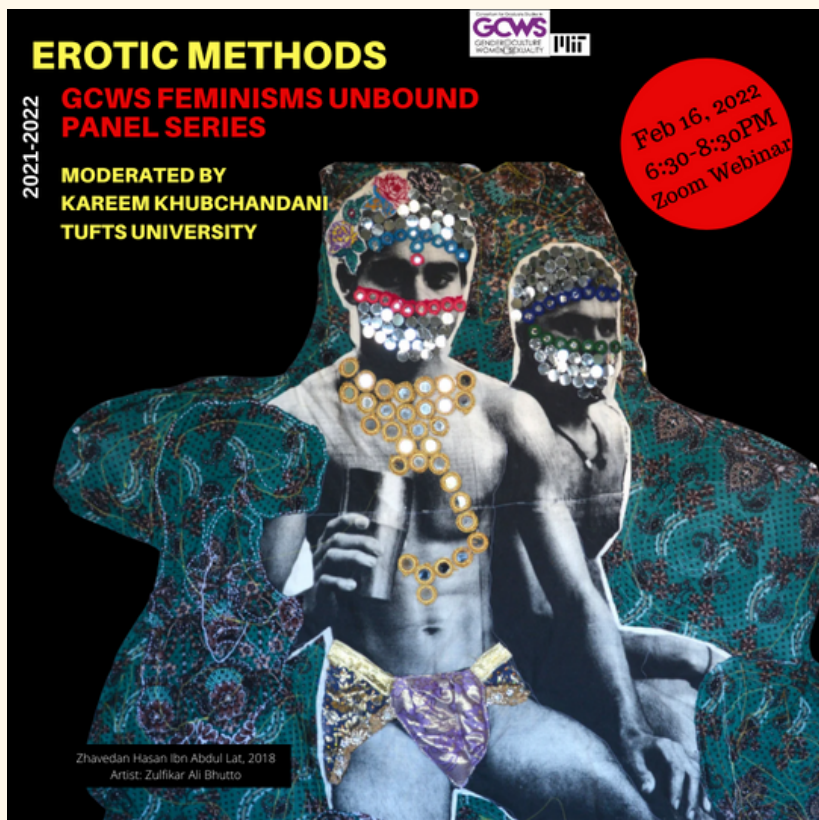
## **Moderator**

**Elora Chowdhury** is a Professor in the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Director of the Human Rights Minor at UMass Boston. Her teaching and research interests include transnational feminisms, gender violence and human rights advocacy, narrative and film with an emphasis on South Asia. She is the author of *Transnationalism Reversed: Women Organizing Against Gendered Violence in Bangladesh* (2011), which was awarded the National Women's Studies Association Gloria Anzaldúa book prize in 2012; and the co-edited volumes (with Liz Philipose) *Dissident Friendships: Feminism, Imperialism and Transnational Solidarity* (2016), *Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Rights: History, Politics, Practice* (with Rajini Srikanth, 2018), and the recently published anthology, *South Asian Filmscapes: Transregional Encounters* (with Esha Niyogi De, 2020)



# Erotic Methods

FEBRUARY 16, 2022  
VIRTUAL



This roundtable is interested in the ways that sex, intimacy, and erotics are not only objects of study but also methods and methodologies for feminist, queer, and transgender studies. Queer ethnography has offered an extended engagement with the value of intimacy and desire in the field, and Black feminist theory has developed erotics as a means of thinking the political, sacred, and sexual together. In critical race and colonialism studies, intimacy has been used to describe the proximities and frictions that result from geopolitical rearrangements of power and capital. In queer and trans studies, BDSM, dungeons, public sex, erotic vomiting, and other dissident acts are crucial venues for re-organizing hegemonic formations of gender, class, and race, dragging colonial histories to the present, and inventing sexual futures. These are but some of the ways that sex, intimacy, and erotics open up new ways of thinking across disciplines.

We invite panelists to consider how sex, erotics, and intimacy operate in their research, pedagogy, art-making, and activism.

## PANELISTS

### Asli Zengin, Rutgers University

Asli Zengin is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Before joining Rutgers, she held postdoctoral and teaching positions at Brown, Harvard, and Brandeis Universities. Her first book, *Intimacy of Power: Women Prostitutes, Sex Work and Violence in Istanbul*, was published in Turkish. In this book, she examines the regulation of licensed and unlicensed sex work at the intersection of state power, law, medicine, and violence. Her second book, *Violent Intimacies: Trans Lives, State Power, Kinship and Urban Geography* is forthcoming from Duke University Press. Zengin has widely published in edited volumes and peer-review journals, including *Cultural Anthropology*, *Allegra*, *Anthropologica*, *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* and *Transgender Studies Quarterly*. Her research lies at the intersection of ethnography of gender non-conforming lives and deaths; Islamic and medico-legal regimes of sex, gender and sexuality; critical studies of violence and sovereignty; as well as transnational aspects of LGBTQ movements in the Middle East with a special focus on Turkey.

### Jallicia Jolly, Amherst College

Dr. Jallicia Jolly is a post-doc and incoming Assistant Professor in American Studies and Black Studies at Amherst College. Dr. Jolly researches and teaches on Black women's health, sexuality, and activism; reproductive justice and transnational feminist organizing; Black feminist health science and Black motherhood; and intersectionality and HIV/AIDS in the U.S. and Caribbean. Dr. Jolly's first book manuscript, *Ill Erotics: Black Caribbean Women and Self-Making in the Time of HIV/AIDS*, now under contract with the University of California Press, is an ethnography and oral history of young HIV-positive Black Jamaican women's reproductive justice organizing that chronicles how they build empowerment and self-care around disability, class oppression, severe impoverishment, and lack of access to health care. As a community-engaged researcher and an equity practitioner, she dedicates her work to improving the well-being of marginalized communities while elevating the organizing and interests of women in the African diaspora using human rights and reproductive justice frameworks. Her scholarship and community-engaged work foregrounds the interrelationship between lived experience, pedagogy, and political engagement.

## Jorge Sánchez Cruz, Harvard

Jorge Sánchez Cruz received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside in 2018. His field of research explores the relationship between aesthetics and politics in 20th and 21st Latin(o) American literature and culture, and its intersections with sexuality and queer studies, travesti and trans theories, and critical race theory. His current manuscript, *Aesthetics of Dissent: AIDS and Sexual Politics in the Americas*, proposes to see, feel, and engage with minoritarian subjects' cultural productions fueled by the search of prolonging life. Focusing on the 1980s and 1990s, the project contextualizes the role of writers, artists, and activists' roles in civil and human rights movements and shows how their aesthetics—chronicles, visual art, poetry, and manifestoes—expose acts of sexual violence and seropositive aberration. A second project in-the-making explores the intersection of queer theory and decolonial thought, with an emphasis in Oaxaca and Chile. He also writes about undocumented rights and on cultural practices by undocu-queer writers and artists.

Before arriving to Harvard, he was an ACLS postdoctoral researcher in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. In 2018-2019, he held the Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow position in Latin American Critical Theory and Latin American Sexuality Studies in the Program of Critical Theory at Northwestern University.

## Rajiv Mohabir, Emerson College

Rajiv Mohabir's memoir *ANTIMAN* (Restless Books 2021, Longlisted for the PEN/America Open Book Award) received the 2019 Restless Books' New Immigrant Writing Prize. He is also the author of three books of poetry including *Cutlish* (Four Way Books 2021, Longlisted for the PEN/Voelcker Award), *The Cowherd's Son* (Tupelo Press 2017, winner of the 2015 Kundiman Prize; Eric Hoffer Honorable Mention 2018) and *The Taxidermist's Cut* (Four Way Books 2016, winner of the Four Way Books Intro to Poetry Prize, Finalist for the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry in 2017), and translator of *I Even Regret Night: Holi Songs of Demerara* (1916) (Kaya Press 2019) which received a PEN/Heim Translation Fund Grant Award and the 2020 Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets. Currently he is an Assistant Professor of poetry in the MFA program at Emerson College, translations editor at *Waxwing Journal*.

**Moderator: Kareem Khubchandani** is the Mellon Bridge Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies and the Program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Tufts University. He recently published *Ishtyle: Accenting Gay Indian Nightlife* (U. Michigan Press), a performance ethnography of queer social spaces in Bangalore and Chicago. He has published in *Scholar and Feminist Online*; *Transgender Studies Quarterly*; *Journal of Asian American Studies*; *The Velvet Light Trap*; *Theater Topics*; *Theatre Journal*; *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*; *Queer Dance* (Oxford UP); and *Queering Digital India* (Edinburgh UP).

# Return(s)

APRIL 6, 2022  
VIRTUAL

2021-2022

**RETURN(S)**

**GCWS FEMINISMS UNBOUND  
PANEL SERIES**

**MODERATED BY  
FAITH SMITH, BRANDEIS**

Apr 6, 2022  
6:30-8:30PM  
Zoom

GCWS  
GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND  
WOMEN'S STUDIES

TUFTS  
UNIVERSITY

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan held a reburial ceremony for the remains of ancestors that were returned to them in 2014 by the University of Michigan. Credit: Marcela Hadden/Nitin Gizis Photography

With the provocation of return we invite panelists' meditations in any of a number of possible directions. Return suggests resumption and rootedness, with attendant notions of convention, propriety, and origin. If it is commonplace to invoke detour and routes to counter these conscripting tendencies (or to question the desire for "returning to normal" in a year that has starkly illuminated the inequities we have learned to live with) are there also registers of precarity that may make return inviting or comforting? How is the returnee potentially persecuted (forced out to "secure borders") in one space, and/or welcomed back as privileged national subject in the other? Return transforms the space of presence into perpetual deferral, into a scene of waiting, an interregnum. Repatriated cultural artifacts press us to imagine imperial histories of violent accumulation as well as orders of value, as in the assessment of returns on an investment. Finally, if return also suggests that which perpetually haunts, the refusal of what has been violently disappeared to stay away, then what are the spiritual practices that either counter or invite such visitations? We invite panelists to think through these and other inflections with us.



## **Brandon Callender, Brandeis University**

Brandon Callender specializes in black and queer literatures with a budding interest in board games and horror studies. He is interested in how black and queer writers, viewers, and players are able to find affirmation in subcultures, genres and spaces that often fail to acknowledge them. His current book project, "The Charge of the Other in Black Gay Men's Literatures" examines eccentric expressions of desire and belonging that test the limits of respectability and solidarity.

## **Harleen Singh, Brandeis University**

Harleen Singh is Associate Professor of South Asian Literature and Women's Studies. She and Sarah Lamb founded the South Asian Studies Program at Brandeis and Singh served as its Chair from 2007-2016. She is the faculty representative to the Board of Trustees at Brandeis. Her writing on novels from India and Pakistan, on Indian film, and book reviews on Hip-Hop music, sexuality, and feminism have been published in various leading journals. Her chapters on women warriors and South Asian women writers are included in seminal book collections. Her monograph, *The Rani of Jhansi: Gender, History, and Fable in India* (Cambridge, 2014), interprets the conflicting, mutable images of an historical icon as they change over time in literature, film, history, and popular culture. The book is in its second reprint and has been reviewed in *The Telegraph*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, *The Book Review*, *BIBLIO*, and *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. Her interdisciplinary work in English, Hindi, Urdu, and Punjabi is focused on women, history, politics, and identity in literature and film. Her next book, *Contemporary Debates in Postcolonial Feminism*, is being published by Routledge in 2021. Her current book projects include a critical translation of Amrita Pritam's seminal partition novel *Pinjar* and a monograph titled *Half an Independence: Women, Violence, and Modern Lives in India*. Professor Singh is a recipient of the ACLS Burkhardt fellowship and was a resident fellow at the National Humanities Center.

## **Rinaldo Walcott, University of Toronto**

Rinaldo Walcott is Professor of Black Diaspora Cultural Studies in the Women and Gender Studies Institute; and a member of the Graduate Program at the Institute of Cinema Studies at the University of Toronto. From 2002-2007 Rinaldo held the Canada Research Chair of Social Justice and Cultural Studies at OISE. Rinaldo is the author of *Black Like Who: Writing Black Canada* (Insomniac Press, 1997 with a second revised edition in 2003); he is also the editor of *Rude: Contemporary Black Canadian Cultural Criticism* (Insomniac, 2000); *Queer Returns: Essays on Multiculturalism, Diaspora and Black Studies* (Insomniac, 2016). With Idil Abdillahi, he co-authored *BlackLife: Post-BLM and the Struggle for Freedom* (ARP Books, 2019). As well Rinaldo is the Co-editor with Roy Moodley of *Counselling Across and Beyond Cultures: Exploring the Work of Clemment Vontress in Clinical Practice* (University of Toronto Press, 2010).

Rinaldo's teaching and research is in the area of Black diaspora cultural studies and postcolonial studies with an emphasis on questions of sexuality, gender, nation, citizenship and multiculturalism. As an interdisciplinary Black Studies scholar Rinaldo has published in a wide range of venues. His articles have appeared in journals and books, as well as popular venues like newspapers, magazines and online venues, as well as other forms of media. His most recent books the *Long Emancipation: Moving Toward Black Freedom* from Duke University Press, 2021; and *On Property* (Biblioasis, 2021 which was shortlisted for the Toronto Book Award). He was born in Barbados.

## **Shahla Talebi, Arizona State University**

Shahla Talebi is a sociocultural anthropologist and is currently an Associate Professor of religious studies and the anthropology of religion of the School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies at Arizona State University. Her book, *Ghosts of Revolution: Rekindled Memories of Imprisonment in Iran* (2011), won the 2011 Outstanding Academic Title Award given by Choice Magazine, and was the co-winner (Gold Medal) of the 2012 Independent Publisher Book Awards. Dr. Talebi's work has also appeared in various academic journals, including and in edited book volumes. Her article on revolutions in recent Iranian history was published in the Oxford Handbook series in July 2018. She was the 2017-2018 Anthony E. Kaye fellow at National Humanities Center where she worked on her book about contested memories of martyrdom in post-revolutionary Iran.

**Moderator: Faith Smith** is an Associate Professor of African and Afro-American Studies and English at Brandeis University. Her research engages aesthetic strategies of writers and artists contending with the legacies of slavery and indentureship, feminist engagements with the state in the wake of globalization, and the resonance of archival histories of intimacy and loss in the present. She is completing "Strolling in the Ruins: The Caribbean's Non-Sovereign Modern in the Early Twentieth Century," a reading of the imperial present just before the First World War. Another project, "Dread Intimacies," examines sovereignty, intimacy and violence in twenty-first-century fiction and visual culture.



# Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality

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