

# DUKE GSF

Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies

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“**Recognizing  
the need, GSF  
introduced the first  
university-wide project on  
trans\* inclusion in the classroom.**”

## TRANSGENDER STUDIES

by: **Ara Wilson**

Associate Professor of Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies  
and GSF Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) at Duke University

The dramatic eruption of transgender movements is rapidly reshaping the meanings of gender. This year, the Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies program began an initiative to bring attention to transgender issues at Duke, particularly the new scholarly field of Transgender Studies, exploring its implications for pedagogy and scholarship. Funded by the Humanities Futures program at the Franklin Humanities Institute, the Transgender Studies initiative is directed by GSF professors Gabriel Rosenberg and Ara Wilson.

The number of trans-identified students at Duke increases every year. Duke's Center

for Sex/Gender Diversity addresses trans\* student life issues, yet the needs of trans\* students in the academic side has been less addressed. Recognizing this need, GSF introduced the first university-wide project on trans\* inclusion in the classroom. More than 75 students, staff, faculty, and deans attended a workshop on classroom climate hosted in collaboration. With the Center for Instructional Technology, we will produce short videos on transgender pedagogy that will provide a public resource for a wider audience.

GSF is also advancing the representation of Transgender Studies in our curriculum.

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# Director's COLUMN

“ For this year’s Feminist Theory Workshop, I asked the four keynote speakers to keep a question in mind as they drafted their talks: what do we now mean by feminist theory? ”



by: **Priscilla Wald**  
Marageth Taylor Smith  
Director of Gender, Sexuality  
& Feminist Studies

For this year’s Feminist Theory Workshop, I asked the four keynote speakers to keep a question in mind as they drafted their talks: what do we now mean by feminist theory?

It is a question the students in Foundations in Feminist Theory and I have been asking throughout the semester. It is the perennial question of anyone who works on the amorphous thing we call “theory.” The feminist social activist bell hooks, in “Theory as Liberatory Practice,” describes how she came to theory because she was hurting. Theory offered her the possibility of “naming all our pain.” She came to theory as a child, she says, “desperate, wanting to comprehend—to grasp what was happening around and within her.” Theory provided a way of focused wondering, and she quotes Terry Eagleton’s observation that “‘children make the best theorists, since they have not yet been educated into accepting our routine social practices as ‘natural.’” Eagleton describes a “‘wondering estrangement’” that is the source of theory and subsequently the basis for potential transformation (hooks is quoting from Eagleton’s *The Significance of Theory*).

Theory begins with a disturbance, as when conventional wisdom encounters resistance. Perhaps, as the feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins would have it, from the outsider within. Theory erupts from the questions

that arise when experiences don’t fit the paradigm, from the tentative probing to see where it hurts and how much. In “Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought,” Collins describes the experience of black women in sociology as an “extreme case” of the “outsider within status,” which “is bound to create tension, for people who become outsiders within are forever changed by their new status” and “their difference sensitizes them to patterns that may be more difficult for established sociological insiders to see.” For those with the greatest stake in the status quo, the prober is an irritant, but for feminist theorists like hooks and Collins, she is the grain of sand in the oyster, producing the (creative) tension that yields the pearl.

If feminist theory emerges from that encounter, it has also consistently been the object of critique. Since feminist theory trains us to be productively critical, it is not surprising that feminist theorists would turn our critical gaze on feminist theory itself, and that is perhaps the greatest strength of the field. From the outset, feminism was troubled by challenges to its universalizing claims, as in, to cite one example, Sojourner Truth’s famous 1851 challenge, “Ain’t I a Woman?” Yet, feminist theory has remained dynamic precisely because of the creative tensions of the many outsiders within.



My GSF colleague, the feminist political theorist Kathi Weeks, exemplifies such inquiry when, In "Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique, and Post-Fordist Politics," she questions "the adequacy of gender identity as a basis for making political claims and a means of political recruitment" and asks, "what if feminist political analyses and projects were not limited to claims about who we are as women or as men, or even the identities produced by what we do, but rather put the accent on collectively imagined visions of what we want to be or to do? Confronting the ongoing gendering of work and its subjects would thus be

more a matter of expressing feminist political desire than repeating gender identities." I read this provocation very much in the spirit of wonder that hooks and Eagleton invoke; the challenge is exemplary of the creative tension that Collins locates as critical for the growth of any discipline or field of inquiry. The willingness of feminist theorists to question even the founding premises of feminism makes feminist theory a bellwether for the changes that are happening across the university and beyond and ensures the continuing vitality that is so characteristic of the field.

■ ■ ...what if feminist political analyses and projects were not limited to claims about who we are as women or as men, or even the identities produced by what we do, but rather put the accent on collectively imagined visions of what we want to be or to do? ■ ■

# Congratulations to the **GENDER, SEXUALITY & FEMINIST STUDIES CLASS OF 2017**

## **GENDER, SEXUALITY & FEMINIST STUDIES FIRST MAJORS**

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Carina Silva Arellano  
Elizabeth Jane Klein

Rebecca Louise Trinklein  
Surya Arunachalam Veerabagu

## **GENDER, SEXUALITY & FEMINIST STUDIES SECOND MAJORS**

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Erin Colby Johnson  
(First Major in History)

Dana Raphael  
(First Major in Political Science)

## **GENDER, SEXUALITY & FEMINIST STUDIES MINORS**

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Abigail Elizabeth Clark  
(Major in Biology)

April Laxmi Pradhan  
(Major in Economics)

Michael Luis Ortuno  
(Major in Biology)

Jessica Elizabeth Van Meir  
(Major in Public Policy)

Kathryn Lynn Pischke  
(Major in Public Policy Studies)

Jailene C. Vazquez  
(Major in International Comparative Studies)

## **GRADUATE STUDENTS COMPLETING THE CERTIFICATE IN FEMINIST STUDIES**

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Sarah Elisabeth Bereza  
(PhD, Music)

Nikolas Oscar Sparks  
(PhD, English)

Brenna Marie Casey  
(PhD, English)

Cheryl Spinner  
(PhD, English)

Claire Elizabeth Scott  
(PhD, Carolina – Duke German)

Michelle Wolff  
(PhD, Religion)



## Alumni CORNER

# Nevertheless, SHE PERSISTED

by: **Angela Jarman MD**

Fellow, International  
Emergency Medicine Clinical Instructor, Warren  
Alpert School of Medicine, Brown University



As an undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies, many of my pre-med peers scoffed, "what are you going to do with that?!" "Whatever I want," I replied indignantly. First I became a financial consultant, then a research assistant, then a faculty development associate. Finally, I accepted my calling and started the long journey of becoming a physician. Now, for the first time since my undergraduate years, I formally study gender [as a determinant of disease] as an International Emergency Medicine Fellow. And while only now does my path make sense to some, being a woman in medicine every day has taught me much more than any course ever could.

It has been argued since the popular second-wave of feminism that we exist in a "post-feminist" society. Much like the trope that we live in a post-racist America, recent events have exposed the many fault lines in these arguments. And whether it's being mistaken for a nurse, called 'honey' or encouraged to smile by our patients, or portrayed as confrontational for advocating for our patients, women in medicine are all too familiar with what it means to experience gendered bias.

Although I was in Rwanda and unfortunately missed the Women's Marches this January, it was incredibly heartening to see so many

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## Spring 2017 EVENTS

### JANUARY

**18 Gender Wednesday Series: "Beyond Theory and Into Practice: Succeeding as a Feminist and the Advantages of a Women's Studies Degree"** with Anna Gonowon (alumna of Duke's Women's Studies '96 and Executive MBA at Fuqua '09), an award-winning strategy and change management executive with over 20 years of leadership experience. A talk on her experience of successfully maintaining feminist values and promoting the advantages of a GSFS degree in life outside of academia and humanitarian/service organizations.

**19 Black Feminist Thought and Practice: "Lost Black Love Objects"** with Rebecca Wanzo, Associate Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Associate Director of the Center for the Humanities at Washington University in St. Louis. A talk exploring the fall of popular love objects in African American culture that hold elevated importance as performing crucial political work, using The Cosby Show and Michael Jackson as examples.

**20 SPILL: "Feminist Fugitivity in Conversation and Performance"** with Hortense Spillers, Black Feminist Scholar and Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor; Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Author and Director of Eternal Summer of the Black Feminist Mind; and Ebony Noelle Golden, Director of Spill performance. A presentation of a commanding collection of scenes depicting fugitive Black women and girls seeking freedom from gendered violence and racism. Followed by a performance of Spill by Spirithouse.

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## Transgender STUDIES (continued from page 1)

Towards this end, we have sponsored new courses, including an Introduction and a first-year seminar in Transgender Studies. To integrate Trans\* Studies across curriculum on sex and gender, we organized a structured panel and workshop. Guest speakers Francisco Galarte (University of Arizona) and Toby Beauchamp (University of Illinois) as well as Cole Rizki, a doctoral candidate in Literature at Duke, guided these pedagogical discussions.

The initiative also aims to introduce frontiers in transgender scholarship, with a particular focus on race, the criminal justice system, and reflections on how gender politics might integrate transgender experiences. We brought together a legal advocate, Asa King, and a political scientist, Paisley Currah (CUNY Brooklyn) to talk about

trans\* vulnerability in prison. A lecture by Gayle Salamon (Princeton) discussed the legal approach to the murder of a young transwoman. Another panel combined Black Studies, Area Studies, and Trans\* Studies, with Marcia Ochoa (UC Santa Cruz), Kai M. Green (Northwestern), and C. Riley Snorton (Cornell University).

The GSF Transgender Studies initiative has garnered support across campus, including collaborative discussions with the Medical School, Trinity College administrators, Law School, student services, Kenan Ethics Institute, Graduate School, undergraduate Program in Education, and a number of academic units. In the 2017-18 year, GSF will continue its exploration of Transgender Studies with two postdoctoral fellows, three thematic courses, and further events.

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 5)

### JANUARY

- 26 Black Feminist Thought and Practice: "A Minor Hold: Gayl Jones"** with Sarah Jane Cervenak, Associate Professor of the Women's and Gender Studies and African American/African Diaspora Studies programs at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. "A Minor Hold" thinks about Gayl Jones' literatures in relation to larger questions of blackness and gathering.

### FEBRUARY

- 1 Gender Wednesday Series: "Ideas for Healing in the Time of Trump"** with Jeanette Stokes, Executive Director of the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South, a nonprofit she founded in 1977. A talk addressing the question, "What helps you stay calm in the face of political changes?"
- 2 Black Feminist Thought and Practice: "Little Black Girl"** with Sharon P. Holland, PhD in English and African American Studies at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This talk provided a look into a series of readings that seek to engage not only how we find the "little black girl," but also how we read her when we do.

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# Where in the world are 2016 TRAVEL AWARDEES



**Congratulations to our 2016 Travel Award recipients.** Their research, presentations and scholarship have spanned the globe. Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies scholars have used their awards to further their research and study of a range of topics including: gender identities, women's rights, feminist theory, LGBT research, health care, and activism. Travel awards also supported students who received summer internships and attended national and international conferences.

## MAY 2016 TRAVEL AWARDEES

### Annu Dahiya

Graduate Student, Literature and Certificate in Feminist Studies

- Attended and presented a paper at the European Society for Literature, Science and The Arts (SLSA-EU) in Stockholm, Sweden.

### Cheryl Spinner

Graduate Student, English and Certificate in Feminist Studies

- Performed archival work at the Victoria and Albert Museum for research relating to the Julia Margaret Cameron collection.

### Cole Rizki

Graduate, Literature and Certificate in Feminist Studies

- Attended a conference "Performance Art and Trans-Cultural Production in Latin American and the Caribbean" in Tucson, AZ where he organized a panel

"Performance Art and Trans\* Cultural Production in Latin America and the Caribbean" and presented a paper.

### Tessa Nunn

Graduate Student, Romance Studies and Certificate in Feminist Studies

- Traveled to Gettysburg College to attend the Women in French 2016 conference and present a paper on Jane Dieulafoy and her depictions of Persian women in her travel, writing and photography.

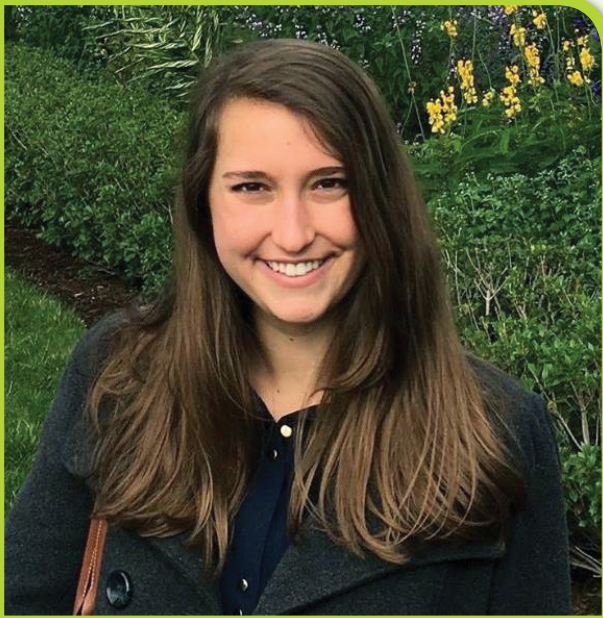
### Tessa Nunn

Graduate Student, Romance Studies and Certificate in Feminist Studies

- Presented at the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) annual conference held in Montreal, Quebec on paper that discussed how reworkings of the nineteenth-century ballets could possibly serve as a decolonial art praxis.

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# SENIOR STORY



## Dana Raphael

■ ■ GSF was the glue that linked together my Duke experience. ■ ■

GSF was the glue that linked together my Duke experience. As a political science major, I read Hobbes and Locke and Mill, but their version of society didn't include a possibility of gender parity. I felt like I was missing a key part of the story. I also wanted a way to connect the work I was doing outside the classroom on sexual assault prevention to an intellectual foundation. GSF provided the bridge I needed. Through GSF, I learned to differentiate radical, liberal, Marxist, and poststructuralist feminism and identify their strengths and faults. I

learned to read my political science texts through a feminist lens. Reading works from people like Kimberlé Crenshaw and Catharine MacKinnon translated to both my constitutional law courses as well as my work on gender violence prevention. I had the opportunity to learn from some of the best professors I've encountered in my Duke career. GSF intellectually linked my different areas of interests and prepared me well for the next chapter of my life: attending UVA School of Law to become a civil rights attorney.

## Spring 2017 **EVENTS** (continued from page 6)

### FEBRUARY

**10 Transgender Studies and the Humanities Series: Symposium On Race & Transgender Studies** with Marcia Ochoa from the University of California, Santa Cruz; Kai M. Green from the University of California, Santa Barbara; and C. Riley Snorton from Cornell University. Moderated by Thomas F. DeFrantz from Duke University.

**10 "Gender, Sexuality, Feminism and the Romance Novel"** with best-selling romance novelists "Ilona Andrews," Mary Bly/Eloisa James, Sarah MacLean, and Alisha Rai and moderated by Julie Tetel Andresen, Professor in English and Linguistics at Duke University and author of over 25 romance novels. A reading and panel discussion on romance novels, the authors' experiences as romance writers, and how the current political climate has shaped their writing.

**15 Gender Wednesday Series: "Ideas for Activism in the Time of Trump"** with Mandy Carter, co-founder of Southerners on New Ground and the National Black Justice Coalition. A talk on understanding the importance of changing attitudes, how changing public policy affects social justice movements, and how the Moral Monday Movement can be a model for coalition building.

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# Rebecca Trinklein

■ ■ My participation in the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies major has reshaped and recuperated my assumptions about social systems, given me the resources to tackle inequalities as I move forward after graduation, and led me to a better understanding of myself. ■ ■



I came to the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies major as a Sophomore at Duke. I had taken a Literature class in my second semester which touched on feminist scholarship, and I thought it would be interesting to take Gender and Popular Culture in my second year. When I took the class, I had no idea what I wanted to major in, but after having the opportunity to write papers and think critically about pop cultural figures like Nicki Minaj, I decided this was the major for me. I picked up Computer Science as a second major, but chose Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies as my primary because of the way one class completely changed the way I looked at the world and my place within it. Throughout my time at Duke, Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies has challenged me to question my assumptions about how the world works and attempt to understand a wide range of perspectives. It has revised the incomplete history I learned in high school to include influential women like Betty

Friedan, Harriet Jacobs, Simone de Beauvoir, Angela Davis, and bell hooks. This major has changed how I see myself in society, and has completely shifted my understanding of social relations and power dynamics. It has been both intellectually stimulating and practically useful, each class increasing my awareness of my own interactions in society. This major has helped me see the stakes for women and other marginalized groups as society moves forward and the motivation to want to enact change. It is because of my unique experience with GSFS and Computer Science that I will spend the summer after graduation teaching girls to code through the nonprofit Girls Who Code in New York City. In short, my participation in the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies major has reshaped and recuperated my assumptions about social systems, given me the resources to tackle inequalities as I move forward after graduation, and led me to a better understanding of myself.

SENIOR  
STORY

# SENIOR STORY



## Surya Veerabagu

Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies has taught me the importance of viewing every situation from different vantage points and perspectives.

GSF has taught me the importance of viewing every situation from other people's shoes and perspectives. My understanding of those different than myself has vastly increased, and I am thankful that GSF has helped me shape that knowledge base. As an aspiring doctor, I now understand how important identity politics are in interactions,

and I hope to use my identity as an Asian American Woman to help others feel empowered and listened to. Lastly, GSF inculcated in me important presentation and argumentative skills that helps me view debates and arguments from multiple sides, allowing me to strengthen my own debate skills.

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 8)

### FEBRUARY

**17** **Duke On Gender Colloquium: "Community in Taiwan and China"** with Sara L. Friedman, Professor in Anthropology and Gender Studies at Indiana University, and Carlos Rojas, Professor in AMES, GSF, and AMI at Duke University. Chaired by Juliette Duara, Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics. A talk on how the power of law can constitute which types of intimacies are deemed legitimate, recognizable, and acceptable.

**22** **Black Feminist Thought and Practice: "Maternal Tongues: An Insurgent Ecstasies of the Sacred"** with J. Kameron Carter, Associate Professor of Theology, English, and African American Studies at Duke University. A talk engaging questions of Black politics, voice, and placing this discussion in the current political climate.

**23** **Queer Theory Lecture: "(Gay) Panic Attack"** with David L. Eng, Graduate Chair and Richard L. Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania. A presentation of a series of case histories and commentaries on gay parachute children who suffer from panic attacks and explores the psychic structures of colorblindness and intersectionality among millennials.

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# Spill: Black Feminist Fugitivity

## CONVERSATION AND PERFORMANCE

Dr. Alexis Pauline Gumbs' latest work begins with the somewhat unusual acknowledgment that it was written "after and with *Black White and In Color* by Hortense Spillers." The eponymous *Spill*, it thus turns out, is more than a verb: it denotes a relationship, one that centers on Spillers' work and the language it inspires. Duke's Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies Department was fortunate to host the two thinkers, as well as the Durham-based art collective SpiritHouse, for a continuation of the conversation opened up by Gumbs' book.

Taking place on the day before Donald Trump was sworn into the presidency, Gumbs chose to open the event with the words of African American activist and poet Pat Parker, which she asked the audience to repeat: "Once upon a time there was a dream, a dream of women turning the world all over, and it still lives." In many ways, the quotation set the tone for the ensuing conversation between Gumbs and Spillers, which revolved around the possibilities of, and personal relationships to, writing black histories and imagining feminist futures.

The engagement with historiography, in conjunction with the awareness of the space this event took place in, led to a discussion of the pitfalls of academic and disciplinary traditions, prompting Spillers to produce the most memorable quotation of the afternoon: "I always wanted to make Hegel speak my own language."

The engaging discussion was followed by a theatrical performance based on *Spill* by SpiritHouse, developed by Ebony Noelle Golden in collaboration with Gumbs. As the performers danced and read the poetry of *Spill* in the hallway and lecture hall of the second floor of the East Duke building, it became apparent just how important the performance was in continuing the project Gumbs began earlier in the day by quoting Pat Parker. In addition to words and voices of dissent, it was the performers' bodies that claimed room and recognition. In making languages of several kinds speak to each other, *Spill* proved a fascinating event about the dynamics of inspiration, black feminist futures, and carving out spaces in a hostile world.

by: **Carolyn Benack**  
PhD Candidate English,  
Duke University



“ Once upon a time there was a dream, a dream of women turning the world all over, and it still lives. ”



## 2017 Seniors GRADUATING WITH HONORS

### ELIZABETH KLEIN

**THESIS:** Medical Decision Making Among Transgender Youth: A Feminist Critique of Pubertal Suppression Therapy

### REBECCA TRINKLEIN

**THESIS:** Calling All Girls: Social Media and Production of Girls Who Code

### SURYA VEERABAGU

**THESIS:** Reproductive Tourism in India: Empowerment or Exploitation

### Alumni corner **NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED** (continued from page 5)

■ ■ The recent engagement of women in my generation, both in medicine and other fields, is perhaps the conciliatory prize of our current political climate. ■ ■

women fighting to be heard. The recent engagement of women in my generation, both in medicine and other fields, is perhaps the conciliatory prize of our current political climate.

Since my days of protesting in college, wearing shirts that read, "this is what a feminist looks like," has come a new popular brand of feminism. Books like *Lean In* have made many formerly academic arguments accessible to the lay public. Young women are much less afraid, now, to call themselves feminists, thanks to popular slogans (and tshirts, etc): "Women's Rights are Human Rights" and "The Future is Female."

Recently, we witnessed one of the most powerful women in the country, Senator Elizabeth Warren silenced on the Senate floor, which sparked outrage from women across the country. As Senator McConnell issued a reprimand, he unknowingly gave birth to the newest popular dictum for women in America.

In recent years, we have seen the advent of training programs and professional societies dedicated to the role of gender in medicine;

these focus primarily on the gender of patients. A recent study, found, however that the gender of physicians also has a significant impact on patient outcomes, as those cared for by women had lower mortality.\*

Being a woman in medicine is a great honor and a great responsibility. Through our work, we are able to provide compassionate, evidence-based care to patients and to truly save lives. The challenges of balancing this fundamental identity with that of partner, mother, daughter, friend is a never-ending challenge. As the past year has made painfully clear, we do not exist in either a post-feminist America, or a post-feminist medical system. We must continue to fight for our patients (and their health insurance coverage), but also to fight prejudice, bias, gendered expectations. And despite the challenges, we will persist.

\* Tsugawa Y, Jena AB, Figueroa JF, Orav EJ, Blumenthal DM, Jha AK. Comparison of Hospital Mortality and Readmission Rates for Medicare Patients Treated by Male vs Female Physicians. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2017;177(2):206-213. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.7875



# Where in the world are 2016 TRAVEL AWARDEES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

## OCTOBER 2016 TRAVEL AWARDEES

### Jessica Stark

Graduate Student, English and Certificate in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies

- Presented at the Affect and Social Justice philoSOPHIA: Society for Continental Feminism, 11th Annual Meeting at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida entitled, “ My Most Secret Boredom: the Affect of Boredom and Femininity in Julie Doucet’s , A Day in Julie Doucet’s Life.”

### Julia Lillis

Graduate Student, Religion

- Presented research at Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity Conference at Yale University under the theme “The Fifth Century: Age of Transformation.”

### Kita Douglas

Graduate Student, English and Certificate Feminist Studies

- Performed archival work at Riverside City College on the Japanese American artist and writer Miné Okubo.

### Zachary Levine

Graduate Student, Cultural Anthropology and Certificate in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies

- Participated as part of a two-person panel at the Masculinidades conference on men and masculinities in Recife, Brazil.

### Kelly Chung

Undergraduate Student, Chemistry and Minor in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies

- Attended 2016 Net Impact Conference in Philadelphia, PA, which is a social entrepreneurship conference that brings leaders of this innovative field together for 3 days for networking, learning, and mentorship.



# Gender, Sexuality, Feminism AND THE ROMANCE NOVEL

■ ■ All authors expressed their early experience of reading romance novels as an activity either to be forbidden and/or scorned. ■ ■

by: **Julie Andresen**  
Professor of English,  
Duke University

The Gender, Sexuality, Feminism and the Romance Novel Symposium was held in the pink parlor on February 10. A standing-room-only audience came to hear New York Times bestselling romance and fantasy authors: Mary Bly, Alisha Rai, Ilona Andrews (husband-wife team Gordon and Ilona) and Sarah MacLean, who being snow bound in New York City, joined us by Skype. Julie Tetel Andresen moderated the event.

In the first hour each panelist told what she (and he) read growing up and how they got interested in the narrative forms they now write. All authors expressed their early experience of reading romance novels as an activity either to be forbidden and/or scorned. Mary Bly is the daughter of Robert Bly, a National Book Award for Poetry winner, and writes Regency romances under the name Eloisa James. She admitted it was difficult at first for her father to accept her writing choice but is glad now that he is proud of her. Gordon Andrews, who grew up in a conservative Christian family in western North Carolina, said his upbringing was not one consistent with the worlds he now creates which include vampires and other magic creatures.

In the second hour a panel discussion opened with the question: How does the current political climate affect the stories

you want to tell and/or how you interact with your readers on social media? Alisha Rai, who is also a lawyer, said she's a person first and a writer second. She is therefore very active in real life in aiding people who have increased problems with immigration, and in her creative life she writes characters with a range of ethnicities and liberal politics. Sarah MacLean is similarly outspoken in expressing liberal political views and said that if a reader doesn't like seeing her opinions on either social media or in her characters and chooses not to read her work as a result, it was all right by her.

The third hour was open to Q&A with the audience and kicked off with a question about how autobiographical elements entered the writers' stories. Ilona Andrews, a native of Russia, her love of Russian literature and her experiences in two cultures and two languages into all the stories she writes with her husband.

A reception open to the public rounded out the afternoon.

GSF was the major funder of the event. Other funds came from: the Interdepartmental Program in Linguistics, the English Department, Dean of Humanities, Perkins Library, and the Sally Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture.

# Nikolas Oscar Sparks

English PhD, Duke University and Certificate in Feminist Studies

## DISSERTATION TITLE:

“Lost Bodies/Found Objects: Storyville and the Archival Imagination”

### Sample Sentence:

In “Lost Bodies/Found Objects: Storyville and the Archival Imagination,” I engage the numerous collections and scattered ephemera that chronicle the famed New Orleans vice district of Storyville to show the ways in which black life is overwhelmingly criminalized, homogenized, and silenced in narratives of the district.

### Abstract:

In “Lost Bodies/Found Objects: Storyville and the Archival Imagination,” I engage the numerous collections and scattered ephemera that chronicle the famed New Orleans vice district of Storyville to show the ways in which black life is overwhelmingly criminalized, homogenized, and silenced in narratives of the district. Storyville, the

city’s smallest and last vice district, existed from 1897-1917 under the protection of city ordinances. The laws attempted to confine specific vices and individuals within the geographic limits of the district to protect the sanctity of the white family and maintain private property values in the city. As a result, the district strictly managed the lives of women working in the sex trade through policing and residential segregation. While all women were subject to these restrictions, black women were often barred from the relative comforts of the district’s brothels and forced to live and work out of shared shacks called “cribs.” Similarly, though to a much lesser degree, black men who worked in and frequented the district faced their own forms of segregation and racial violence. Turning to a largely obscured set of archival



objects discovered through primary research—housing records, biometric technologies such as Bertillon cards, travel literature, and *Blue Book* guides—I read how discourses of waywardness, domesticity, race, and sexuality at the turn of the twentieth century converge to illuminate the vexed social life of Storyville. I argue that when read alongside popular histories, literary interpretations of the district, and discourses on black social life at the turn of the twentieth century, the records of the district challenge the archival narratives imposed upon them and expand historical approaches to archival approaches to Storyville.

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 10)

### FEBRUARY

- 27** Graduate Scholars Colloquium: “Sound of New Pussy: the Buddha and the iPad” with Ali Na, PhD Candidate in the Department of Communication at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and Feminist Studies Certificate at Duke University. Response by Hwansoo Kim, Associate Professor in Religious Studies at Duke University. A talk based on a dissertation chapter about the performance artist Yozmit in relation to the racialization of femininity.

### MARCH

- 7** Black Feminist Thought and Practice: “Black Women Out West: Unsettling the U.S. Frontier Myth” with Tsitsi Jaji, Professor of English and African American Studies at Duke University. A talk using fiction, photography, and comics to think through the question, “Why has the U.S. frontier myth offered Black artists such fertile grounds for critiques of settler colonialism and hyper-masculinity?”

- 27** Graduate Scholars Colloquium: “Domesticating Women: ‘The Female Prisoner’ and the 19th Century” with Jess Issacharoff, PhD Candidate in Literature. Response by Israel Durham, PhD Candidate in English. A talk on Issacharoff’s first dissertation chapter about the linkages between the home and women’s prison as disciplinary institutions.

*continued on page 17*



## Sara Bereza

Music PhD, Duke University and Certificate in Feminist Studies

### DISSERTATION TITLE:

“The Right Kind of Music: Fundamentalist Christianity as Musical and Cultural Practice”

“What kind of music do you make if you believe music is spiritually dangerous? If bodies are distant from God but you want to make music—with your body—to glorify God?”

Historically fundamentalist Christians loosely affiliated with Bob Jones University (Greenville, SC) which teach that music influences listeners’ faith and moral character both for good and evil. Good music reflects or reveals God’s nature, allowing born-again listeners to connect with God and show their salvation to unbelievers, but bad music pulls listeners away from God by promoting immorality and false worship. Though their central argument is that music is dichotomously moral, I argue that their discourse and practices reveal a view that all musical sound is dangerous in its insistent entrance into listeners’ bodies: music is like fire—useful under control but devastating if unrestrained.

Fundamentalists prioritize mental engagement with music over emotional and physical responses to it, because they believe people most directly relate to God through their conscious minds and only indirectly with their bodies. However, fundamentalist musicians use their bodies

to make music, an activity that they believe glorifies God. I examine three primary areas of their music: recorded music, congregational singing, and solo and soloistic vocal music. Because musicians aren’t seen, recordings underscore how fundamentalists’ beliefs are primarily about musical sound, not performer’s movements or appearances. Congregational singing reflects believers “joy of salvation” through their robust participation, but their collective emotional affect is limited to only some emotions and physically constrained to small movements that almost never bloom into something fuller. For solo and soloistic vocal music, the classical music and associated musical techniques that fundamentalists typically consider “excellent” must be constrained or even discarded for vocalists to effectively minister their faith to fellow believers. These arguments are based in my fieldwork and my analyses of fundamentalists’ extensive written and recorded discourse on music.



# Michelle Wolff

Religion, PhD, Duke University and Certificate in Feminist Studies

## DISSERTATION TITLE:

“Intimate Life Together: A Decolonial Theology”



“ After elucidating the limitations of progressive policy and misuse of Christian theology, I offer a constructive theological vision for community that promotes social justice. ”

My dissertation explores harmful uses of Christianity as a “cure” for sexuality. I use examples from my place of birth, South Africa. South Africa was the first country to constitutionally protect against sexual discrimination in 1994 and fifth in the world to legalize same-sex marriage in 2006. Despite being at the forefront of progressive policy, South Africa also has high rates of sexual and homicidal hate crimes. My research investigates the role of religion in

perpetuating and preventing this violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer people. It entailed archival research and in-depth interviews with activists and religious leaders in 2015 and 2016. After elucidating the limitations of progressive policy and misuse of Christian theology, I offer a constructive theological vision for community that promotes social justice.

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 15)

### APRIL

**4 Black Feminist Thought and Practice: “Refashioning Casualization: Black Studies, Women’s Studies, and the Birth of the Adjunct”** with Nick Mitchell, Assistant Professor in the Department of Feminist Studies and the Program in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Santa Cruz. A talk on the history of Black and Women’s Studies that addresses the question, “What do the histories of minoritized fields of study have to teach us about the transformation of academic labor conditions?”

**6 Withholding: Photography, Mourning, and Writing the Mother** with Kate Zambreno, a novelist and teacher in the writing programs at Sarah Lawrence College and Columbia University. A talk reflecting on her book, *Book of Mutter*, that considers the photograph of the mother ghost, or the poetics of its refusal, in the writings of several authors.

**10 Black Feminist Thought and Practice: “Feelin’ Colors and Seeing Speech: Diasporas of Difference in Black Women’s Literature”** with Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Assistant Professor of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at UMass Amherst and Postdoctoral Fellow in Black Feminisms in the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies department at Duke University. A talk exploring the radical fusions of body and voice in black women writers’ creative explorations of diaspora.

*continued on page 18*



# Claire E. Scott

German PhD, Carolina-Duke Program and Certificate in Feminist Studies

## DISSERTATION TITLE:

**Murderous Mothers: Feminist Violence In German Literature and Film (1970-2000)**

“ The model established by these texts is not one that allows woman to speak as one, but to live as many ”

## Certificate in Feminist Studies Graduates DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

My dissertation analyzes literary and filmic representations of violent mothers from late 20th-century Germany. I employ feminist theories of language and the body to enhance close readings of texts in which female protagonists defy gendered expectations by perpetrating acts of aggression. These representations of violence include both psychological violence and physical violence, which is often directed against the mothers' own children. The first section of this work treats adaptations of *Medea* written by Christa Wolf, Dea Loher, and Elfriede Jelinek; the second section examines representations of politically-motivated and domestic violence in films directed by Margarethe von Trotta, R.W. Fassbinder, and Helma Sanders-Brahms. In each of these works I uncover an interplay between violence displayed by the characters and the confrontational transgression of genre conventions on the part of the authors and

filmmakers. Together these works generate an imaginary of feminist violence that advances feminist political goals including reproductive freedom. Highlighting this dynamic reveals female bodies and voices as important sites for working through both past and contemporary violence within the German context. This work also has broader theoretical significance in that it establishes linkages between feminist theories of language and more materialist feminist theories. Ultimately, the model established by these texts is not one that allows woman to speak as one, but to live as many. Through my analysis, I highlight how violence is used as a tool for the development of new understandings of female subjectivity within the genres of mythology and melodrama. Instead of strategies for individual emancipation, these works generate female subjectivities that are engaged in genre-defying, collective, and collaborative storytelling practices.

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 17)

### APRIL

**12 Gender Wednesday Series with Alexis Pauline Gumbs** provost of *The Eternal Summer of the Black Feminist Mind*, co-creator of the *Mobile Homecoming* experiential archive project, and author of *Spill: Scenes of Black Feminist Fugitivity*. Talk on how to live an intellectual and activist purpose based on passages from *Spill*.

**14 Duke On Gender Colloquium: “Feminist Visions and Activist Dilemmas”** with Xhercis Méndez, Assistant Professor in Philosophy and African American and African Studies at Michigan State University; Anne-Marie B. Makhulu, Associate Professor in Cultural Anthropology and African and African American Studies at Duke University; and Kathryn Mathers, Lecturing Fellow in International

Comparative Studies at Duke University. Transnational conversation on the US Black Lives Matter and SA Fees Must Fall movements that addresses the question, “Can ‘gender’ as a category of analysis move us away from oppositional sexual politics that undermine substantive efforts to dismantle (neo)colonial arrangements of bodies and power?”

*continued on page 22*

# “What’s the Buzz???”

## GENDER WEDNESDAY

by: **Priscilla Wald, Margaret Taylor Smith**

Director of Gender, Sexuality  
& Feminist Studies

The brainchild of GSF Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies Kathy Rudy, Gender Wednesday is a bi-weekly lunch event in which students and others meet with professionals whose work is influenced by their feminism. We wanted to show our students the many possibilities that the work we do in GSF can offer them, as professionals, but also as actors in the world.

Our speakers represent a range of professions from local business owners and alternative educators to midwives and other medical professionals. Many were Duke graduates, including undergraduate majors and graduates of the feminist studies graduate certificate. Speakers included the co-owner of a local all-woman meadery and a midwife in Costa Rica, a local political activist and a founder of a career advising business.

A panel of graduating seniors advised students at the beginning of their Duke careers not to be afraid to seek out faculty; they talked about the great opportunities both in GSF and elsewhere in the university for women to get training in leadership.

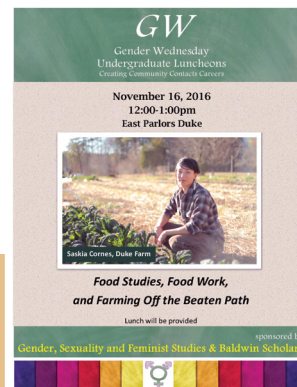
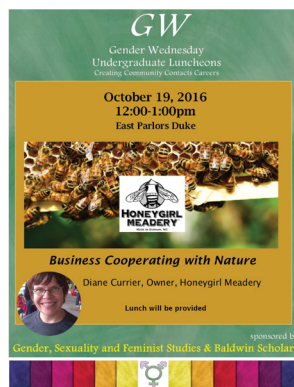
Rebecca Turecky, a Certified Nurse Midwife in Costa Rica, flew up to Duke to talk about her experiences as a midwife. That conversation has led to a Duke Engage placement. Several of our majors are heading to Costa Rica to work with her and will be involved in teaching the class on birth and midwifery on their return. Duke graduate Ana Homayoun described how, on

“We wanted to show our students the many possibilities that the work we do in GSF can offer them, as professionals, but also as actors in the world.”

finding herself without a job in the wake of the 9/11 bombings, she built on her feminist liberal arts training to start a business helping students learn strategies to succeed in middle and high school.

Award-winning strategy and change management executive Anna Gonowon shared her thoughts about how her training as a Duke Women’s Studies major had helped her succeed in the competitive world of business.

The series has drawn upon local talent as well. Diane Currier, owner of a local meadery, discussed “Starting a Woman-Owned Business from Your Heart,” and local doctor Lisa Nadler skillfully guided students through the difficult topic of female health and hormonal birth control. Duke Farm Director Saskia Cornes shared her experiences as a food activist and farmer and introduced students to her pioneering work integrating the Farm into the Duke University curriculum. Two local activists—Founding Director of the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South Jeanette Stokes and Co-Founder Southerners On New Ground and the National Black Justice Coalition Mandy Carter—in separate talks addressed ideas for healing and activism, respectively, “in the time of Trump.”



# Black Feminist THOUGHT & PRACTICE SERIES



**Faces and Phases: "Zanele Muholi's Portrait Series Featuring LGTI Persons from Africa and Beyond,"** with Zanele Muholi. Zanele Muholi is a visual activist/photographer. She was born in Umlazi, Durban, and lives in Johannesburg.

Muholi's self-proclaimed mission is 'to re-write a black queer and trans visual history of South Africa for the world to know of our resistance and existence at the height of hate crimes in South Africa and beyond'.

*Zanele Muholi*

**"Finding Politics in Unexpected Places"** with Tiffany M. Gill, Associate Professor of University of Delaware, Department of Black American Studies and Department of History. African American Women, Entrepreneurship and the Making of Black Global Citizens. A talk on the international dimensions of the black beauty and travel industries to place black women's entrepreneurial experiences at the center of global black freedom struggles.

*Tiffany M. Gill*



**"A Black Feminist Sense of Place in the Louisiana of Lemonade and The Louisiana Project"** with LaKisha Simmons, Assistant Professor of University at Buffalo, SUNY, Transnational Studies. Centering on the sugar plantations of Southern Louisiana, in this talk LaKisha Simmons explores the site/sight of memory in Beyoncé Knowles-Carter's Lemonade and Carrie Mae Weems' The Louisiana Project, alongside the memories of formerly enslaved women and the voices of Jim Crow sharecroppers. Simmons asks how a black feminist sense of place engages with our haunting histories, landscapes of the present/past, and embodied memories.

*LaKisha Simmons*

**"Wearing our Wokeness: The Dressed Black Body and the Fight for Social Justice,"** Tanisha C. Ford, Associate Professor of University of Delaware, Black American Studies & History. In this talk, historian Ford theorizes wokeness and how it, at once, functions as a strategy for organizing, a political ideology, and a style of dress.

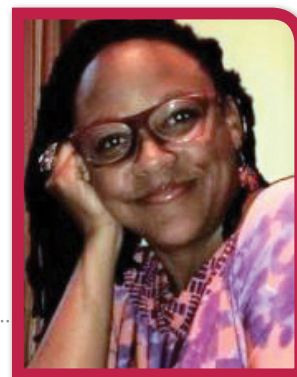
*Tanisha C. Ford*





**"Lost Black Love Objects"** with Rebecca Wanzo, Associate Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Associate Director of the Center for the Humanities at Washington University in St. Louis. Popular love objects in African American culture frequently hold elevated importance as performing crucial political work. *What do we lose when our love objects fall from grace? But more importantly, What possibilities emerge after the fall?* Rebecca Wanzo explores these questions using The Cosby show and Michael Jackson as examples.

*Rebecca Wanzo*



**"A Minor Hold: Gayl Jones"** with Sarah Jane Cervenak, Associate Professor of the Women's and Gender Studies and African American/African Diaspora Studies programs at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. *A Minor Hold* thinks about Gayl Jones' literatures in relation to larger questions of blackness and gathering, black gatherings. Through an engagement with some of Jones' early short stories, particularly those that center characters figured as mentally ill or cognitively disabled, Sarah Cervenak considers how Jones' writing functions like a barricade against the round ups waged by the putatively self-possessed. She argues that Jones' craft is as much literary as it is sculptural; in writing, Jones makes harbors for racialized, sexualized and crippled social life. Put another way, In writing, Jones spins minor holds against the violence of worldly seizure.

*Sarah Jane Cervenak*

**"Little Black Girl"** with Sharon P. Holland, PhD in English and African American Studies at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In the figure of the little black girl we have an opportunity to meditate on a new phenomenology of being, one in which a relentlessly discursive essence marks the space where existence should be. "Little Black Girl" deploys a series of readings that seek to engage not only how we find her, but also how we read her when we do.

*Sharon P. Holland*



**"Maternal Tongues: An Insurgent Ecstasies of the Sacred"** with J. Kameron Carter, Associate Professor of Theology, English, and African American Studies at Duke University. Thinking with M. NourbeSe Philip's *Zong!* Poetry collection in mind, this talk engages questions of Black politics and voice, placing its discussion in the current political climate of Trump(ets).

What emerges from *Zong!* then, and what this talk thinks about, is *Zong!*'s urgent antepolitics and sociopoetics of joy, its insurgent ecstasies of the sacred, and the frenzied speech of the poems' maternal tongues.

*J. Kameron Carter*

## Black Feminist THOUGHT & PRACTICE SERIES



**"Black Women Out West: Unsettling the U.S. Frontier Myth"** with Tsitsi Jaji, Professor of English and African American Studies at Duke University. Why has the U.S. frontier myth offered Black artists such fertile ground for critiques of settler colonialism and hyper-masculinity? We'll think through this question with the help of fiction, photography, and comics from Africa and its diasporas.

*Tsitsi Jaji*

**Refashioning Casualization: Black Studies, Women's Studies, and the Birth of the Adjunct** with Nick Mitchell, Assistant Professor in the Department of Feminist Studies and the Program in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Santa Cruz. What do the histories of minoritized fields of study have to teach us about the transformation of academic labor conditions? In this talk Nick Mitchell explores the contradictory terrain that student and faculty advocates for Black Studies and Women's Studies faced in the late 1960s and early 1970s as they simultaneously sought to have their labor institutionally recognized (in the form of wages and credentialization) and to protect their field formation efforts from white- and male-dominated institutional control.



*Nick Mitchell*



**"Feelin' Colors and Seeing Speech: Diasporas of Difference in Black Women's Literature"** with Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Assistant Professor of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at UMass Amherst and Postdoctoral Fellow in Black Feminisms in the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies department at Duke University. This paper explores radical fusions of body and voice in black women writers' creative explorations of diaspora. Focusing on the works of black lesbian Canadian poet Akilah Oliver, lesser-known works by American poet and playwright Ntozake Shange, and the work of queer Afro-Cuban hip-hop group Las Krudas Cubensi.

*Mecca Jamilah Sullivan*

## Spring 2017 EVENTS (continued from page 18)

### APRIL

- 14** **2017 Honors Students Presentation and Dinner.**  
Event celebrating the three honors students in the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies program.

- 17** **Black Feminist Thought and Practice: "Thinking the Practice of Black Feminist Poetry"** with Cheryl Clarke, author of five books of poetry. A talk on Cheryl Clarke's published work, with emphasis on poetry, feminism, and blackness as an integrated and integral practice and struggle.

### MAY

- 13** **GSF Graduation Ceremony**

# Queer THEORY

## (Gay) Panic Attack

by: **Chase Gregory**

PhD Candidate Literature and Certificate  
in Feminist Studies, Duke University



David L. Eng, Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania

On February 23rd, the Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies welcomed Dr. David L. Eng to East Duke Building to give the annual Queer Theory Lecture in honor of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Eng, currently the Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, is well known for theorizing Asian American subjecthood through the multiple lenses of queer, psychoanalytic, and critical race, and gender theory. His talk, titled “(Gay) Panic Attack,” addressed the rising phenomenon of so-called “parachute children”: young Asian immigrants who come to the US by themselves in order to gain educational opportunities and learn English.

The lecture drew significantly from Eng’s ongoing collaboration with practicing college psychoanalyst Shinhee Han, *A Dialogue on Racial Melancholia and Racial Dissociation* (forthcoming). As such, the talk remained dually interested in both the clinical and theoretical implications of this contemporary immigration trend, exploring both diagnosis and subject formation in equal measure.

Ventriloquizing Han, Eng read two case studies of college students who were also “parachute children.” The first focused on a struggling art student whose continuing battle with eating disorders and alcoholism skyrocketed when she moved to New York City. The second told the story of a high-achieving gay business student at Colombia, referred to student services after he suffered several severe panic attacks. After each, Eng offered a brief analysis, arguing that the

symptoms displayed by both students were the result of a specific repression tied to the advent of a US political rhetoric of “racial colorblindness.”

Eng gave the lecture to a packed and attentive crowd (technical difficulties necessitated a last-minute change of venue from the pink parlor to the blue, resulting in standing-room-only space for many of the eager participants). In a provocative Q&A, audience members noted the gender dynamic at work in the two cases; they also addressed how the slippage between “Asian” and “Asian American” in Eng’s talk appeared symptomatic of fact that shifts in immigration demographics make it hard to assimilate the term “parachute children” into current understandings of Asian identity in the US. Some audience members challenged Eng on his apparent embrace of psychoanalysis, citing queer theory’s debts to Michele Foucault—a theorist who is quite suspicious of Freud.

These discussions continued in a separate seminar held the next day, during which Eng led a lively lunch discussion with a number of GSFS students. The seminar focused on a pre-circulated recent publication, “Colonial Object Relations,” which is part of Eng’s other in-progress book project, *Reparations and the Human*, which investigates the problem of reparations during the Cold War. The group spent much of the time making provocative connections to the previous day’s lecture.



Gender, Sexuality, & Feminist Studies

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## Fall 2017 COURSES

<b>GSF 89S-01</b>	<b>Girls Go Global</b> Kimberly Lamm	<b>GSF 295S</b>	<b>Sex Work: Politics of Sexual Labor</b> Kathi Weeks
<b>GSF 89S-02</b>	<b>Gender and Sexuality in Middle East</b> Frances Hasso	<b>GSF 361</b>	<b>Money, Sex, Power</b> Kathi Weeks
<b>GSF 199S</b>	<b>Thinking Gender</b> Elizabeth Grosz	<b>GSF 364S</b>	<b>Race, Gender &amp; Sexuality</b> Departmental Staff
<b>GSF 202S</b>	<b>Sexuality Studies</b> Gabriel Rosenberg	<b>GSF 367</b>	<b>Feminist Reproductive Ethics</b> Kathy Rudy
<b>GSF 235S</b>	<b>Clinical Issues for LGBTQ</b> Janie Long	<b>GSF 390S</b>	<b>Mad Men: Gender and Work</b> Kimberly K. Lamm
<b>GSF 275</b>	<b>Food, Farming and Feminism</b> Gabriel Rosenberg	<b>GSF 503S</b>	<b>Cartographies of Gender and SXL in the Middle East</b> Frances Hasso
<b>GSF 278</b>	<b>Sex/Gender-Nature/Nurture</b> Ara Wilson	<b>GSF 890S</b>	<b>Time and Becoming</b> Elizabeth Grosz