

WOMEN'S, GENDER, & SEXUALITY STUDIES FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER



A Letter from the Director

As we creep closer to year two of the global pandemic, it is increasingly difficult to remember the Before Times. But remember we must, because in the midst of all this turmoil and fear, much else happened: we managed to get rid of the rancid Orange One and elect our first woman vice-president; the country was ignited and inspired and transformed by the Black Lives Matter movement; serious considerations of racial justice, environmental stewardship, and economic equity have entered into critical political debates around the world; and so much more...

While the Delta variant makes everything a bit iffy, we are planning on a return to campus this fall with a full roster of in-person courses including the new ***Introduction to Trans Studies*** taught by our (still new, still wonderful) colleague **K.J. Rawson**, and ***Gender and Black World Cultures: feminist futures*** taught by the fabulous new director of Africana Studies **Régine Jean-Charles** – who has a partial appointment in WGSS! We are also offering an online-only version of ***Gender, Social Justice, and Transnational Activism*** taught by feminist activist and theorist **K. Melchor Hall**.

I'd like to welcome **K.J.**, **Régine**, and **Melchor** to Team Feminism, the only team worth playing on. And speaking of teams: a warm welcome to our new co-op, **Brittany Clottey**, and the new *Signs* graduate assistants: **Kyle Wholey**, **Julianna Wessels**, and (returning for a second year!) **Giorgia Shields**. We also have **Mary Gryctko** joining us this year as our Visiting Scholar. Mary comes to us from the University of Pittsburgh where she works on Victorian literature and childhood studies – she's got two fascinating projects in the works and we hope to get a chance to hear her discuss her research at faculty symposia and more informal events as well. For more on Team Feminism's new members, check out page 2. We did, alas, have one member of Team Feminism leave Northeastern: **Moya Bailey** has taken a position at Northwestern University. We are sad to see her go but wish her all the best in her new job – and thank her for her invaluable contributions to our community.

Once again, WGSS will be hosting a *Collaborative Research Cluster* (thanks Humanities Center!) and continuing our work from last year focusing on contemporary feminist theory. If you (grad students and faculty) are interested in joining up, please do contact me right away. More information is on page 3.

And make sure to put **Friday, March 25th** in your calendar – we will be back at the **Cabral Center** for our annual *Women's History Month Symposium*. While last year's online event was very successful, it will be wonderful to gather together in-person once again. Read more about our plans for this signature event on page 3.

As always, in sisterhood and solidarity -
Prof. Suzanna Walters

Inside this Issue

Page 2: New Faces in WGSS

Page 3: Upcoming WGSS Programming

Page 4: Tip of the Feminist Cap

Page 5: *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*

Page 7: The Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality

Page 8: Spring 2022 WGSS Courses



NEW FACES IN WGSS



Dr. Régine Michelle Jean-Charles (she/her) is a Black feminist literary scholar and cultural critic who works at the intersection of race, gender, and justice. Her scholarship and teaching in Africana Studies include expertise on Black France, Sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean literature, Haiti, and the diaspora. She has recently been appointed as the Director and Professor of Africana Studies, Dean's Professor of Culture and Social Justice, and Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

K. Melchor Quick Hall (she/her/hers) is the author of *Naming a Transnational Black Feminist Framework: Writing in Darkness* and the co-editor, with **Gwyn Kirk**, of *Mapping Gendered Ecologies: Engaging with and beyond Ecowomanism and Ecofeminism*. She is a popular educator who works with students of all ages. Melchor is also the Interim Executive Director of African American Education & Research Organization (AAERO) and Melchor-Quick Meeting House (MQMH), both organizations founded by her mother. Through Pendle Hill Quaker Conference and Retreat Center, she co-facilitates a writing workshop for people of color and a reparations workshop for US-based, white inheritors of wealth. Read more about her work at <https://www.writingindarkness.org/> and <https://mappinggenderedecologies.org/>.



Mary Gryctko (she/her) holds a PhD in English Literature and a certificate in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research interests include Victorian literature and culture, childhood studies, medical humanities, and gender and sexuality studies. She is working on her first book project, which explores the Victorian cult of the dead child. At Northeastern, she plans to begin work on a project tracing the 19th century origins of contemporary anti-sex work rhetoric, focusing in particular on the utility and destructiveness of the identity of "child" for young sex workers in Victorian England.



Kyle Wholey (they/them) is a third-year PhD student in English, studying queer and feminist aesthetics in contemporary literature and visual culture. They co-chair GSWAG (Graduate Student Welfare Advocacy Group), alongside former *Signs* GA **Rachel Molko**, a group that advocates for wellness and community within academia. As a writer and scholar, Kyle's work emphasizes consciousness-raising through community activism and art.

Julianna Wessels (she/her) is a PhD student in the English Department in CSSH. Her research fields of interest include Postcolonial and Caribbean Literature as well as Women's Studies, Graphic Novels, and Contemporary Literature. In addition to serving as an Editorial Assistant for *Signs* this fall, Julianna will be working as a research fellow for the Early Caribbean Digital Archives.



Brittany Clottey (she/her) is the Summer 2/Fall2021 co-op for the WGSS program and *Signs* Journal. She is from South Jersey and is a 5th year PPE major. Her research and curatorial interests lie within critical theory, aesthetics, and contemporary culture. She is currently working on a research project and curatorial exhibition on the marginalization and representation of American American women from the 20th century to the present.

UPCOMING WGSS PROGRAMMING

WGSS 8th Annual Women's History Month Symposium

Friday, March 25th, 2022

We are excited to announce that we are planning to hold our eighth annual Women's History Month symposium in person on Northeastern's Boston campus this coming March of 2022. While our 2020 Symposium, which was held exclusively online, was a success, we are looking forward to feeling the unmatched energy of a live audience this coming year. So, save the date of **Friday, March 25, 2022**, and meet us in the **Cabral Center** at the **John D. O'Bryant African American Institute** for **"Feminism for the Future: Constructive Conversations on Lesbian and Trans Identities and Politics"**.

This day-long symposium starts from the position that trans inclusion and liberation are non-negotiable and aims to unpack and analyze the fears and falsehoods that motivate (some) lesbian attacks on trans activists. Through a series of panels, we'll initiate a respectful dialogue that is deeply informed by evidence and history and aligned with building a multi-racial, gender-inclusive, intersectional feminism that holds space for all identities. We are still building the panels but confirmed speakers include **Tey Meadow** (Columbia University, Sociology); **Cameron Awkward-Rich** (UMass Amherst, WGSS); and **V Varun Chaudry** (Brandeis, WGSS), who recently conducted an interview with trans historian and filmmaker **Susan Stryker** as part of the "Ask A Feminist" series for *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. As most of our community knows, we prefer our panels to be multidisciplinary, including activists, journalists, and organizers alongside more traditional academics. We will be updating our website with details of speakers and panel titles as the event continues to take shape. In the meantime, if you are interested in getting involved with the planning, or have a great idea for a speaker or question you'd like addressed at the event, please get in touch with us at wgss@northeastern.edu. See you on March 25!



From last year's symposium, *#Feminism: Gender & the 2020 Election*, featuring political commentator, **Zerlina Maxwell**



Professor of WGSS and Law, **Libby Adler**, asks a question at a past symposium (Photo by **Lauren Scornovacca**)

WGSS Collaborative Research Cluster

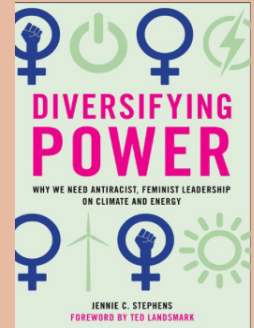
Last spring, the WGSS executive committee started a virtual reading group to connect and discuss contemporary feminism and feminist writing. This year, the WGSS program will continue this work with a Collaborative Research Cluster, thanks to the generosity of the Northeastern Humanities Center. The group will continue to meet and discuss feminist readings. With the support of the Humanities Center, we will provide books to all members and are planning to meet on a monthly basis. The group is open to faculty and graduate students from any department. We are still in the planning phases and are still accepting suggestions of books to read as a group, so if you are interested in joining please contact wgss@northeastern.edu to sign up.

TIP OF THE FEMINIST CAP



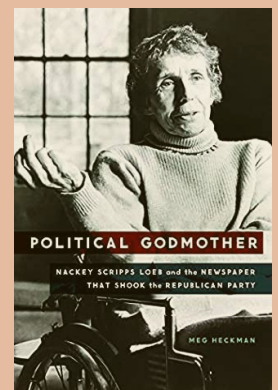
Alicia Sasser Modestino (Associate Professor of Public Policy and Urban Affairs and Economics; Director of Research, Dukakis Center) co-authored an article for *The National Bureau of Economic Research* titled, “Gender and the Dynamics of Economics Seminars.” Her work was also covered extensively by the *New York Times* in the article, “For Women in Economics, the Hostility Is Out in the Open” which spoke about gender bias within the field of economics.

Jennie Stephens (Director of the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs; Dean's Professor of Sustainability Science & Policy) recently published her book, *Diversifying Power: Why We Need Antiracist, Feminist Leadership on Climate and Energy* (Island Press, 2020), which has been reviewed on [Resilience.com](https://www.resilience.com). In this book, Stephens highlights how climate and energy leadership must be diverse and must concentrate on integrating antiracist and feminist values.



Martha F. Davis (University Distinguished Professor of Law; Affiliated Faculty of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies) published “Infertility and Human Rights: A Jurisprudential Review,” in *Gender & Law* (co-authored with **Rajat Khosla**) and “RBG's Human Rights Legacy,” in *American Constitution Society Expert Forum* (co-authored with **Risa Kaufman**). She also recently joined the Academic Advisory Council of the ERA Project.

Meg Heckman (Assistant Professor of Journalism; Affiliated Faculty of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies) published her book, *Political Godmother: Nakey Scripps Loeb and the Newspaper That Shook the Republican Party* (University of Nebraska Press/Potomac Books) in June 2020. She also contributed a chapter called “Conflicted: Student Media Advisors, Sexual Assault Coverage, and Mandatory Reporting Under Title IX” in the book, *Testing Tolerance: Addressing Controversy in the Journalism and Mass Communication Classroom* written by The AEJMC Commission on the Status of Women.

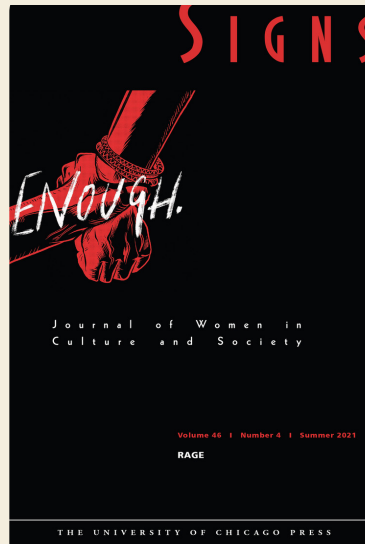


SIGNS

Journal of Women in Culture and Society

ABOUT SIGNS

Recognized as the leading international journal in women's and gender studies, *Signs* is at the forefront of new directions in feminist scholarship. Challenging the boundaries of knowledge concerning women's and men's lives in diverse regions of the globe, *Signs* publishes scholarship that raises new questions and develops innovative approaches to our understanding of the past and present. What makes feminist scholarship published in *Signs* distinctive is not necessarily the subject of investigation or particular methods of inquiry but the effort to cultivate alternative research practices that further feminist, queer, and antiracist goals of social transformation. *Signs* is published by the University of Chicago. Make sure to check out the *Signs* website, www.signs-journal.org, for access to new releases.



| SIGNS | |
|---|---|
| Volume 46 Number 4 Summer 2021 | |
| Contents | |
| Rage A special issue edited by Durba Mitra, Sarah Haley, and Carla Kaplan | |
| Introduction | |
| Carla Kaplan, Sarah Haley, and Durba Mitra | Outrageal/Enraged: The Rage Special Issue 785 |
| Articles | |
| Marisol Le Brón | Policing Gender in the Colony: Toward a Decolonial Feminist Politics of Rage in Puerto Rico 801 |
| Hil Maldonado | The Promise of Repair: Trans Rage and the Limits of Feminist Coalition 827 |
| J. T. Roane | Spring Back at Law and Order: Donnetta Hill's Rage in an Era of Vigilante 853 |
| Jennifer C. Nash and Susanna Panto | A New Genealogy of "Intelligent Rage," or Other Ways to Think about White Women in Feminism 883 |
| Caroline E. Light | "What Real Empowerment Looks Like": White Rage and the Neoliberal Politics of Armed Womanhood 911 |
| Kristen Soares | Joy, Rage, and Activism: The Gendered Politics of Affect in the Young Lords Party 939 |
| Sarah Orem | Tangles of Resentment 963 |
| David A. Rubin | Anger, Aggression, Attitude: Intersecting Rage as Biopolitical Protest 987 |
| Awino Okoth | Feminist Digital Counterpublics: Challenging Femicide in Kenya and South Africa 1013 |

The Summer 2021 issue of *Signs* is a special issue on **RAGE**, edited by **Durba Mitra, Sarah Haley, and Carla Kaplan**. This issue discusses the complex phenomenon of rage, its global and historical components, and its significance within feminist theory. See more @ <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/toc/signs/current>.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Signs Special Issue: "Complexities of Care and Caring": In the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and amid the groundswell of support for #BlackLivesMatter, there is a need for reassessing notions of care and caring. This special issue invites such reassessment across disciplines, broadly questioning and complicating feminist histories, debates, and politics of care and caring. We seek essays that are passionate, strongly argued, and willing to take risks. The deadline for submissions is **December 15, 2021**.

2023 Catharine Stimpson Prize for Outstanding Feminist Scholarship: Named in honor of the founding editor of *Signs*, the Catharine Stimpson Prize is designed to recognize excellence and innovation in the work of emerging feminist scholars. Feminist scholars in the early years of their careers (fewer than seven years since receipt of the terminal degree, including current graduate students) are invited to submit papers for the Stimpson Prize. The deadline for submissions is **April 1, 2022**.

For more information about these calls for papers, please visit <http://signsjournal.org/for-authors/calls-for-papers/>

S I G N S

Journal of Women in Culture and Society

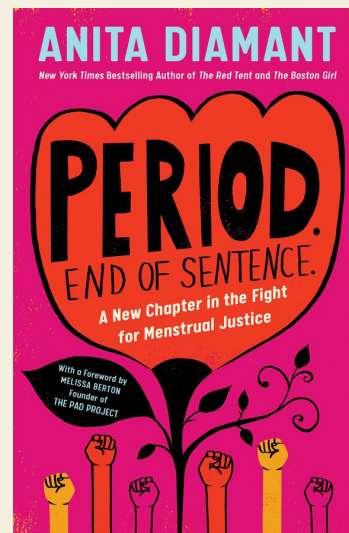
FEMINIST PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS PROJECT

The Feminist Public Intellectuals Project seeks to engage feminist theorizing with pressing political and social issues via open-access, online-first initiatives. Check out some recent releases below!

Ask a Feminist: "Susan Stryker discusses Trans Studies, Trans Feminism, and a More Trans Future with V Varun Chaudhry"

Feminist Frictions: Title IX, featuring Catharine Stimpson's essay "Dereliction, Due Process, and Decorum: The Crises of Title IX," including a digital archive on the topic

Short Takes: Anita Diamant's *Period. End of Sentence. A New Chapter in the Fight for Menstrual Justice*, with commentaries from Chris Bobel, Shenila Khoja-Moolji, Pema Lhaki, and Jennifer Weiss-Wolf, including a response by Diamant



The Autumn 2021 issue of *Signs* features **Sara Tafakori's** "Digital Feminism beyond Nativism and Empire: Competing Claims to Suffering in Iranian Women's Online Campaigns," **winner of the 2021 Catharine Stimpson Prize for Outstanding Feminist Scholarship**. The issue also includes a symposium titled "**Feminists Theorize COVID-19**" as well as a number of timely articles on the intersection between gender and science, past and present.

THE CONSORTIUM FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN GENDER, CULTURE, WOMEN, AND SEXUALITY

The Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality (GCWS) is located at MIT and brings together students and teachers from nine different schools in the Boston area. The goal of the Consortium is to come together under a similar devotion to interdisciplinary graduate teaching, research, and scholarship in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

The GCWS offers the opportunity to study under an educational model of representative and consensual governance in a collaborative environment. Through the act of sharing resources and faculty, an ever-evolving learning space is established wherein a new interdisciplinary understanding of research and teaching is discovered. For more information about the GCWS and a full list of their courses, visit their website @ <https://www.gcws.mit.edu!>

GCWS Spring 2022 Course Offerings:

Race, Sex & the Ethics of Collection in the Peabody Museum

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

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

Wednesdays,
4:00-7:00PM

Spring 2022



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

Convened at Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archaeology 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?

Consortium for Graduate Studies in

GCWS
GENDER & CULTURE
WOMEN & SEXUALITY

Feminist, Queer, and Indigenous Methodology

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. To begin, we will examine the types of questions asked, the assumptions that serve as foundations, the frameworks that structure the method of inquiry, and the values and power relations inherent in particular approaches. Working at both a theoretical and practical level, the seminar will train 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.

Drawing on in-class workshops, podcasts, art, film, global case studies, class visits from distinguished as well as promising young scholars, students will examine the underpinnings of cutting-edge methodological paradigms used throughout the world while gaining skills applicable to their own research inquiries/projects.

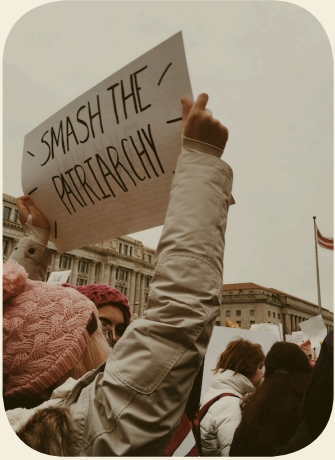
FEMINIST, QUEER, AND INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGY

DR. SANDRA MCEVOY, BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2022 - DAY AND TIME TBA
THIS WILL BE A HYBRID CLASS MEETING ON
ZOOM AND BU CAMPUS



SPRING 2022 WGSS COURSES

WGSS has an exciting roster of courses planned for the Spring semester. From required courses for the minor and graduate certificate to exciting elective opportunities with our fabulous feminist faculty, we have it all. We will also have a number of cross-listed courses on the roster. Start planning your spring semester now by checking out our parent course offerings below.



WMNS 1101/SOCL 1102. *Sex, Gender, and Pop Culture*: Examines how femininities, masculinities, and different forms of sexual identity are produced and represented within popular culture. Using theories and concepts from both feminist/sexuality studies and popular culture studies, this course analyzes popular texts and media for their treatment of gender and sexuality and the intersection of those categories with racial and class identities. Explores the visual representation of women (and men) and analyzes how visual and textual media shape our attitudes and identities. Required reading and assignments include close readings of texts, film screenings, class discussions and activities, writing assignments, and creative projects. Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture; taught by **Prof. Suzanna Walters**

WMNS 1103. *Intro to WGSS*: An interdisciplinary course introducing key themes in gender and sexuality studies. Offers students an opportunity to learn core concepts that inform our understanding of how gender and sexuality are socially constructed and are experienced in everyday life. Drawing on women's studies, queer studies, masculinity studies, and allied areas, the course analyzes gender, sexuality, and other dimensions of identity; explores critical issues of gender, sex, and power; and studies gendered/sexed identities in both national and transnational contexts. Topics include the gendered conceptions of love, sexuality, and violence; biological arguments about gender and sexuality; the social construction of sexuality and gender; intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality; masculinities and femininities; theories of sexual difference; gender and the state; and gender and popular culture. Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Societies/Institutions; taught by **Prof. Margot Abels**. *This course is required for the WGSS minor.*



WMNS/AFAM/HIST 1225. *Gender, Race, and Medicine*: Examines the basic tenets of "scientific objectivity" and foundational scientific ideas about race, sex, and gender and what these have meant for marginalized groups in society, particularly when they seek medical care. Introduces feminist science theories ranging from linguistic metaphors of the immune system, to the medicalization of race, to critiques of the sexual binary. Emphasizes contemporary as well as historical moments to trace the evolution of "scientific truth" and its impact on the U.S. cultural landscape. Offers students an opportunity to develop the skills to critically question what they "know" about science and the scientific process and revisit their disciplinary training as a site for critical analysis. Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity; Professor TBD

SPRING 2022 WGSS COURSES

WMNS/PHIL/POLS 3500. *Sexuality, Gender, and the Law:* Examines the legal regulation of gender and sexuality. Investigates concrete legal cases to study the history of constitutional interpretation and the current status of rights for women and sexual minorities. Focuses on important theoretical issues emerging in the writings of diverse feminist and queer legal scholars. Addresses debates over the value of conventional equality approaches in legal doctrine; equality vs. difference perspectives; ways in which legal language constructs gender and sexuality; the incorporation of sexuality and gender in ideologies of law; and the intersections of gender, sexuality, and race in legal doctrine and legal theory. Attribute(s): NUpath Ethical Reasoning, NUpath Societies/Institutions; taught by **Prof. Libby Adler**



WMNS/SOCL 7100. *Queer Theory:* Introduces the core texts and key debates that have shaped queer theory and examines the intersections between queer theory, feminism, and critical race theory. Seeks to provide an understanding of expansive and radical contemporary queer politics by analyzing foundational queer and feminist texts, pushing beyond narrow constructions of identity politics, anti-discrimination policy, and rights-based reforms. Engages queer theory by means of a rich philosophical and political interrogation of the meaning and content of “queer.” Professor TBD. *This course is a foundational requirement for the WGSS graduate certificate.*

