



CENTER FOR THE  
STUDY OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY  
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## 2025 CSWS ANNUAL REVIEW



### CSWS Undergraduate Initiatives



### REFLECTIONS: 2024 Elections & Aftermath







CENTER FOR THE  
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# “Feminist Futures”

## *CSWS 50th Anniversary Impact Summary*

### *Highlights*

- **National and international speakers** including Anita Hill, 2024 Lorwin Lecture on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties; Tina Brown, acclaimed former editor of the *New Yorker*; and Diana Greene Foster, author of *The Turnaway Study: Ten Years, a Thousand Women, and the Consequences of Having—or Being Denied—an Abortion*
- **Campus-wide collaborations** with the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Wayne Morse Center, School of Music and Dance, School of Journalism and Communication, UO Common Reading, Cinema Studies, Comics Studies, and UO Environment Initiative
- **Concerts, art exhibits, film screenings, symposia, and more**

### *Major Events*

- “Haunting Ecologies: The Past, Present, and Future of Feminist and Indigenous Approaches to Forest Fire” panel, lecture, and art installation
- “Feminist Futures: An Evening of Song, Music, & Dance” performance
- “Artists, Constellations, and Connections: Feminist Futures” exhibit
- “Desire in the Aftermath of Environmental Violence” Acker-Morgen Memorial Lecture
- **CSWS Alumni Symposium: Celebrating “Feminist Futures”**

***2023-24 event attendance total: 1,678***

*Scan for a complete overview  
of 50th Anniversary impacts:*



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CSWS Advisory Board member and librarian Heghine Hakobyan and Nina Kankanyan, political science graduate student, at a CSWS open house / photo by CSWS staff.

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Cover: University of Oregon faculty and graduate students catch up during the 2024 CSWS New Faculty Welcome and Holiday Party / photos by CSWS staff.

## CSWS ANNUAL REVIEW OCTOBER 2025

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### OUR MISSION

Generating, supporting, and disseminating research on the complexity of women's lives and the intersecting nature of gender identities and inequalities.

Faculty and students affiliated with CSWS generate and share research with other scholars and educators, the public, policymakers, and activists. CSWS researchers come from a broad range of fields in arts and humanities, law and policy, social sciences, physical and life sciences, and the professional schools.

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CSWS *Annual Review* is published yearly by the Center for the Study of Women in Society. While CSWS is responsible for the content of the *CSWS Annual Review*, the viewpoints expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the organization.

**MANAGING EDITOR** Jenée Wilde

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Over the last year, with the help of our undergraduate student workers and interns (see below), CSWS has continued to develop our communications strategy across multiple platforms.

We are excited that past issues of the *CSWS Annual Review* have been fully digitized and are now available on our website, along with PDFs of the printed publication. With digitization, all articles are now searchable by keywords at [csws.uoregon.edu/share/annual-review](http://csws.uoregon.edu/share/annual-review). Plus, authors can link to *Annual Review* articles for their CVs, websites, and other digital media. Historical publications such as reports and newsletters are also available online in PDF form.

Our video production has expanded to include regular series with new content posted each term on our website and YouTube channel. In the **CSWS Spotlight** series, we interview University of Oregon faculty about their research, recent events, feminist scholarship, and accomplishments of women across disciplines. **CSWS Presents** offers interviews with invited speakers as well as highlights from lectures and panel discussions. In our **CSWS Alumni Focus**, we hear about the work of our alumni and the impact of the Center beyond the UO. See the "Multimedia Spotlight" in this issue for a sampling of new video offerings, and check out our YouTube channel playlists for more coverage of CSWS events, initiatives, and programs.

To make full use of our multimedia content, CSWS revamped our website over the summer to spotlight dynamic content on our homepage and to make navigation easier. Our main menu now features new landing pages for Research, Funding, Programming, Events, Media, Impact, and About—each of which highlights the incredible work of the Center and our affiliates. For a sampling, you can hear about our new CSWS Undergraduate Initiatives and see work produced by students in those programs at [csws.uoregon.edu/impact](http://csws.uoregon.edu/impact) (see articles this issue).

In social media news, CSWS has officially moved from X to Bluesky, so please Follow us at [uocsws.bsky.social](https://uocsws.bsky.social), as well as on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. If you're not already receiving our biweekly MailChimp newsletter, you can sign up at [csws.uoregon.edu/forms](http://csws.uoregon.edu/forms). ■

—Jenée Wilde, Managing Editor

## 2024-2025 Undergraduate Workers



**ADDIE**  
SOCIAL MEDIA



**PERCI**  
WEBSITE + DATABASES



**DIM**  
GRAPHIC DESIGN



**EMMA**  
OFFICE ASSISTANT



**JILLIAN**  
INTERNSHIP



**OWEN**  
VIDEOGRAPHY

**UO Center for the Study of Women in Society**

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

The 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Center for the Study of Women and Society committed to supporting research and creative practice that envisioned Feminist Futures. This charge has become ever more urgent this past year as we seem to be living now in a fight or flight mode, where each day a new crisis hijacks our attention and energies. In 2023, for instance, the wage gap for women widened after two decades. The fight to reverse this loss shrinks our capacity to work towards closing that gap, or to address how women of color make substantially less than 84 cents to the dollar. Yet, we must resist this temporality of crisis that mires us in a regressive present and forecloses our abilities to imagine a future. Thanks to your continued support, CSWS is uniquely privileged in offering space, time, and resources that enable faculty and students to attend to the unfinished projects of feminism. I hope you will enjoy the articles and interviews featured in this issue that provide a window into the field-changing work undertaken by our associates as they shape just and egalitarian feminist futures.

Since our current undergraduate students will go into the world and shape the time to come, one of my strategic initiatives as director has been to expand the scope of CSWS to support undergraduate research, writing, creative practice, and professionalization. We launched a robust internship program in 2023 to help students gain on-the-job training in managing a non-profit. Our interns gain experience in marketing, communication, videography, event management, research, and writing. This year, fundraising and a grant from the Calderwood Foundation allowed us to launch two undergraduate initiatives—the CSWS Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing and the CSWS Summer STEAM Fellowships. Jack Evans, a doctoral student in history, taught our first Calderwood seminar in Spring 2025, titled, *On Women's Land: Public Writing on Women's Writing and the Environment*, to an enthusiastic group of students. We had a terrific response to the STEAM Fellowships, and with additional support from the Office of Research and Innovation we welcomed our first cohort of fellows and faculty mentors for Summer 2025. They worked on projects that engaged the CSWS commitment to intersectional research through the analytics of gender in fields ranging from biology and psychology to anthropology and women's, gender, and sexuality studies. We

currently have three years of funding for these initiatives, but I do hope we can sustain CSWS's support for undergraduate research and public-facing writing beyond this time frame.

As funding sources shrink within the University and beyond and certain fields of inquiry are challenged and delegitimized by our current political dispensation, CSWS felt it was more important than ever to sponsor feminist research in an interdisciplinary and intersectional frame. Faculty grants now include a course buyout option so that associates can dedicate time to research and creative practice. We also strengthened our commitment to the Research Interest Groups (RIGs) and were able to fund a larger number of RIGs. Some of our most active RIGs are spearheaded by doctoral students, and we hope this expansion will provide some support as resources available for graduate education continue to dwindle. We have witnessed a dramatic increase in applications for graduate grants, and many worthy projects are not receiving the support they deserve. As the Center prepares its next Strategic Plan, we will make graduate funding a priority.

Being in community is a critical need during these unsettling times and so we were excited to host several Open Houses where associates came together to strengthen existing ties and build new connections. These events were energizing and productive and allowed us to learn in an informal setting how we might better serve the needs of faculty, students, and community members at the University and beyond. In the same spirit, we initiated video projects to introduce our community to the exciting work being done by our faculty, students, and alumni. Featured on our website and archived on our YouTube channel, these interactions throw a spotlight on the impact our associates are making in academia and beyond. I urge you to go to our re-designed website and explore the cutting-edge research, innovative creative practices, and transformative community service that CSWS has been privileged to sponsor, support, and disseminate. In our effort to communicate with you more effectively, we always appreciate hearing from you as to how we might do better. Please reach out and tell us what you want to see!

I would like to thank our Advisory Board for their advice, ideas, and guidance. This past year, the Board spent countless hours updating our governance documents and putting



*Sangita Gopal*

in place efficient, transparent, and thoughtful policies that reflected the Center's mission and clarified our relationship to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation. My gratitude as well to Professor A. R. Razdan and his team at OVPRI for supporting us with resources, signing on to our vision, generating ideas for funding new programming, and highlighting our contributions. My heartfelt appreciation to the CSWS team—our business manager Angie Hopkins and dissemination specialist Jenée Wilde, as well as a crack team of student workers who do so much with so little.

Another election cycle came and went, and the US failed—once again—to elect a woman president. More significantly, the gender gap widened, especially among younger voters. Gender lies at the beating heart of our fraught political climate as the goals of liberty, equality, and justice feel unachievable for vast swathes of the population. Our current theme is Gender and Politics, and at a CSWS panel discussion processing the 2024 US Elections entitled “Gender as Target,” I witnessed despair, anger, and cynicism among colleagues, students, and community members in the audience, and yet people showed up and kept talking to one another. This is what feminists have always done well: Amidst disagreements and disappointments and while inhabiting vastly unequal structures, we have assumed the right to talk. At universities and cafes, at street protests and around kitchen tables, we keep talking. In so doing, perhaps we achieve what Danielle Allen has called “difference without domination” and renew our democracy.

Thank you for all you do for CSWS, and with my warmest regards.

*—Sangita Gopal is an associate professor of cinema studies and director of the Center for the Study of Women in Society.*



# Encountering Women's History in a CSWS Calderwood Seminar

by Jenée Wilde, Associate Teaching Professor, Department of English

In the Jane Grant Room at CSWS, a dozen students gather around the conference table as their instructor gets the workshop started. This week, classmates in group A are the editors, providing detailed critical and generative feedback to the op-ed writers in group B. Next week, their roles will be reversed.

"I really liked that one week we were an editor and the next week we were writing," said Tanya Gunarathne, a general social science education major and nontraditional student at UO. "Being able to comment on our classmates' work was intimidating at first, but after a while I was excited to see what everybody wrote, and they were excited to see what I wrote. It was an awesome thing to see."

Her classmates agree. "It felt like we were all on a team trying to achieve a new goal, and it was completely different from any other class I've had," said Elizabeth Elliott, an international business global studies major who is minoring in history and sports business. "It was cool to experience something new."

Gunarathne and Elliott are in HIST 416 Women and the Family in 20th Century America, a CSWS-funded Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing taught by Jack Evans, a fifth-year history PhD student.

"It's so uncommon for a grad student in history, and maybe more generally speaking in the humanities, to get any kind of experience teaching these smaller types of classes," Evans said. "To have a really well-funded classroom environment, being part of an intellectual

community where you're valued and allowed to make independent choices, is something so seldomly afforded to grad students. To be allowed in the CSWS as a graduate student, and to be treated as an equal and welcomed into this teaching environment, is something that I'm so tremendously grateful for."

The history seminar is a result of the Center's recent efforts to amplify graduate and undergraduate participation in CSWS activities and programs. During our 50th Anniversary (2023-24), we raised more than \$50,000 to launch two new undergraduate initiatives: a summer research fellowship in STEAM fields (see story this issue) and the CSWS Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing.

The mission of Calderwood Seminars is to empower students to communicate specialized knowledge to a broad audience by teaching them to explain academic work in a way that makes the information relevant to others. By encouraging students to connect their liberal arts studies to the world beyond the university, the Calderwoods help to prepare students to participate actively in a democratic society.

"One of the things we say in the Calderwood Seminars is that it's not just writing for academics, for professional historians, it's writing for life, writing for the general public, and writing in specific ways for their parents and for their siblings," Evans said. "There's something that really speaks to students about doing that kind of writing."

These small seminars are designed around short writing assignments



## VIDEO SPOTLIGHT: UNDERGRAD LEARNING

CSWS is expanding our support for undergraduate learning by sponsoring Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing on gender-related topics across several departments at the UO.

Scan the QR code to hear student experiences and instructor insights about these intensely rewarding workshop-style courses that strengthen student writing, editing, and revision skills for audiences beyond academia.

For more on this undergraduate initiative, including student-written articles from the seminar, go to [csws.uoregon.edu/calderwood-seminar](https://csws.uoregon.edu/calderwood-seminar).

Pictured left is CSWS Calderwood Seminar instructor Jack Evans, who taught HIST 416 in Spring 2025 / photo by Owen Garvey.





that might appear in a blog, magazine, newspaper, or other media outlet. Students revisit knowledge acquired in their majors and shape it for general readers, producing NPR-style Academic Minutes, book and film reviews, interviews and profiles, op-eds, and other forms of public writing. Course mechanics involve a weekly rhythm of outside-of-class peer editing, in-class workshopping, and delivery of multiple drafts, with students rotating each week between the roles of editor and writer.

"I felt so enthusiastic about having a smaller class," Evans said. "With 10 students coming regularly, this class was just incredible. The way they were able to build collegial relationships with one another in a learning community was so distinct from anything I had experienced before. I had no way of knowing it would go quite so well when I signed up to teach the class."

This unique curriculum was first developed by economics professor David L. Lindauer at Wellesley College in the 1980s for an Economics Journalism course. The pedagogy proved adaptable to other disciplines, encouraging its widespread adoption at the college. In 2013, with funding from the Stanford Calderwood Charitable Foundation, a teacher-training program was developed for Calderwood Seminars. Within five years, the program had expanded to more than a dozen colleges and universities.

At the UO, Calderwood Seminars have been offered by the Clark Honors College and by the Department of English. With funding from the Calderwood Foundation, the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, and our donors, CSWS is sponsoring six seminars over three years in collaboration with faculty from the departments of History, Art, Comparative Literature, English, East Asian Languages and Literatures, and Women's, Sexuality, and Gender Studies. The purpose of CSWS Calderwood Seminars is to train undergraduates to effectively communicate cross-disciplinary research on women and gender to the public.

"Most of my classes as a history major have been focused generally on men, especially white men," said Lash Eversole, a history major who is minoring in secondary education. "So it's really refreshing to actually see a focus on women right now."

"Hearing students talk about the way in which they first began to

encounter women's history, feminist history, histories of people who were of non-masculine genders across the spectrum, and the way that opened up whole new worlds of seeing for them and whole new ways of understanding I think is such a valuable part of this," Evans said.

Evans designed his course to introduce students to some of the scholarship that UO faculty are producing on histories of gender.

"Through courses like the Calderwoods, we can integrate some of the really valuable research that CSWS is funding," Evans said. "For many of these books my students were working with in their writing, it was so powerful to get to turn to the acknowledgements and say, look who is funding this research."

Topics included Marsha Weisiger's research on gendered injustice in Navajo history and Annelise Hinez' work on histories of white and Asian American women, as well as other scholarship on lesbian communes in Oregon, the Indigenous Child Welfare Act of 1978, and the fall of Roe v. Wade.

"I believe having a place for group discussion and for sharing your work and getting feedback is so much more important for history students because history is not just learning about a historical event," said Shawn Fonda, a history major and international student. "It's more like learning that part of history is for telling and sharing some message from the past."

"It's history that isn't being taught," said Teddy Coates, a political science major who is minoring in history. "Each week would be something that I've never heard about or have broad knowledge of but no real conception about, like a lot of Native American stories. I think a lot of the things that I learned about should be more well understood by the public, not just in an upper division liberal arts setting. I am a more well-informed person, without a doubt." ■

—Jenée Wilde is the CSWS research dissemination specialist.

Editor's note: Quotations in this story have been edited for brevity and clarity.

**Photo Above:** Sitting around the CSWS Jane Grant Room conference table, students offer both generative and critical feedback on their op-ed assignment drafts in the HIST 416 Calderwood Seminar last spring / photo by Owen Garvey.

# Personal Stories Inspire Summer Undergraduate Research Projects

by Jenée Wilde, Associate Teaching Professor, Department of English

**T**he Center for the Study of Women in Society has launched a new student-centered research initiative—the CSWS Undergraduate STEAM Summer Fellowship.

Over the summer, undergraduate fellows collaborated with University of Oregon faculty mentors to develop interdisciplinary research and creative projects that engage with STEAM fields—science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. Our STEAM fellows approach their inquiry with gender and intersectionality as an analytical framework.

“We are so excited to support undergraduate research and creative projects that align with our mission,” said CSWS Director Sangita Gopal. “These team-based fellowships are designed to fill a need for undergraduate arts and humanities research opportunities at the University of Oregon by linking creative work and scholarship to research in the sciences.”

Student fellows receive up to \$3,000 to pursue their research-based summer projects, while faculty mentors receive up to \$1,000. The program also enhances pathways for under-represented students in STEAM to succeed.

Initial funding for the program was raised from donations to the CSWS 50th Anniversary DuckFunder Campaign, with additional funding from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI) at University of Oregon.

We are honored to welcome the inaugural cohort of CSWS-OVPRI Undergraduate STEAM Summer Fellows:

- Cing Dim, Advertising, “Lost from Home, Disconnected from Roots” (faculty mentor Aye Thuzar).
- Sophia Foerster, Multidisciplinary Science, “Estrogen Signaling in Cartilage Extracellular Matrix Integrity and Composition in Inflammatory Systems” (faculty mentor Nick Willett).
- Anisha Srinivasan, Psychology, “A Feminist Framework for Studying Deficits in Recognition of Outgroup Faces” (faculty mentor Chanel Meyers).
- Alex Underwood, Sociology, “The Portrait Project: Preserving Queer History through Intergenerational Storytelling” (faculty mentor Judith Raiskin).

In their applications, the 2025 STEAM fellows shared compelling personal stories and visionary gender-based projects that promise needed interventions and positive impacts within specific communities.

## Amplifying Myanmar Women's Voices

“I was born to a family of poor farmers in the Naulak tribe, indigenous to Myanmar, a country that is at war with itself in the devastating aftermath of colonization,” said Cing Dim, who used her summer fellowship to research and document the stories, cultural practices, and activism of Myanmar immigrant women in the region. The project, “Lost from Home, Disconnected from Roots,” will offer survivors who fled civil war and religious persecution a space to be heard while shedding light on displacement and intergenerational trauma.

“I do believe there is a profound generational trauma among my community, and I believe I have a role in changing it,” she said.

Before immigrating, Dim’s family faced religious persecution in Myanmar. “Through a miraculous chance, we were granted religious refugee status and admitted into the United States,” she said. “The road to get here and our life since have been difficult, but my roots are still alive within me and guide my every move.”

Years after leaving the war-torn country, Dim was diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress disorder in 2023. “It brought a profound sense of relief, finally giving a name to the enduring pain I had felt for so long,” she said.

Experiences of abuse and hardship that Myanmar women like herself have faced motivate Dim to amplify their voices in the US and contribute to discussions of human rights, gender justice, and displacement through public awareness campaigns.

“I applied for the CSWS STEAM Fellowship to explore how advertising can serve as a medium for feminist resistance and healing,” she said. “My research develops a campaign empowering survivors of sexual abuse, particularly those impacted by colonial legacies, to reclaim their voices. CSWS’s mission to support intersectional, justice-oriented research directly informs this work.”





The 2025 CSWS-OVPRI Undergraduate Steam Summer Fellows are, from left, Cing Dim, Sophia Foerster, Anisha Srinivasan, and Alex Underwood / photos provided by the fellows.

## Making Women's Health a Priority

As a third-generation descendant of Diethylstilbestrol (DES)—a fertility drug from the 1970s marketed as safe despite inadequate research—Sophia Foerster knows intimately what it feels like to have pain dismissed by the medical system, especially as a woman.

“My grandma passed away when my mother was nine,” she said. “My mother was left infertile and underwent painful IVF. My twin sister and I were born prematurely with long-term health consequences. I am one of the thousands of women and children DES harmed because women’s health has never been a priority.”

For years, Foerster suffered from invisible pain that doctors could not identify and repeatedly dismissed—until she was finally diagnosed with endometriosis. This and other medical experiences motivated Foerster to explore systemic issues in women’s healthcare as a multidisciplinary science major at UO. Her next step will be graduate school for a degree in biomedical sciences to pursue research on critically understudied conditions that impact biological females.

“This exclusion of women has fueled my passion for changing the landscape in academia that fails to uphold standards of representation in research,” she said. “I believe recognizing the intersectional nature of sexism in policy, physical science, and professional fields is critical to addressing all the sources that contribute to this ongoing exclusion.”

Foerster works as an undergraduate research assistant for the musculoskeletal tissue engineering research program at the Willett Regenerative Labs, located in the Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact.

“Sophia is dedicated to creating lab models that truly reflect each patient’s unique biology—something that traditional methods and experiments often miss,” said Nick Willett, associate professor of

bioengineering at the Knight Campus. Willett is Foerster’s STEAM Fellowship faculty mentor.

“Her goal is to make research more inclusive by filling in important gaps about how men’s and women’s joints work differently,” he said. “With her strong background in biology and chemistry, she’s the perfect person to lead this innovative work.”

The fellowship allowed Foerster to work full time over summer on her current research developing a pre-clinical model that accounts for women’s hormones in states of chronic inflammation, particularly in Ehlers–Danlos Syndrome (EDS), with the hope that the model can better inform targeted therapeutics.

“I applied for the CSWS fellowship because of its empowering focus on feminist scholarship,” she said. “It is an honor to be selected as an inaugural fellow to continue my research. I am inspired to address the complicated nature of gender inequalities that have flourished in male-centric fields like science and medicine with the support of the CSWS.”

## How Gender Influences Recognition of Women of Color

Growing up, Anisha Srinivasan had two amazing women role models—her mother and her aunt—yet she witnessed her grandfather consistently overlooking his daughters’ achievements in favor of their husbands’ successes.

“In Indian culture, where male prestige is often prioritized, I saw firsthand how women’s accomplishments could be undervalued,” Srinivasan said. “My grandfather took immense pride in his sons-in-law but failed to extend the same recognition to his own daughters. Experiencing this from both within and outside this culture, as someone raised in the US, has allowed me to critically examine the larger sociocultural and political structures that shape gender dynamics.”





For her fellowship project, Srinivasan researched how gender influences the perception and recognition of women of color through an experimental memory-recall study aimed to test the intersection of race and gender in memory biases.

“This work highlights the mechanisms underlying person perception of women of color,” she said, “identifying biases in both race and gender that often lead to various downstream consequences such as fewer job offers made from networking and a persistent dismissal of their lived experiences by the same perceivers.”

Personal experience has fueled Srinivasan’s passion for clinical research that investigates sociocultural and political factors that influence individual psychology. Take trauma, for example: Although trauma is frequently addressed as a personal issue, being raised in oppressive political conditions where one is exposed to violence constitutes a form of trauma rooted in broader structural forces. Srinivasan wants to understand how such structural forces shape social perception and individual well-being.

“The reason I applied for the CSWS STEAM Fellowship is because of the Center’s deep investment in exploring the complexity of women’s lives and its expansive vision for empowering under-represented voices in research,” she said. “As someone deeply interested in women’s experiences and narratives, it felt like the most meaningful space to grow my research.”

### Preserving Queer History through Intergenerational Storytelling

As a trans and queer individual, Alex Underwood says the practice of art has been crucial to his understanding of himself and the world around him.

“In a time when trans and queer people are able to seek little solace in the world around us, art is a visible expression of our most invisible feelings, thoughts, and potentials,” he said. “I applied to the CSWS Summer STEAM Fellowship because it is evident that under the ongoing threat of erasure and censorship, the complexities and joys of queer life must be preserved by queer people themselves.”

Underwood’s project documents queer histories through

intergenerational storytelling and art—specifically portraiture. Participants in the project collaborated in cross-generational pairs to create portraits of each other as they shared stories, memories, and advice with one another in order to learn from and enrich each other’s lives. He plans to archive the results for exhibits and create a zine to share the stories and artworks.

Underwood’s project developed from two Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies courses taught by UO Professor Judith Raiskin—one that focused on queer archives and one on public-facing research and activism. These courses grew out of the Eugene Lesbian Oral History Project, which documents through interviews and archival research the lived experiences of lesbian elders in Eugene from the 1960s to the 1990s. Raiskin received CSWS research grant funding for the project.

“Much like the queer people who migrated to Eugene in the 60s, I also came to the University of Oregon to avoid identity-based prosecution and to be able to have access to trans-affirming health care,” Underwood said.

Raiskin, who is Underwood’s STEAM fellowship faculty mentor, sees an urgent need for intergenerational community projects like this.

“This is a historic moment of terrifying representations of trans people and an assault on their humanity,” Raiskin said. “It is also a time of violent attacks on women’s autonomy and freedom. Alex’s project of shared portrait making and storytelling is a brilliant and moving opportunity for women, lesbians, queer people, and trans people to claim their own self-understanding and share it with others.”

Information on the CSWS Undergraduate STEAM Summer Fellowship is available at [csws.uoregon.edu](https://csws.uoregon.edu).

You can support innovative undergraduate research focused on gender across the disciplines by going to the CSWS website and clicking the “Give to CSWS” button. ■

—Jenée Wilde is the CSWS research dissemination specialist.

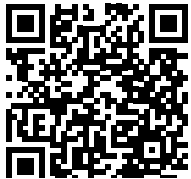
**Photo Above:** Queer Portrait Project participants in the process of creating their artwork / photo by Alex Underwood.



# Multimedia Spotlight

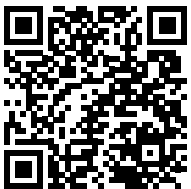


*The Center for the Study of Women in Society now features a variety of multimedia content on our website and Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Bluesky, including interviews, short features, lecture and panel discussions, and alumni testimonials. Subscribe and Follow today!*



## CSWS Spotlight: Jina Kim on 2024 Nobel Laureate Han Kang

In this interview, Jina Kim, associate professor of Korean literature and culture at the University of Oregon, discusses the Korean writer Han Kang, who was the first Asian woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2024.



## CSWS Spotlight: Michael Kuhn on 2023 Nobel Laureate Claudia Golden

In this interview, Michael Kuhn, an associate professor of economics at the University of Oregon, spoke with CSWS about the role of gender in his research and the significance of Harvard Professor Claudia Dale Goldin's work in the field of economics. Dr. Goldin was awarded the 2023 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences.



## CSWS Presents: Moira Fradinger

CSWS spoke with Moira Fradinger, associate professor in comparative literature at Yale University, on the occasion of her talk "A Decolonial Reading: The Case of Latin American Antígonas" on October 18, 2024, at the University of Oregon. The event was presented by the Center for the Study of Women in Society and the Department of Romance Languages, and cosponsored by Center for Latino and Latin American Studies, Oregon Humanities Center, Theater, and Comparative Literature.



## CSWS Presents: Darshana Mini

Darshana Mini is an assistant professor in communications arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and recently published the book "Rated A: Soft-Porn Cinema and Mediations of Desire in India" (2024). She presented her talk "Madakarani as Screen Pleasure: Scandal and Soft-Porn Imaginary" at the University of Oregon on October 25, 2024.



# Gender as Target

## *US 2024 Elections and Aftermath*

**O**n Feb. 28, 2025, CSWS hosted “Gender as Target: US 2024 Elections and Aftermath,” a teach-in featuring University of Oregon faculty and Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF) representatives discussing how gender and race discourses informed the 2024 election cycle and ways we can collectively respond to the barrage of policies impacting immigrant and LGBTQ+ communities today.

First, Alison Gash, professor and chair of political science, spoke about the reliance on anti-queer and trans rhetoric as a catalyzing force in the rise of the conservative politics in the United States, with a particular focus on queer and trans politics at school and among young people. Gash researches US law and public poli-

cy. Her work on LGBTQ+ policies has appeared in *USA Today*, *Washington Monthly*, *NPR*, and the *Washington Post*, along with numerous other public and academic journals.

Next, Anita Chari, associate professor of political science, situated the elections in the context of critiques of “identity politics” (including the politics of gender, sexuality, and race) and their relationship to discourses regarding societal trauma, and discussed strategies for working toward a constructive, coalitional politics. Chari is a political theorist and somatic practitioner. Her interdisciplinary scholarly research explores the political significance of aesthetics and somatic experience for our times.

Concluding the panel, graduate students Kaito Campos de Novais and Brennan Fitzgerald

introduced the GTFF Rapid Action Working Group and discussed the role of intersectional labor organizing in support of immigrants and queer and trans people. They shared how we can collectively resist the escalation of white-nationalist and transphobic policies from the current administration. Kaito Campos de Novais is a PhD candidate in cultural anthropology and the VP for International Affairs at the GTFF. He is a Brazilian queer artist and labor organizer. Brennan Fitzgerald is a PhD candidate in chemistry and biochemistry and the VP of Membership Communications for the GTFF. They are a Southerner and a proud trans person.

Below are some thoughts and take-aways from CSWS graduate student affiliates who attended the event.



Panelists for the “Gender as Target” event were, from left, Anita Chari, Alison Gash, Kaito Campos de Novais, and Brennan Fitzgerald / photo by Cing Dim.





Sofía Vicente-Vidal

### Reflection by Sofia Vicente-Vidal Department of Anthropology

The “Gender as Target” teach-in addressed the use of identity politics in mainstream political discourse to mobilize voters and secure political power—in different ways by the far-right neo-fascist movement as well as the Democratic party. Dr. Alison Gash discussed how scapegoating through targeting the rights of LGBTQ+ people has historically been a strategy of conservative politics and provided specific examples of discriminatory laws across the United States since the 1950s. Dr. Gash reminded us that villainizing the LGBTQ+ community to stoke fear with the aim of gaining votes is not a new tactic, but also highlighted that resistance to each wave of targeted attacks is also not new. In the face of the bullying and political violence of those at the helm of the country’s government, we need reminders of resistance efforts that have succeeded in the past.

Dr. Anita Chari pointed out how the use of identity politics to advance political aims is not exclusively a strategy of conservatives and the far right, especially in this last election. The Democratic party has also engaged in the use of marginalized identities in an effort to gain political power. I was particularly struck by Dr. Chari’s mention of Olúfemi O. Táíwò’s concept of elite capture, or the ways in which identity politics have been mobilized to gain political power by reducing the real and material vulnerabilities of marginalized identities

into empty mainstream neoliberal discourses of positivity and acceptance. Another salient takeaway from Dr. Chari’s discussion was her assertion that identity politics itself is not the problem, but that its use in mainstream political conversation mobilizes trauma for elitist interests. She highlighted the need to re-orient trauma discourse in politics to be more historically specific, and to focus its intention on repair and care for groups who are being targeted and subjected to repeated and compounded trauma right now.

Having representatives from GTFF, our graduate student labor union, on this panel served to bring the discussion of the elite capture of identity politics home. As universities are meant to be places where students learn our country’s history, and college is perhaps the first time students experience the liberatory power of knowledge, we feel the gap between the ideas imparted in our classrooms and the normalized practice of institutional violence in the academy. Particularly vulnerable are BIPOC, immigrant, trans, queer, working class, and international graduate student workers who may be targeted for exercising their right to protest and fear they cannot count on the university for protection. ■

—Sofía Vicente-Vidal is an anthropology PhD candidate and GE in women’s, gender, and sexuality studies.

### Reflection by Liesl Cohn De León Department of Anthropology

As an international student, I was interested in learning more about US local politics and how today’s events are distressing the LGBTQ+ community, so I attended the “Gender as Target: US Elections and Aftermath” talk.

Dr. Alison Gash was a good start for the conversation because she exposed in detail the history of LGBTQ+ rights and how it connects to now, highlighting the decades of resilience of the queer community. Current conservative politicians have been publicly attacking and dismantling LGBTQ+ rights and progress made over the years in public policy, like transgender public recognition and access to health-care. However, the current administration has not been the first to have anti-queer rhetoric, and Dr. Gash reminded us how conservative policies have changed very little in the past 70 years because anti-queer rhetorics are about securing political power and fear catalyzing crisis (mentioning examples such as Florida or Oregon). In the end, Dr. Gash expressed that her talk’s goal was to make us aware that



Liesl Cohn De León

when things get more complex, the LGBTQ+ community has consistently pushed back and moved forward. They fight for their dignity and value, this being yet another impasse where they will emerge triumphant.

The second speaker was Dr. Anita Chari, who situated the current election context within the discourses of societal trauma. She started by saying that democracy and the rule of law today are in a precarious state and that resistance and solidarity are crucial in the face of it. According to Dr. Chari, the current political situation is an outcome of the success of progressive movements such as Black Lives Matter that have brought critical discourses around racial justice, class, and sexuality more into the political mainstream. Therefore, today’s white supremacist, xenophobic, and neoliberal right is exploiting people’s vulnerabilities by creating enemies in marginalized populations. Also, the right has successfully simplified and abused the trauma discourse by not addressing political violence, which is dangerous because trauma is real and has to be addressed in specific ways. Dr. Chari considers that cultural change toward trauma and more social connections are urgently needed to best respond to this situation collectively. Thanks to this talk, I learned about how the concept of trauma has been revised through the years and how it has been pathologized and overgeneralized by current politicians.

Finally, Kaito Campos and Brennan Fitzgerald closed the panel by sharing their

personal experiences, fears, and actions taken as part of UO's community of international students and trans students, which many people from the audience could relate to. This panel provided interesting insights about current politics in the US, creating a space for reflection, hope, and freedom of speech, which are so much needed in academia. ■

—Liesl Cohn De León is an anthropology PhD student and recipient of a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant.

### Reflection by Vasil A. Arangelov School of Journalism and Communication

The discussion on the intersection of queer rights, trauma, identity, and labor is timely and needed considering the American political reality. At its core, the event showcased the importance of talking about these topics, organizing in protecting human rights, and providing some hope and tools for resistance.

Dr. Chari and Dr. Gash emphasized that current policies are nothing new in the longstanding discourse against gender, racial, or sexual "otherness" and traced such rhetoric back over 70 years of historical events. It is valuable to acknowledge that hate and fear-mongering are used as drivers for political gains, yet the affected communities have resilience and manage to withstand the negativity and remain a vocal, amazing, and integral part of society. As a final remark, Dr. Gash said, "We will prevail!" which was a great way to



Vasil A. Arangelov

reiterate the community's commitment and emotions.

One of the most important notes from the event was the discussion on the exploitation of identity politics, over-traumatized people, and overgeneralization of emotions. These elements are oftentimes targeted, creating notions of subjectivity and branding communities or generations (Gen Z) as too fragile. Such tactics are once more promoted with the idea of creating divisions and achieving political gains.

What is visible in my work is that those divisions transcend the real-world dynamics and transfer to online spaces and, particularly, video games. The culture in the gaming environment is vastly influenced by biases and tailored to the dominant white straight man culture, promoting hegemonical power and exclusionary barriers. Politization and right-wing voices are taking up a lot of space in the gaming world, and the game developers or community members who promote diverse and inclusive content are aggressively targeted in response. This motivates me to look for ways to impact the gaming environment by promoting participation, reducing toxicity, and addressing existing structural inequalities. Scholars have the potential to address these issues while working with community members and promoting tangible solutions.

The event was a good reminder that we need to organize, discuss, and support each other in times of uncertainty. We can see that US politics are targeting gender beyond the American perspective, reinforcing conservative ideas across the world with populist rhetoric. These tactics have limited potential, and once the dust settles, the differences between people will be a topic of celebration rather than antagonization. ■

—Vasil A. Arangelov is a PhD student in the School of Journalism and Communication.

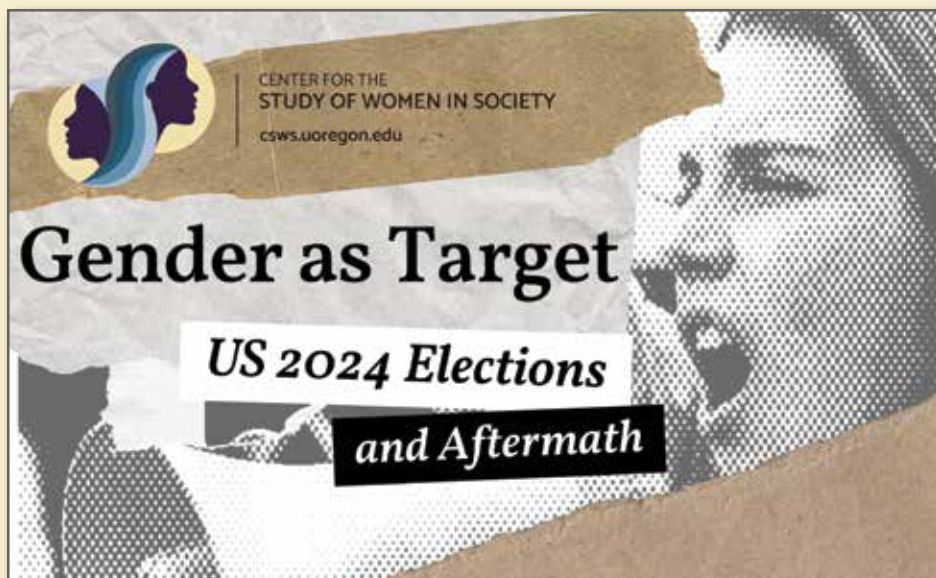
### VIDEO SPOTLIGHT: GRADUATE STUDENT REFLECTIONS

*In February 2025, CSWS hosted a teach-in on gender and politics in the 2024 election cycle and how the new political landscape is shaping up for important feminist issues.*

Scan the QR code to hear some thoughts and take-aways from CSWS graduate student affiliates who attended the event.



For more highlights from CSWS events, go to [csws.uoregon.edu/csws-events](https://csws.uoregon.edu/csws-events).







*Miriam M. Johnson*



## Johnson Paintings Gifted to CSWS

CSWS is honored to have the paintings of sociologist and CSWS co-founder Miriam M. Johnson (1928–2007), who was known as Mimi by her friends and colleagues, on view throughout our offices in Hendricks Hall. The paintings were donated to the Center after the passing of Mimi's husband, Ben Johnson, in 2024.

Mimi played a prominent role, along with sociologist Joan Acker (1924–2016), in providing the leadership to establish the Center for the Study of Women in

Society. In 1973, both Mimi and Joan met with William Harris in the home of UO President Robert Clark, at which time Harris declared his intention to donate the significant estate of his wife, Jane Grant, to establish a center for research on women.

For the next thirty-plus years, Mimi continued to be an active CSWS member and contributed generously to the Center. She served three times, across three decades, as acting director for CSWS: in 1974–75, 1986–87, and 1990–91.

The staff and affiliates of CSWS are indebted to Mimi for her strong advocacy in establishing a UO center focused exclusively on the issues of women and gender in society. Her theoretical and empirical research advanced the knowledge of women and gender as a whole and set a precedent for the field of women's studies, while her leadership helped establish the bedrock for subsequent generations of women scholars.

To learn more about Mimi's legacy, go to [csws.uoregon.edu/miriam-johnson](https://csws.uoregon.edu/miriam-johnson). ■



# New Faculty Welcome and Holiday Party

In partnership with the Office of the Provost, CSWS transformed our annual New Faculty Welcome event into a festive holiday party at the end of Fall term, 2024. Attendees enjoyed getting to know new colleagues and catching up with old friends from across campus.

*Pictured this page, above right: English graduate students Anu Sugathan (left) and Gowri Nair (right) check out the list of new University of Oregon faculty on the back of the Feminist Bingo icebreaker game. Right: Art Department Head Professor Anya Kivarkis (center left) listens to the provost's welcome with Art Professor Tannaz Farsi (center right). Bottom right: Provost Christopher P. Long chats with CSWS Director Sangita Gopal (left) and Stacy Alaimo (right), professor of English and environmental studies. Bottom left: Sierra Dawson (left), associate vice provost for faculty and leadership development, and Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh (right), vice president for equity and inclusion, enjoy the holiday party treats.*

*Pictured facing page, top: CSWS Advisory Board member and librarian Heghene Hakobian signs in at the festive welcome table. Pictured facing page, bottom right: Humanities Divisional Associate Dean Erica Bornstein enjoys speaker remarks during the event / photos by CSWS staff.*











# CSWS Open House

In 2025, CSWS welcomed our affiliate faculty and graduate students and folks from across the University of Oregon campus to our Valentine's Day and spring open house events. In these unsettling times, we join in community to strengthen existing ties and build new connections.

During 2025-26, CSWS will host two open house events: a Dark Academia party on Friday, Oct. 31 and a Dark Valentine party on "Friday the 13th" in February. Info: [csws.uoregon.edu/events-calendar](https://csws.uoregon.edu/events-calendar).

*Pictured above left are Lynn Stephen (left), Philip H. Knight Chair and distinguished professor of anthropology, and Laura Pulido (right), professor of geography and Indigenous, race, and ethnic studies.*

*Pictured above right are former CSWS director Michelle McKinley (left), Bernard B. Kliks Professor of Law, and Sangita Gopal (right), CSWS director and associate professor of cinema studies.*

*All photos by CSWS staff.*



*Pictured left are John Sutter (left), assistant professor of science communication, Ernesto Javier Martinez (center), department head and associate professor of Indigenous, race, and ethnic studies, and Sangita Gopal (right), associate professor of cinema studies and CSWS director.*







Above, graduate students, faculty, and staff from a broad range of disciplines are enjoying the Spring CSWS Open House event, including representatives from United Academics. These gatherings were energizing and productive and allowed the Center to learn in an informal setting how we might better serve the needs of our community at the UO and beyond.



Pictured above are Cing Dim, CSWS student employee and advertising major, and Salvador Herrera, assistant professor of English.

Pictured right are Sarah Stapleton (left), associate professor of education, Julie Voelker-Morris (center), distinguished teaching professor and graduate career services director, and Kelley Christensen (right), director of research communications for research and innovation.



# Finding Edie X.

## *A Writer Explores Gender, Motherhood, and Disability through Art*

by Jori Celona, Associate Professor, Creative Writing Program



Caravaggio's Saint Matthew and the Angel (1602) / image provided by Marjorie Celona.

**M**y third novel, *The Year of X*, begins with Edie X., a mid-career artist, leaving her husband to attend a yearlong artist residency in upstate New York, bringing her young daughter, Lou, along for the ride. Her proposed project is a reimagining of Rembrandt's *The Anatomy*

*Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, in which she plans to document her own top surgery in a series of photographs. But shortly after arriving at the residency, she begins to have bizarre seizures, which hijack her life and art, and alter her sense of personhood in the world.

In 2024, I received a CSWS Faculty Research Award to create Edie X.'s art with artist Anthony Schrag of Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. I had not previously felt I needed to embody my protagonists to write them well. But in the case of Edie X., I felt I needed to create her artwork to understand her. Being an artist wasn't her "job"—it wasn't even her "calling." It was more than that—in the way I feel my fiction is central to who I am.

Edie X. is inspired by several contemporary artists, but her work is most informed by Canadian artist Jeff Wall, whose 1979 photograph *Picture for Women* is a reimagining of Édouard Manet's *Un bar aux Folies-Bergère* from 1882. Whereas Manet's painting

objectifies its subject (a prostitute), Wall's update speaks to the representation of women in art throughout history. I have always been drawn to the oil paintings of the Renaissance and Neoclassical periods for their repurposing of the past, and it made sense to give this preoccupation to Edie X.

Over the course of ten days, Schrag and I created several works from Edie X.'s career at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall in Edinburgh. Among them:

- a mid-career series on motherhood that she begins at the residency, including a reimagining of Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun's self-portrait with her daughter (1789) and of Caravaggio's *Saint Matthew and the Angel* (1602), both controversial in their day;
- an early-career recreation of stills from Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979);
- Edie X.'s biggest career controversy: a photograph of herself as a trans man that she sells to a perfume company for a magazine ad.



Marjorie Celona





*Over the course of ten days, Anthony Schrag and Marjorie Celona (pictured left) created several works from Edie X.'s career at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall in Edinburgh / photo provided Celona.*

In our photographs inspired by—and in response to—oil paintings by Le Brun and Caravaggio, we tried to replicate what might cause similar discomfort in 2024. Le Brun's daughter is smiling with her mouth open—outrageous in 1789, when sitting for a painting was a serious affair. In our replication, Edie X. looks as though she is about to passionately kiss her child. It's a discomfiting image—the idea being that the intense bond between a mother and child is too much to behold—and calls to mind regressive reactions to public breastfeeding.

"The concepts of shame, identity,

representation, offense, and atonement are explored through these recreations," says Schrag. "Layered throughout these works we examined the erasures and presences that are caused by Edie X.'s diagnosis of epilepsy halfway through the novel."

After much discussion, Schrag and I felt that Edie X. would depart from photography for her final work of art in the novel. I found myself writing a performance piece in which Edie X. has several seizures over the course of seven days in a gallery, partly to "atone" for the furor caused by the lucrative photographs of

herself as a trans man and partly to make her invisible disability a very visible thing, bordering on spectacle.

As I continue to work on this novel, I do so now with a portfolio of Edie X.'s work. Most importantly, I feel I know Edie X. in all her prismatic wonder: an artist pushing forward her career; a nonbinary mother preparing for top surgery; and a person living, working, and parenting with a disability—all is to say, I know her well enough now to write her. ■

—Marjorie Celona received a 2024 CSWS Faculty Research Grant for this project.

# A QUEER HISTORY OF YIDDISH

by Miriam Chorley-Schulz, Assistant Professor, German and Scandinavian Studies

In their zine *TimTum—A Trans Jew Zine* (1999), Micah Bazant introduced an affirmative layer to the history of who is referred to in Yiddish as *timtum* (or *tumtem*). According to Bazant, a *timtum* is “a sexy, smart, creative, productive Jewish genderqueer.” This was not always the case.

Derived from the Mishnaic Hebrew *tumtum* whose Semitic root connotes “closedness,” a *timtum*, as Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert has shown, is originally treated in Rabbinic discourses as a not-yet-sexed person whose sexual organs may eventually appear or be revealed surgically.<sup>1</sup> A twin figure of the much more commented on *androgynos* (person with both primary sexual organs throughout their lives), *timtumim* have been introduced by the Rabbis to put to the test the neat sex-gender binary they ultimately naturalized for Jewish collective reproductive purposes. Both categories demonstrate, however, that more ambiguous gender possibilities were at least theoretically grappled with in the making of Jewish law, even if dismissively and, for today’s eyes, potentially offensively so.

*Timtum* in Yiddish has different meanings, some closer to the original Hebrew than others. In dictionaries, translations include: hermaphrodite; asexual animal/person; and an androgynous person whose gender is hard to identify, folding the two Rabbinic sex-categories into one. Also, as Leo Rosten pointed out, the original legalistic subtext eventually got lost in Yiddish so that *timtum* today mostly describes “effeminate men” or a “beardless male youth with a high-pitched voice.” It also developed into an insult denoting “a total loss”—a slur for those not fitting into Jewish masculinist gender norms by being unproductive both intellectually and, we can deduce, physically. Bazant’s 1999 full embrace turns *timtum* on its head as a positive identity and point of pride, speaking to broader tendencies in the entangled histories of queerness and Yiddish.

*Timtum* is not only part of the Yiddish lexicon. Yiddish is *timtumdik* itself. Eastern European vernacular Yiddish, which brings Germanic, Hebrew, Slavic, and other linguistic elements into mutual relations, has similarly defied neat categorization for most of its millennium-long history. It has been derided and shunned as a result. A linguistic misfit, medieval and early modern Eastern European Jewish elites described Yiddish as “the language of women” or of “men who are like women” (i.e., unable to read Hebrew). With the advent of modern race science, Yiddish was derided as a symptom of Jewish “racial inferiority” mostly, but not exclusively, by non-Jews, inscribing Yiddish into the grammar of antisemitism and Jewish self-hatred respectively.

Simultaneously, certain Jewish national movements in the 19th and 20th centuries, conversely, embraced Yiddish as a tool of nation-building, but saw the need to “purify” and “masculinize” it. Many Eastern European Jews, however, became closeted in their Yiddish-speaking, predominantly communicating in other languages seen as cultur-



Cover page of Micah Bazant’s *TimTum—A Trans Jew Zine* (1999) / image provided by Miriam Chorley-Schulz.

ally superior and linguistically more refined. Starting in the late 1960s, LGBTQ+ identit(ies) and Yiddish culture(s) have gradually been seen as natural allies—especially within progressive (primarily American) Jewish circles—not least because of a shared (without equalizing) experience of persecution: While the vast majority of Nazi Germany’s Jewish victims were Yiddish speakers, German fascists targeted the political left and those who they deemed “sexual deviants.” Today, whether in academic scholarship, LGBTQ+ performance art, feminist activism,



or Yiddish language study groups, the fusion of queer and Yiddish has become a powerful symbol of resistance, pride, and politics.

This rough historical sketch raises important questions: How did we come from the Mishnaic misfit *tumtum* to the 19th-century Yiddish loser *tumtem* to the celebrated *TimTum* as we entered the 21st century? What is done to “queer” and “Yiddish” and what is hidden when these ideas are re-natured as always already dissident, always already progressive, always on the “right side” of history? Has Yiddish triumphed over its own history as sexy and smart, creative and productive, proudly genderqueer?

My current book project traces the messy histories that led to our current moment of “queer Yiddish pride” by *queering* the history of Yiddish itself. *A Queer History of Yiddish* examines how, since the 1800s, language, race, class, and gender have intersected to influence how Yiddish speakers have been constructed throughout modern history—and how they’ve lived and died in the wake of it. By returning to queer and trans theory’s original deconstructionist mission breaking down categories, questioning power structures, and exposing how identities—sexual, classed, racialized, linguistic—are built, policed, and normalized, I show how the history of Yiddish rhymes with modern queer histories: the pressures, desires, and failures to “fit” into dominant cultures, including fascistic ones, exist alongside practices of resisting and reimagining identity and community beyond traditional boundaries. Rather than treating Yiddish as a sealed-off heritage language or a nostalgic symbol of resistance, *A Queer History of Yiddish* explores Yiddish’s more uncomfortable histories rife with contradictions alongside its breathing radical potentials. ■

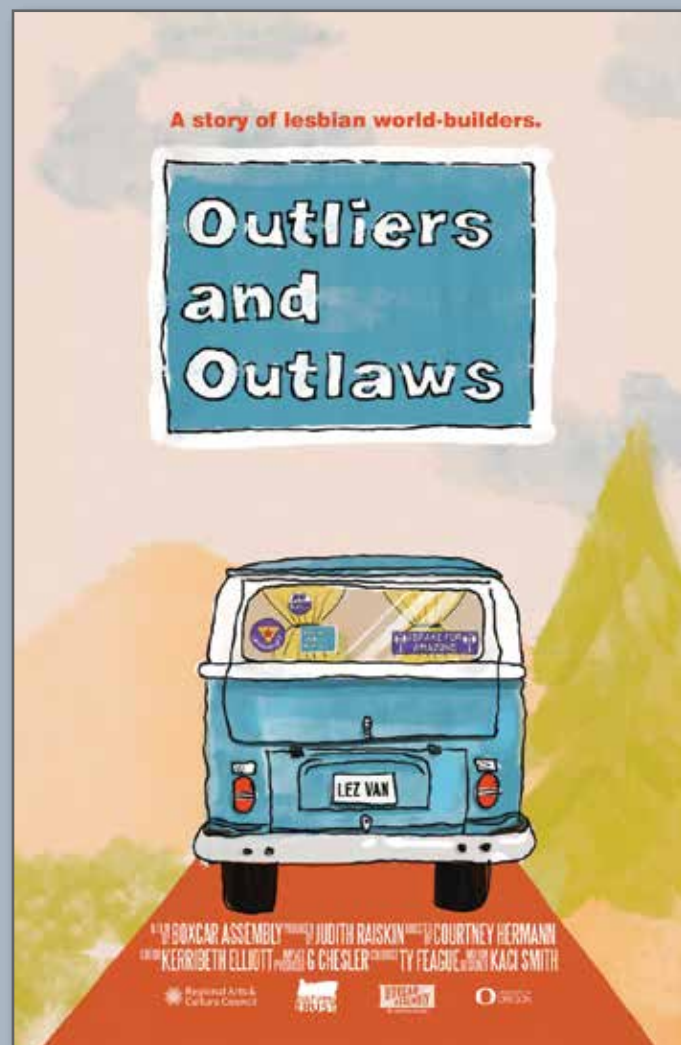
—Miriam Chorley-Schulz is an assistant professor and Mokin Fellow of Holocaust Studies at UO. She received a 2024 CSWS Faculty Research Grant for this project.

#### NOTES

1 Mishnah Yevamot 8:6; Yevamot 83b; Bava Batra 126b, in: Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert, “Gender Identity in Halakhic Discourse,” *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*. 27 February 2009. Jewish Women’s Archive.



Miriam Chorley-Schulz



## Outliers and Outlaws from the Eugene Lesbian History Project

Judith Raiskin, professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies, previewed her new documentary film *Outliers and Outlaws* in November 2024, with showings in February and March 2025 at the University of Oregon and The Art House in Eugene.

Part of the Eugene Lesbian History Project, the film is now screening at film festivals, universities, and theaters across the US. Screening information: [blogs.uoregon.edu/outliersandoutlawsdocumentary](https://blogs.uoregon.edu/outliersandoutlawsdocumentary). For more on the history project, go to: [outliersoutlaws.uoregon.edu](https://outliersoutlaws.uoregon.edu).

Raiskin received CSWS faculty research grant funding for this project. ■

# The Necessity of Oppositional Care for Transnational Feminist Politics

by Rhiannon Lindgren, PhD Candidate, Department of Philosophy

When one defines an activity as a “labor of love,” we are often referring to an experience that combines feelings of joy, difficulty, fatigue, and gratitude. While the labor of love is a sacrifice, the prepositional qualifier of “love” indicates the motivation for such a sacrifice. One labors out of a sense of love that is both inspiration and reward for a tiresome endeavor.

Feminisms in the US have taken a variety of positions toward such labors. With the onset of the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, domestic labor—an exemplary form of human activity that comingles love and labor—was a primary target of feminist anger, resentment, and political struggle. As the goals of the women’s liberation movement shifted from liberation and toward an unflinching affirmation of femininity, the differences between men and women were emphasized even while equal opportunity and legal status became primary political goals (Echols 1989). At the turn of the twentieth century, the gutting of social services and public welfare recast basic human needs through an increasingly individualistic lens (Nadasen 2023). Labors of love never seemed more central and, increasingly, they were demanded of women in taxing and harmful ways.

Throughout all these phases of changing historical conditions, socialist and Marxist feminists have endeavored to articulate the role of domestic labor within women’s oppression and the varied social processes integral to the accumulation of capital. While in the 1980s the debate around domestic labor reigned supreme, Marxist feminists now emphasize an understanding of social reproduction as the practices



Image provided by Rhiannon Lindgren.

and processes through which women’s relationship is determined under capitalist social relations (Bhattacharya et al. 2017; Vogel 2014).

Social reproduction includes the unpaid domestic labor of the housewife figure, like child-rearing and cleaning domiciles, but it also includes social institutions such as education, paid childcare, and healthcare as fundamental features of the overall reproduction and maintenance of human beings. Social reproduction theory (SRT) argues that a “hidden” circuit of reproduction was not adequately accounted for within Marxist theory and that this circuit largely defines the terms of gendered and sexual

oppression underlying capitalism. Most importantly, SRT also claims that the level of social reproduction, or the access to essential reproductive resources that the working class has, is determined in part by the class struggles between the ruling and working classes (Vogel 2014).

Leftist, anti-capitalist struggles often under-determines the role of care as a site of political praxis. Even when community care is initially identified as a core objective of a political program or movement, the gendered and racial divisions that emerge in organizing caring labor often antagonize the internal practices of solidarity within radical political

**CARE, continued on page 25**





# DREAMS DEFERRED

## *Navigating Aspiration and Constraint in Urban India's Margins*

by Malvya Chintakindi, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology

*Photo: Malvya Chintakindi (center) interviews three of her participants on a recent trip to Hyderabad, India / photo provided by Chintakindi.*

**A**t age 33, Renuka's face carried the weathering of a life spent crossing multiple thresholds—between others' homes and her own, between caste boundaries that marked her as both essential and polluting, between dreams of education and the harsh reality of survival.

"I used to be clear-skinned like you," she told me, her fingers absently tracing the green glass bangles that matched her sari, a comment that deeply revealed the bodily inscription of caste and class through years of manual labor. Her eyes darted frequently toward the ceiling, measuring time until her husband's return from his work as a computer operator. In this moment of quiet reflection, before domestic tensions would force her to hurry home, she unfolds a story that illuminates how caste, gender, and class interweave to shape lives

in contemporary urban India: "We can have dreams," she says, cutting through my question about her life aspirations, "but they won't get fulfilled."

The intersection of these dreams and their deferral plays out daily in the urban landscape of Hyderabad.<sup>1</sup> Fifteen floors above the city streets, in the gleaming Cyber Towers that symbolize Hyderabad's technological ascendance, Ramanamma and Saritha navigate different corridors of the same paradox. As cleaning staff from lower caste communities, they maintain the offices where "empowered women" work in positions of global influence.

"I am from here in this city," Saritha reflects after twenty years of service, "but I have no security, no safety. I feel so far from where all these empowered women are." Their physical proximity to spaces of progress serves

paradoxically to heighten their sense of distance from it—a distance measured not just in meters but in the interlocking barriers of caste, gender, and class that keep them perpetually on the margins of urban opportunity.

My dissertation project examines how class, caste, and gender intersect in urban slums of India to shape aspirations for "good life" for women belonging to lower caste communities, predominantly engaged as informal labor. Last summer, as a CSWS research fellow, I conducted participatory research with middle-aged women that revealed a submission to precarious conditions and the strategic solutions they have developed to pivot the lives of their children. Given the ubiquity of caste, class, and gender creating a triple burden on lower caste women in India, this intergenerational

**DREAMS, continued on page 25**

*“This is traditional song; we can’t let you stay happy long”<sup>1</sup>*

# Gender, Social Politics, and Media Sensationalism in 19th-Century American Murder Ballads

by Nat Ivy, Master’s Student, Folklore and Public Culture Program



Nat Ivy

*“Oh, listen to my story,  
I’ll tell you no lies  
How John Lewis did murder  
Poor little Omie Wise.”<sup>2</sup>*

**M**urder ballads have been around for centuries. A murder ballad is a narrative song that tells the story of murder. However, as with any vernacular tradition, there’s a lot more to them than that. American murder ballads are most associated with Appalachian folk music, emerging in the early 19th century as Scottish and Irish immigrants made new homes in North America. As the century progressed, these Appalachian songs blended with African musical traditions, producing blues ballads.

Songs about murder have probably been sung for as long as there have been people to sing them. Some of them are even about real people. In investigating historical murder ballads, we can learn a lot about the gendered social expectations and realities of the communities that produced them.

My work examines three “true crime” murder ballads within their historical contexts in order to draw out the social messaging and norms they uphold. Spanning the entirety of the 19th century, my research investigates *Omie Wise* (1807), *Tom Dooley* (1866), and *Frankie and Johnny* (1899) as well as the community and media responses to the crimes. I argue that we can observe changes in acceptable social behaviors and the perceived value of a woman’s life through “true crime” murder ballads. Further, through the case of Frankie and Johnny, we can examine the impact of what “becoming” a living folkloric figure does to someone with less social power, unlike other “folk heroes” who lived during their own canonization, who were all white men.

Let me take you back in time. Randolph County, North Carolina. In early April, 1807, Naomi Wise was found dead, her body buoyed in Deep River just miles from her home. Within hours her lover, Jonathan Lewis, would be arrested. However, he never stood trial for her murder, escaping from prison and fleeing to Kentucky. Soon, the tragic events were strung into a song. The ballad of *Omie Wise* quickly spread. In fact, her murder is considered the basis for the first-ever fully American murder ballad.

However, murder ballads expose a lot more than just the sordid details of a death. *Omie Wise* is a story that has become a traditional standard, so common that it has even been given a genre classification, the “murdered sweetheart ballad.”<sup>3</sup> In these songs, women are murdered by their partners, usually because they have become

pregnant out of wedlock. Usually, these sweethearts are lured into a secluded place upon the promise of marriage, where they are brutally killed and callously disposed of. This is exactly what happened to Naomi Wise, who was strangled and drowned by Jonathan Lewis.

Her murder was not only memorialized in song, but it was spread as a way to keep other young women in line. Murder ballads, particularly ones based on the lives and deaths of real people, are used to convey social messages and cultural expectations. In the case of poor little Omie Wise: *Don’t be generous with your trust. Don’t have premarital sex. Don’t go into the woods with a man, even if you believe he loves you.* What it meant to be a “good” or a “bad” woman is inscribed among the song lyrics. The value of a woman’s life and her communal role are laid between the bars. Further, by exploring ballad variants, we can follow how these norms and expectations change as they evolve through time and place.

For *Omie Wise*, this came in her characterization within the ballad. Extant historical evidence shows that Jonathan Lewis was not the first man Naomi had slept with.<sup>4</sup> In fact, she had two previous children at the time of her murder. She was imperfect and “impure.” However, the ballads about her cast her in the role of the ideal, naive maiden. She becomes the perfect victim and the perfect stock character to project social ideals onto. Further, the ballad version of Jonathan Lewis doesn’t escape his fate. He’s haunted by the guilt and the ghost of Omie until the day he dies.<sup>5</sup> When justice wasn’t dealt in court, it was restored in the ballad. To young men, this warned: *Actions have consequences. Escaping the laws of man is not the same as being free.*

Listen between the lines. These ballads may not be the full truth, but they can tell us so much more. They tell us no lies. ■

—Nat Ivy received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bob Waltz, “Remembering the Old Songs: *Omie Wise*.” *Inside Bluegrass*, Aug. 2000, [www.lizlyle.lofgrens.org](http://www.lizlyle.lofgrens.org).

<sup>2</sup> Doc Watson, *Omie Wise*, CD, Doc Watson (New York, NY: Vanguard Records, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> Delia Dattilo, “Some Patterns of the ‘Murdered Sweetheart Ballads’ in Oral Tradition, Early Recordings, and Popular Culture.” *Studia Ethnologica Pragensia*, no. 1 (2023): 24–40.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Woody, ms, *A True Account of Nayomy Wise* (c. 1813).

<sup>5</sup> Doug Wallin, *Omie Wise*, CD, *Classic Mountain Songs from Smithsonian Folkways* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 2002), [folkways.si.edu](http://folkways.si.edu).



movements (Lindgren 2022). Often more “masculine” forms of public outrage and grief are classified as proper political activity while the quiet work of interpersonal repair or keeping people alive under conditions of extreme oppression are obscured from political discourse and analysis. Surviving under a capitalist social formation usually requires that individuals engage in some features of the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities in order to live. This means that politicizing survival cannot rely on a politics of purity, through which some types of individual and collective reproduction are classified as morally or politically righteous and others are demonized.

I came to notice these tensions within practices and labors of care through my experiences as an academic and a grassroots community organizer. As a worker in the feminized field of education, which happens to be a fundamental institution of social reproduction, I felt the way that discourses of care were deployed both to dissuade worker

actions such as strikes and to justify the unreasonable workloads and expectations. Outside of academia, my political organizing activities often included discursive references to burnout, capacity check-ins, and self-care, but they rarely seemed structurally incorporated into group rituals or shared expectations. It always felt like an individual responsibility to attend to these needs, and as a person socialized as a woman, I got the feeling that I was not so good at identifying such things until they had gone from a moderate need to a severe one.

Since I found few frameworks available that politicized survival and the gendered caring processes through which survival is secured, I propose the concept of “reproductive struggle” in my dissertation to identify collective, conscious opposition in caring and reproductive labor to the distorted ways capitalism profits from our survival. This concept aims to generate interdisciplinary feminist scholarship on the ambiguity of care as both a transformative labor and one in which significant harm can be produced.

I argue for a transnational horizon for future directions of feminist struggles upon which care, labor, and reproduction can become sites of antagonism to the maintenance of capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy. Instead, such activity can become directed toward an emancipatory future. ■

—Rhiannon Lindgren received the 2024 Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship for this project.

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## DREAMS, continued from page 24

capability transfer among such marginalized communities highlights how multiple vulnerabilities are reshaped into a source of resistance and opportunity.

Ramanamma and Saritha’s navigation of tech spaces informs their children’s understanding of both professional possibility and persistent barriers, while their maintenance of traditional caste practices at home creates preserved knowledge that enables both survival and dignity. Renuka’s emphasis on both practical skills (her daughter’s karate training) and formal education demonstrates skillful balancing of protective capabilities with expansive ones. These patterns suggest how marginalized communities actively construct strategic combinations of traditional and modern knowledge that enable both protection from vulnerability and expansion towards new possibilities.

Ramanamma and Saritha craft invisible cities within cities. Through “parallel urbanities,”

they create worlds that exist alongside but separate from the dominant narratives of global capitalism, worlds where back entrances become front doors and service elevators carry not just bodies but dreams. Renuka orchestrates her sovereignty across multiple stages—her own cramped home, the offices she cleans, the careful choreography of movement between them. These aren’t simply spaces she occupies but domains she authors, each one requiring its own strategies of presence and absence. When she times her work to avoid her controlling husband while maintaining her employers’ trust, she isn’t just managing schedules but crafting temporal territories of freedom within constraint. I develop the concept of “generational capability transfer” to explain how abilities to convert resources into achievements are shaped by intergenerational experiences of both limitation and possibility.

Narratives such as these challenge us to understand how good life aspirations are shaped not just by present opportunities but by

the complex interplay between historical consciousness and future orientation, between the weight of what was denied and the persistent reach to what might yet be possible. In these women’s careful cultivation of their own and their children’s capabilities, we see how hope itself becomes a kind of inheritance, one that carries both the memory of constraint and the seeds of its transcendence. ■

—Malvya Chintakindi received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant and the 2025 Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship for this project.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Hyderabad—a major technology hub in South India, in the state of Telangana, blending traditional and modern elements—offers an ideal research site for studying Dalit intersectionality due to its stark juxtapositions of technological aspiration and persistent caste hierarchies. The city’s significant budget allocations for Dalit empowerment programs, among the highest in India, create a critical research opportunity to examine how substantial state investment interacts with entrenched social hierarchies, illuminating the gap between policy intervention and lived experience.



Guatemalan Maya women prepare a meal of traditional foods / photo provided by Liesl Cohn De León.

# MIGRANT MEMORIES

## *Community and Identity Building in a New Territory*

*By Liesl Cohn De León, PhD Student, Department of Anthropology*

**T**he Guatemalan migrant population in the United States has been growing in the last few decades. Although Guatemalans started coming to the US in the 1980s during the Guatemalan Civil War (1960–1996), between 2010 and 2020 the Guatemalan population increased by about 60%.<sup>1</sup> According to the 2020 Census, about 1,683,093 Guatemalans live in the United States. However, there are estimates<sup>2</sup> of at least 3,256,047 people from Guatemala living in the US.

Unfortunately, there is no good data on Guatemalan Mayas

in the US because, most of the time, they are mislabeled as “Hispanic.” Nevertheless, it is known that the Guatemalan Maya have settled through transborder communities—multi-generational networks connecting established communities in the US with home communities in Guatemala<sup>3</sup> in search of a life away from violence, insecurity, lack of opportunities, and low wages. Maya women specifically come to reunite with their families, escape domestic violence, or be more independent, and most of them request asylum and have refugee status.



In the last decade, many Guatemalan Maya migrants have settled in Oregon towns due to the high supply of agricultural work, the fishing industry, and their proximity to areas where the salal plant and mushrooms are located. Women particularly work picking berries and salal, cleaning houses, and working in restaurants. A diversity of Guatemalan Mayan groups live in Oregon, the majority being Mam, Q'anjob'al, Akateko, and K'iche.

Some consider Maya Guatemalans throughout the country to be confronted with the pressure to adapt to an environment that is predominantly Latino/Hispanic.<sup>4</sup> However, while non-Indigenous Guatemalans prefer to migrate to large cities to mingle with other Latinos, Guatemalan Mayans prefer to migrate to small cities or rural towns in search of ethnic and linguistic connections mimicking their places of origin.<sup>5</sup>

During my explorative research, I wondered how Maya migrant women of different generations and places of origin reconstitute their communities and collective and individual identities in Oregon, and how memory has survived, changed, and fractured through migration. I collected 20 oral histories of Maya migrant women and men living in Oregon (Newport and Corvallis)—14 women and six men, most of them Mam, and some Popti' and Akateko, between 18 and 49 years old. I also made observations in Woodburn, Cottage Grove, Beaverton, and Hillsboro.

I found that Mayas build a sense of belonging by maintaining their agricultural habits, or by seeking to join evangelical churches where the pastor is from their town and speaks the same language. Also, I found that they have established several local committees to collect money when there is an emergency, to transport the dead back to Guatemala, to count the community members, to drive in groups to the nearest Guatemalan consulate, or to organize cultural activities such as parades. Also, they open and frequent Guatemalan stores selling Guatemalan brands, textiles, and traditional products such as seeds and herbs for teas, broths, and natural medicine.

Communal practices are strategies that Maya men and women use to manage, self-regulate, and defend their culture and territories daily. These constantly updated communal practices use memories that emanate from the long memory of rebellions and uprisings organized by past generations.<sup>6</sup> Even ordinary daily activities are a way of resistance and preservation of the collective memory. While Maya men focus on work and providing for their families, Maya women continue to practice their ancestral traditions at home and pass them on to their children, particularly teaching them their language to communicate with their grandparents. Also, women play an essential role in these communal spaces because they are on the front lines of family and communal activities, continuing the centuries-long tradition of weaving and preparing the feasts served at ceremonies, parties, and burials. The Maya people have a strong sense of identity and rootedness in their local communities. The establishment of borders has affected their lives, but these communities have remained deeply interconnected, with exchanges



Liesl Cohn De León

occurring fluidly in both trade and kinship<sup>7</sup> and the frequent use of social media.

All the people I talked to came from a background of extreme poverty. They went to school only until 6th grade, and when they were children, they used to work in the fields, shepherding, or weaving to help their parents. Most women traveled alone or with a young child to reunite with their husbands or relatives. All of them crossed the Mexico–US border through the desert. Many said the journey was difficult. Most people came to escape poverty, but some also mentioned violence—robberies and gangs. Hence, Maya migrant women are the leading producers of history and identities in their communities, which are being built in new territory in a context of complex intersectional relationships challenged by trauma, structural racism, poverty, gender violence, postwar violence, and labor exploitation. ■

— Liesl Cohn De León received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.

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Tali Bitton

# SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND PALESTINE

by Tali Bitton, PhD Candidate, Department of Philosophy

For many colonized women, gender-based violence (GBV) is never solely about their being women. When considering GBV within Palestine and Israel, like other forms of political violence, GBV functions as a mechanism of male supremacy within and across both peoples as much as a mechanism of settler colonization. But whereas Israel has a long history of documented GBV against Palestinians (as the UN has found occurred systematically in Israel's current genocidal campaign in Gaza<sup>1</sup>), the view of GBV within Israel is often presented in inverted form.

Take, for example, the "Stricter Penalties for Sexual Offenses for Nationalist Motives Bill," passed by Israel's legislature, the Knesset, in July of 2023. Introduced by right-wing Knesset members, the Bill maximizes the penalties for anyone deemed to have committed sexual violence for "nationalistic, terrorist" motives, with its proponents claiming such violence is on the rise. However, not only have groups like the Israeli Association of Rape Crisis Centers challenged these claims, many Palestinian and Israeli feminists criticized the Bill for entrenching rather than addressing GBV for Palestinians and Israelis, all while obscuring the fundamental cause—the colonial occupation of Palestine itself.<sup>2</sup>

In my research, I am interested in exploring how the asymmetries of meaning and political salience of GBV (alongside other forms of domination) are indicative of asymmetries in Palestinian and Israeli social reproduction. I work in Social Reproduction Feminism (SRF) which allows me to examine how the daily and generational renewal of human life, and with it human labor power, is essential to the cyclical persistence not just of inequality but of capitalism.<sup>3</sup>

SRF begins with the recognition that human labor is the heart of creating and reproducing societies, yet in capitalist ones human labor is not organized for making free, self-determining, and flourishing humans. Rather, capitalism transforms entire societies toward profit-making, created by the many to be owned by the very few. Throughout a workday, and over the course of working-class life, one's capacities to labor are exhausted and require replacement outside work, by replenishing current laborers' abilities (through domestic labor), producing new laborers, or reshaping the class of available laborers (e.g., migration). Crucially, working-class women are made to bear the double role of social reproductive laborer and waged laborer, such that changes in

class composition (say through colonization and forced displacement) generate specific social reproductive crises—which place heightened demands on women's labor across both roles.

Through SRF I examine how Zionist colonization intensified capitalist development in Palestine and Israel beginning in the mid-19th century, and how the growth of settler capitalism has generated social reproductive crises for Palestinian and Israeli working classes, albeit in very different ways. The critical purchase of SRF is that it shows how the capitalistic nature of the occupation imbricates the settler colonial elimination of Palestinians as a people (including their exploitation by Israeli capital) with the capitalist contradictions and social reproductive crises in Israeli society.

Indeed, for Palestinian feminists, the foundational role settler colonialism plays in engendering GBV has been a central focus of their struggles for gender and national liberation. In August 2019, Israa Ghrayeb, a Palestinian woman from Bethlehem, was brutally beaten to death by her family members—one of 34 Palestinian women killed that year in acts of feminicide. Thousands of Palestinian feminists took to the streets in protest across historic Palestine. These protests coalesced into the Tal'at movement ("stepping out" or "rising up" in Arabic). Tal'at demanded accountability for these feminicides, as well as recentring anti-patriarchy and economic justice within the national liberation movement.<sup>4</sup> This is one example of "social reproductive struggle," a form of class struggle that emerges not on the shop floor but out of social reproductive conditions—with the aim of transforming those very conditions.

Palestinian social reproductive struggles such as Tal'at, the Unity Intifada protests in 2021, and more, are instructive for thinking about the meaning of decolonization and class struggle today. Such decolonial social reproductive struggles contest the capitalistic undermining of life-making inscribed in the contradiction between production and social reproduction. To do so, they necessarily contest not only the Israeli state and the Palestinian Authority (effectively a comprador parastate), they also demand transforming relationships among Palestinians and the working classes throughout the Mashreq and globally. The Palestine solidarity movement today is a testament to the international reach of

PALESTINE, continued on page 31





Back of a bronze mirror showing a decorative design, from storage at the Seattle Art Museum / photo by Yuan Fang.

# It All Started with a Mirror

## *Questioning How We Assign Sex in Ancient Tombs*

by Yuan Fang, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology

One summer break back home in China, I visited the Henan Museum and found myself drawn to a bronze mirror on display. I had seen many before, but something about this one stopped me. Its delicate designs were beautiful, but I couldn't stop thinking about what it meant. I pictured a Tang dynasty court lady using it for daily grooming—the familiar image often used to represent bronze mirrors as feminine tools tied to beauty. Then I thought of Fu Hao, the Shang dynasty queen and military general from my home province. She didn't fit that traditional idea of femininity. Did she use bronze mirrors, too? Did her husband, King Wu Ding, have one? What kind of designs did they prefer? Could commoners own mirrors? That moment made me start asking different questions. It wasn't just about what bronze mirrors looked like, but what they revealed about people's lives.

In both academic studies and public media, mirrors are often portrayed as feminine objects tied to beauty and domesticity. In archaeological contexts, they're frequently grouped with items like hairpins and toiletry tools—and together, these are used to infer the sex of the deceased, typically assumed to be female. But as I looked deeper, I

realized that my questions needed to go beyond the mirrors themselves. I wanted to understand not only how mirrors were used across different gendered contexts in ancient China, but also how the interpretations we rely on today are shaped by modern assumptions. With support from CSWS, I've explored these questions as part of my dissertation, which examines how bronze mirrors reflected or resisted social categories—and how archaeologists have constructed those categories through their interpretations.

To explore these questions, I built a dataset of 1,411 bronze mirrors excavated across China, drawing mainly from reports published in *Kaogu* ("Archaeology"), a leading Chinese archaeological journal, between 1980 and 2024. I recorded mirror types, decorative patterns, tomb locations, dynastic periods, co-buried objects, and the assigned sex and rank of the deceased. As I worked through these reports, I noticed patterns—not only in the finds but in how they were interpreted. In many cases, the reported sex wasn't based on skeletal or genetic evidence but inferred from the presence of toiletry tools like combs and cosmetic boxes, or personal ornaments. For example, tombs in the 1994

**MIRROR, continued on page 31**

# How to Love an Oyster

## Chemistry, Slippage, and Attachment

by Megan Hayes, PhD Candidate, Environmental Studies Program

It was oysters who taught me about tides. Or, more precisely, it was oysters who taught me to give better attention to the tides. An oyster is a kind of bivalve, and bivalves are a class of aquatic mollusks that have, in the collective poetic descriptive of Wikipedia, “laterally compressed soft bodies,” which are enclosed in calcified exoskeletons made up of a hinged pair of half-shells, or valves.

When they feel safe, an oyster is open to receiving the world. In the right conditions, an oyster will lie in their watery milieu, fixed in place by a tiny attachment created through secretions of their own mineral bioadhesive, and they’ll yawn themselves open. The act of opening through the relaxation of their two shells—a behavior known as “gaping”—is the only discernible behavior of oysters, and it allows them to take in the watery world around them, filtering up to fifty gallons of water per day in search of food.

When stressed, an oyster will fasten their shells closed, which they do with the impressive speed and force of their adductor muscle; a force you’ll have encountered if you’ve ever tried to shuck an oyster. The instinct to close around their soft body is a protective response to changes in water temperature, chemistry, or even noise, but also routinely—as in, twice daily—to the ebb of a tide. When an oyster closes, they hold tight within their shells a gulp of their watery surround. It’s thanks to this marine microcosm held safe inside of their locked valves that oysters can stay closed for so long, around two weeks.

Oysters living in the intertidal zone—either wild or aquacultured on oyster farms—*must* be sensitive to tides. They need to know to close when the water is rhythmically tugged away from their shoreline toward some other high tide elsewhere on the planet. For the oysters, this tidal attunement is a matter of life or death. For Xochitl Bervera, a former prison abolitionist turned oyster farmer I first met in the summer of 2023, the stakes of tidal attunement are perhaps a little less immediate and a little more distributed. But they are vital, nonetheless.

It was a Google search for “queer oyster farmer” that first led me to Xochitl. The Florida farming project Xochitl and her partner, Kung Li, started a few years ago was one of the first results of my Google search, and after poking around on their website for just a few minutes, I was pretty immediately smitten. So, what was there to do but slide into their DMs and ask if we could meet over Zoom? After a few hurricane season delays, we did meet, and I got to learn about Xochitl’s journey from 25 years of prison abolition organizing to oyster farming, and the powerfully principled orientation she and Kung Li bring to their farm work. And then, in the Fall of 2024, I was able to visit Florida, thanks to a CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant. In Apalachicola, I learned more about their work by joining them on the water and spending some time helping on their farm (which is something I do whenever I can, out of a desire to give my time and labor to those I am learning from and with).

Tides are an important part of life for all oyster farmers, but in

Apalachicola, I was especially struck by the way in which attunement to tidal time was a clear intention for Xochitl and Kung Li. They had been drawn to the water out of a reparative desire to move beyond the frenetic grind of capitalism—including the urgency that can keep nonprofit work trapped in the same temporal logic as capitalism. Now, they spend their days oriented by the tides (and so also the moon and the wind) and tending to the water by tending to oysters. In turn, this allows them to tend to the social ecology of Apalachicola, a place that has been shaken by the over-exploitation of oysters and the toxic ripple effects of petro-capitalist extraction, especially in the wake of the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

In our first conversation, Xochitl mentioned a famous quote by Mariame Kaba: “What’s needed are a million experiments.” In Apalachicola, I came to see how this sentiment ties together their abolitionist work and oyster farming. It matters that they tend to their oysters within this framework of experimentation, as a means of finding and prefiguring new worlds and new ways of being with each other. It matters that their tending is oriented by the refusal of harm. And it matters, too, that oysters lead them through their experiments, on a farm called Water is Life. ■

—Megan Hayes received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.



Oyster harvesting off the coast of Apalachicola, Florida / photo provided by Megan Hayes.



Xuzhou and 2016 Hubei reports were labeled female for this reason (Cao et al. 2016; Xuzhou Museum 1994). Similarly, the 2002 Xi'an and 2009 Xuzhou excavation reports identified male tombs based on the presence of weapons (CASS Xi'an Team 2002; Xuzhou Museum 2009). These examples are not outliers—they reflect a broader trend in how gender is constructed through burial interpretation.

This led me to examine how archaeologists describe burials that don't fit expected gender roles. Mirrors are often highlighted in tombs labeled female, reinforcing assumptions about beauty and femininity. But in tombs labeled male—often due to weapons or scholarly tools like brushes and inkstones—mirrors are sometimes present but barely discussed. One example comes from an excavation in Jiangxi: two bronze mirrors were found in a wooden box along with toiletry items and scholarly tools, all buried with an iron blade (JPM 1983). The tomb was identified as male based on the scholarly tools, while the mirrors and grooming items—typically cited as feminine markers—were downplayed. Other cases show similar contradictions. A tomb in Shandong, labeled male, included gold and silver hair ornaments (Jining Regional Bureau of Cultural Relics 1983). One tomb contained both iron weapons and face powder (SHC-SDU & SPICRA 2023). Another held bronze ornaments alongside weapons (Luoyang Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology 2024). Some of these finds involve mirrors, others do not. However, they all reveal the same issue: Ancient material culture doesn't always conform to binary gender categories. These contradictions challenge long-held frameworks and call for more nuanced interpretations.

I keep returning to the question that first came to me in the Henan Museum: How did someone like Fu Hao—a queen, general, and high priestess—use bronze mirrors? Her tomb at Anyang, one of the most significant archaeological discoveries in China, contained weapons, ritual bronzes, and four mirrors. She didn't fit the conventional image of femininity, yet she was buried with objects tied to both masculine power and feminine adornment. For me, what began as a moment of curiosity in front of a museum piece has grown into a broader investigation into how gender, power, and interpretation intersect in the archaeological record. Mirrors may reflect faces—but they also reflect the assumptions of those who study



Yuan Fang

them. And it's those reflections I now study most closely. ■

—Yuan Fang received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.

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"Palestine is a Feminist Struggle" by Urenna Evuleocha, a Feminist Front: Movement Artwork (2023) / image provided by Tali Bitton.

the Palestinian cause as large segments of the global working class, from the peripheries of the world economy to the imperial centers, rally to fight for Palestinian life.

Lastly, we should challenge the notion that Palestinian national liberation entails any form of antisemitism, not only because decolonization at its best could overthrow the very conditions of Israeli exploitation, but also because the international movement for Palestinian liberation is also the most rigorous social movement combatting the forces that create real antisemitism (e.g., a billionaire's Nazi salutes, not student anti-genocide protests<sup>5</sup>). ■

—Tali Bitton received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.

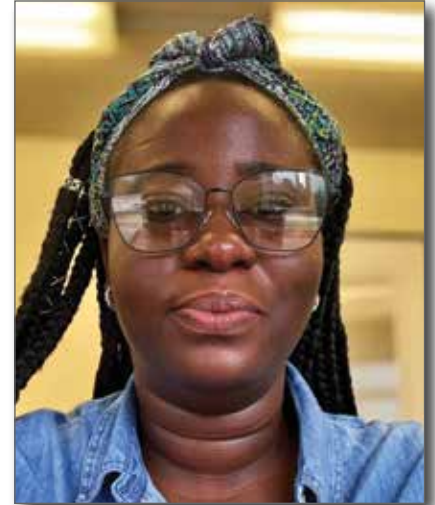
#### NOTES

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# TRUST IN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

## *Evaluating Gender Gap and State Characteristics*

by Ruby Amanda Oboro-Offerie, PhD Student, Department of Sociology



Ruby Amanda Oboro-Offerie

Public trust in institutions has long been a focus of social science research, yet most studies have concentrated on political institutions (Van Der Meer 2010), banks (Fungáčová et al. 2019), and regional (Ron and Crow 2015) and international organizations (Torgler 2008; Hessami 2011). In contrast, limited attention has been paid to trust in women's organizations (e.g., women's rights/empowerment groups or feminist movements), despite their growing role in civil society, global gender advocacy, and transforming social norms and gender power relations (Hassim 2006).

The inquiry into trust in women's organizations intersects with broader debates on global feminism and the contested terrain of contemporary feminist mobilization. While feminist NGOs and women's movements have gained traction across diverse contexts, they also face mounting resistance. In the Global North, right-wing populists and anti-gender critics frame feminist advocacy as a threat to traditional values (Epstein 2001; Khan et al. 2024). In parts of the Global South, feminist actors confront cultural and religious tensions, with scepticism often intensified by their reliance on international funding (Jad 2004). In effect, scholars argue that feminist organizations in Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East, especially

during the UN Decade for Women and the Beijing Conference, have adopted global repertoires that spurred transnational proliferation (Freedman 2007; Alvarez 2000; Ferree and Tripp 2006). These shared commitments are reflected in the structure and rhetoric of women's NGOs from Nairobi to New York, facilitating inter-organizational trust (Çagatay et al. 1986).

Yet scholars caution against assuming that the global diffusion of feminist norms automatically fosters local legitimacy or trust. The coexistence of expanding feminist networks and political backlash highlights the need to examine trust in women's organizations within this dynamic and contested landscape. Along these lines, my study merges for analysis data from the World Values Survey with GDP data from the World Bank and overall democracy from the Varieties of Democracy data.

Based on data from the World Values Survey Wave 7 (2017-2022), trust levels vary considerably, with mean scores ranging from approximately 2.1 to 3.0 on a four-point scale, where higher values indicate greater trust. The top fifteen countries exhibiting the *highest* levels of trust include Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Uruguay, Puerto Rico, China, Tajikistan, Malaysia, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom,

Zimbabwe, Thailand, Ethiopia, and Taiwan. In contrast, the *lowest* levels of trust are observed in Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Iraq, Serbia, Tunisia, Guatemala, Morocco, Romania, and Armenia. A cluster of countries including Mongolia, Ukraine, Greece, Jordan, Peru, Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, Japan, and Russia display *midrange* levels of trust.

These patterns suggest that trust in women's organizations is not uniformly distributed globally, indicating that high levels of trust are not confined to a specific region or economic status; both developing and developed countries appear among the highest and lowest trusters. This heterogeneity highlights the need to further examine how individual and broader national, historical, political, and cultural contexts rather than simple economic development shape public perceptions of women's organizations across countries.

To further explain the observed variation among individuals nested in the various countries, I estimate the role of individual and broader national characteristics in shaping trust in women's organizations using a multilevel framework. At the individual level, I find that, on average, women exhibit significantly higher trust in women's organizations than men, though the magnitude of this



gender gap varies considerably across countries. This outcome is conditional on holding constant factors such as trust in philanthropic organizations (charity and environmental), government institutions (parliament, court, police, political parties, etc.), international organizations (NATO, WTO, WHO, ICC, etc.), media organizations (television and press), age, educational attainment, religious affiliation, residence, and employment status.

At the broader national level, my analysis found that Human Development Index (HDI) and GDP per capita are not significantly associated with trust in women's organizations, and the quality of democracy exhibits only a marginal effect. These results challenge the prevailing assumption in institutional trust scholarship that structural conditions—such as economic development, human capital, and democratic governance—consistently predict trust across all domains. While such macro-level indicators have proven useful in explaining trust in political, state, economic, and media institutions, their limited explanatory power in this context suggests that trust in women's organizations follows a distinct trajectory given its unique role.

In this context, findings obtained from my study lend empirical weight to theoretical arguments from transnational feminist scholarship, which conceptualize trust as a relational and ideologically mediated process. In particular, higher levels of trust among women across countries support the notion that trust in women's organizations reflects both gendered socialization and alignment with globally circulating feminist repertoires. However, the variation in the size of the gender gap and the contextual moderation of trust effects further show that this trust is not universally constituted. Rather, trust emerges through the interplay of shared feminist commitments and their local negotiation, shaped by histories, organizational forms, and the perceived legitimacy of transnational agendas. These findings advance advocacy strategies by demonstrating that trust in women's organizations is not merely a function of structural endowments but is

transnationally constituted, relationally enacted, and contextually differentiated.

■

—Ruby Oboro-Offerie received a 2024 Graduate Student Research Grant for this project.

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# For a Good Cause

## *Chinese and Japanese American Girl Reserve Fundraising in 1930s Portland*

By Olivia G. Wing, PhD Candidate, Department of History

In the late 1930s, Portland's Chinese Girl Reserves and Japanese Girl Reserves each hosted a variety of fund-raising events to support causes of their choosing. Fundraisers were not unusual for a service organization sponsored by the YWCA. In the late 1930s, however, the Chinese and Japanese Girl Reserves each chose to sponsor seemingly diverging causes: war relief for Chinese refugees and summer camp, respectively. While Chinese American girls chose to signal political solidarity with their families' homeland, Japanese Americans used their fundraisers to participate in summer camp—a pastime increasingly considered a quintessential experience among American youth. Despite their apparent differences, however, each cause signaled the kind of girlhood citizenship both Chinese and Japanese American girls strove to embody.

My research contextualizes these choices amid the background of Asian American history and the history of American girlhood. By the 1930s, the United States was several decades into the period of Asian Exclusion. Japan's invasion of China in 1937 marked a turning point in international relations as the US identified Japan as a potential threat and China as a sympathetic nation in an impending global conflict. The late 1930s, therefore, represents a moment in which Chinese Americans' and Japanese Americans' perceived perpetual foreignness and assumed ties to their community's nation of origin held the possibility to grant certain opportunities for the former and posed real threats for



Photograph by Gladys Gilbert in *The Oregonian* (April 18, 1937), from the Lewis & Clark Special Collections, YWCA Collection / image provided by Olivia Wing.

the latter. These global events provide context for the stakes of community-facing representation and fundraising that Girl Reserves engaged in.

When Chinese American girls spilled into the streets of Portland to sell paper flowers for Chinese war victims, they participated in a rising trend among American and British girl groups to engage in matters of global relations

as future maternal, service-minded, and educated women.<sup>1</sup> However, the Chinese Girl Reserves acted not just as representatives of US empire, as other white American Girl Reserves did, but specifically as representatives for their community's nation of origin. Their fundraising coincides with the history of "bowl of rice" fundraisers for China wartime aid made popular by California and New York Chinatown associations



and supported by US politicians in the late 1930s.<sup>2</sup> The large-scale parades and banquets that characterized these fundraisers never materialized in Portland, but the paper flower fundraiser hosted in both Portland and Salem demonstrates that Oregon participated in this transnational humanitarian movement. Furthermore, in Portland it was specifically a girls' organization that made strides to join this movement. In doing so, the Chinese Girl Reserves demonstrated their simultaneous commitment to American and Chinese American internationalism, as well as modern gender expectations for political engagement, by weighing in on these global events via fundraising.

Meanwhile, the Japanese American Girl Reserves defined dual cultural citizenship by participating in local efforts to make camping more accessible for Portland girls while also representing a Japanese cultural inheritance divorced from Japan's modern politics. Their most popular fundraiser was a tea where they exhibited Japanese artifacts, performed traditional dance and music, and served guests in kimonos (see photo). These events framed their performance as odes to the Japan of their first-generation ancestors, eschewing their connections with a Japan of the present and using their performance of culture in service of their future in the US via American youth culture. In Portland, and across the US, the interwar period marked the increased availability of the American summer camp for girls; prior to this period, camps were largely reserved for white boys from urban areas.<sup>3</sup> In Portland this transformation was expedited by the YWCA's purchase in 1937 of a designated summer camp for girls, Camp Westwind. The Japanese Girl Reserves' tea party fundraised for equipment to furnish the newly purchased camp with facilities, boating dock, and canoes—amenities that all participating Portland Girl Reserves, including Chinese and Japanese American Girl Reserves, enjoyed for a 10-day summer retreat in the summer of 1938.<sup>4</sup> Japanese American girls' fund-raising signaled an investment in this local project, as well as the American cultural



Olivia Wing

phenomenon of the summer camp, at a time in which their community's loyalty came under increasing scrutiny by West Coast communities and the US government.

Girls had limited means by which to affect large-scale change, but via youth organizations, they could show their local communities the values they intended to champion as women. This small window into Portland fundraisers in 1937–1938 illustrates that Chinese and Japanese American girls pursued different avenues—both, however, anchored by global politics and cultural movements at home. Their fundraising causes demonstrate the precarious place of Asian immigrants during times of global upheaval, as well as the actions girls took to chart their futures as citizens in the pre-war era. ■

—Olivia Wing received a 2024 CSWS Graduate Writing Completion Fellowship for this project.

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<sup>3</sup> Paris, Leslie. *Children's Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> "Camp Dates Announced for Girl Reserves," *Girl Reserves Journal*, April 25, 1938. Girl Reserves published dates for the summer season following a drive to fund equipment and member attendance. Portland's Chinese and Japanese Girl Reserves participated and ranked in the fundraising competition.

## New CSWS Fellowship Launched

A new CSWS Faculty Research Fellowship provides University of Oregon faculty with one course release for a term of reduced or no teaching to pursue work on any aspect of the study of women and/or gender. Career and tenure-track faculty are encouraged to submit fellowship applications for research-based and creative projects from across the disciplines.

Up to two CSWS Faculty Research Fellowships will be offered each year, one of which gives preference to a tenured faculty member at the rank of associate professor or full professor. Fellows who take the course buy-out option (up to \$20,000, not including OPE) will continue to receive their regular pay during the course release term. Fellowships may also be taken as summer research funds (up to \$15,000).

CSWS Faculty Research Fellows are expected to conduct research during the fellowship term, give a Work-in-Progress presentation and an off-campus public presentation during the fellowship year, and participate in other CSWS activities.

In addition, faculty members can still apply for our standard CSWS Faculty Research Grants (up to \$6,000) by completing the fellowship form.

All faculty award applications are due Monday, October 27, 2025. Fellowship and grant award funds are for use from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

For complete fellowship guidelines and application form link, go to [csws.uoregon.edu/faculty-funding](https://csws.uoregon.edu/faculty-funding). ■

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ACADEMIC YEAR

## Affiliates win UO Distinguished Teaching Awards

Four CSWS faculty affiliates—Lana Lopesi, Adell Amos, Corrine Bayerl, and Amanda Wojick—were selected for 2025 Distinguished Teaching Awards, which recognize exceptional teaching at the University of Oregon.

The Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching, which recognizes early career excellence, went to Lopesi, an assistant professor of Indigenous, Race and Ethnic Studies. Since joining the university in 2022, Lopesi has created five courses and developed the department's first study abroad class, strengthening Pacific Islander Studies at the UO.

Amos, Clayton R. Hess professor of law and CSWS Advisory Board member, received the Herman Faculty Achievement Award, which honors long-standing excellence in teaching and is the university's highest teaching honor. With recent changes to the legal landscape at a national level, nominators said Amos has expertly adapted to meet the moment and prepare students for the future.

Bayerl and Wojick each received a Herman Award for Specialized Pedagogy, which recognizes significant expertise in a particular area of teaching.

Bayerl, a senior instructor in the Clark Honors College, has been with the university since 2012. She has taught at every level of the honors college, from helping new students through their first college course to mentoring seniors working to complete their thesis.

Since joining the College of Design in 2001, professor Wojick has made significant contributions to the university both inside and outside the classroom. In her art classes, Wojick highlights artists with diverse backgrounds and styles and includes thoughtful projects and course materials.

## Affiliates named 2025-26 OHC Faculty Fellows

Four CSWS faculty affiliates were awarded 2025-26 Faculty Research Fellowships from the Oregon Humanities Center at the University of Oregon. OHC Research Fellowships provide faculty with one course release so they can have a term free of teaching to pursue full-time research as part of a community of scholars. Of the eleven fellowships awarded, the following went to CSWS affiliates: Stacy Alaimo, English: "Dissolving Species: Ocean Acidification, Extinction, Mediation" (Provost's Senior Humanist Fellowship); Anita Chari, Political Science: "Traumacracy: Towards a Constructive Politics" (Oregon Humanities Center VPRI Completion Award); Priscilla Peña Ovalle, Cinema Studies: "Hair Moves: Production and Performance in Music Videos and Commercials" (College of Arts and Sciences Humanities Research Fellowship); and Cera Smith, Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies: "Vivified Viscerality: Bioscience and the Black Interior in US Black Literature and Sculpture" (Ernest G. Moll Faculty Research Fellowship in Literary Studies).

In addition, alternates for the research fellowships included the following CSWS faculty affiliates: Lana Lopesi, Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies, "Imagining Global Samoan Subjectivities After Diaspora"; and Leah Lowthorp, Anthropology and Folklore and Public Culture, "Hashtag Folklore and CRISPR Gene Editing: Biotechnological Humor and Anxiety in the Twittersphere."

## Affiliates win OVPRI Outstanding Research Awards

CSWS affiliate Lana Lopesi, assistant professor of Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies, has won the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation's 2025 Early Career Award—UO's highest award for early career faculty. It celebrates an emerging and significant record of scholarship and research on our campus.

In addition, OVPRI presented its 2025 Faculty Research Awards to

support scholarship, creative projects, and quantitative or qualitative research from all disciplinary backgrounds. Among the nine award recipients were the following CSWS faculty affiliates: Marjorie Celona, Associate Professor, Creative Writing Program; Maria Fernanda Escallon, Associate Professor, Anthropology; Alisa Freedman, Professor, East Asian Languages and Literatures; and Yvette Saavedra, Associate Professor, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

The Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation presents the Outstanding Research Awards to highlight notable research activities taking place at the University of Oregon.

## Alaimo appointed to a named professorship in English

CSWS affiliate Stacy Alaimo has been appointed to the Barbara and Carlisle Moore Professorship in English, one of the Department of English's two departmentally held endowed chair positions. Also an Environmental Studies core faculty member, Alaimo organized the May 2025 UO symposium, "Blue Visions: Thinking with Ocean Ecologies across the Arts and Humanities." Her most recent work is *The Abyss Stares Back: Encounters with Deep-Sea Life* (2025, University of Minnesota Press).

## DeRose awarded National Science Foundation creativity extension

CSWS Advisory Board member Vickie DeRose, professor and head of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, has received a 2024 creativity extension from the National Science Foundation for research into the structure and function of ribonucleic acid (RNA) through its interactions with metal ions. According to NSF, these rare extensions offer "the most creative investigators an extended opportunity to attack adventurous, 'high-risk' opportunities in the same general research area, but not necessarily covered by the original/current award." DeRose is an associate member of the Materials Science Institute and Institute of Molecular Biology at UO.



Vickie DeRose

## Guillemin named to National Academy of inventors

CSWS affiliate Karen Guillemin, professor of biology, has been named to the National Academy of Inventors, a designation that recognizes visionaries and innovators whose technologies brought, or aspire to bring, a real impact on society. Guillemin joins a select group of 162 academic inventors welcomed by the academy this year. Senior members are active faculty members and scientists who have demonstrated success in patents, licensing, and commercialization that tackle the world's pressing issues. As a researcher in the Institute of Molecular Biology, Guillemin pioneered the germ-free zebrafish model, building on the UO's four-decade legacy as a leading center for zebrafish research.



Karen Guillemin

## Heinz wins history prizes

CSWS affiliate Annelise Heinz, associate professor of history, has won three prizes for her article, "Separated but far from alone: Forging Lesbian Networks in the 1970s–1980s," co-authored with Cameron Blevins in the *Pacific Historical Review* special issue, "New Directions in Feminist History"

**HIGHLIGHTS, continued on page 38**



# CSWS Congratulates 2025–26 Research Grant Award Winners

The Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS) awarded \$80,000 for scholarship, research, and creative work on women and gender at the University of Oregon for 2025–26. A total of 17 grants were given to 12 graduate students and four faculty members.

Anthropology doctoral candidate Malvya Chintakindi won the prestigious Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship for her project, “Pursuing the ‘Good Life’: Intersections of Caste, Class, and Gender in Urban Slums of India”. The Jane Grant Fellow receives a \$27,000 stipend and UO student health insurance for the academic year. In addition, the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI) provides tuition remission for the academic year.

As noted in her abstract, Chintakindi’s dissertation research “examines how Dalit women workers in India’s informal labor sector envision and pursue their aspirations for a ‘good life’ while navigating multiple forms of discrimination. Dalits, historically known as ‘untouchables’ and excluded from India’s caste hierarchy, face severe societal discrimination, with women experiencing heightened vulnerability due to their gender.”

Through ethnographic fieldwork in Hyderabad’s urban slums, including participant observation and interviews spanning 50 women workers, Chintakindi’s dissertation project investigates “how the intersection of gender, caste, and class shapes these women’s daily experiences, dreams, and capabilities. Despite facing severe societal stigma and earning less than half of men’s wages for similar work, these women demonstrate remarkable resilience in crafting futures for themselves and their families.”

Chintakindi’s work aims to reveal how—despite significant constraints—Dalit women maintain dignity and pursue opportunities. While existing research often portrays these women as passive victims, her project “reveals them as active agents who develop sophisticated strategies to navigate urban spaces and social barriers.”

CSWS has awarded the Jane Grant Fellowship to graduate students at the University of Oregon since 1983. This highly competitive dissertation award supports projects from a range of disciplines on topics related to women and gender. The award is open to eligible UO graduate students who are ABD and spend the award year writing their dissertation.



Malvya Chintakindi

In addition, CSWS awards summer Graduate Writing Completion Fellowships to support one or more doctoral students who are in the early stages of their dissertation and who were runners-up for the Jane Grant Fellowship. This year, two writing completion fellowships were awarded to doctoral candidates Jinsun Yang in sociology and Olivia Wing in history.

Two research awards are eligible for funding from the Giustina Fund for Women in the Northwest. In 1997, CSWS received a large private gift from Mazie Giustina to promote and spotlight research on women’s lives in the Pacific Northwest. This year’s projects highlight the impacts of hostile architectural design on homeless individuals in Eugene and the history of Asian youth culture in the Pacific Northwest.

The following is a complete list of CSWS grant awardees and their projects:

## Jane Grant Dissertation Fellow

- Malvya Chintakindi, Anthropology, “Pursuing the ‘Good Life’: Intersections of Caste, Class, and Gender in Urban Slums of India.”

## Graduate Writing Completion Fellows

- Olivia Wing, History, “Common and Contested Ground: Chinese and Japanese American Youth Culture in the Pacific Northwest, 1920s-1960s” (Giustina Fund).
- Jinsun Yang, Sociology, “Decolonizing Sex-Segregation in Sports: Global Gender Policing and LGBTQ+ Sports Activism in South Korea.”

## Graduate Student Research Awards

- Precious Adejumbi, Anthropology, “Negotiating Health and Gender: Women’s Experiences of Endometriosis in Nigeria.”
- Tari Azebi, Global Studies, “Feminist Environmental Justice in Practice: Women as Agents of Change in the Niger Delta’s Oil Conflict.”
- Kaito Campos de Novais, Anthropology, “Crear Arte, Cultivar Lucha: The Politics of Art and Resistance among Queer and Trans Latine Immigrants.”
- Gloria Macedo Janto, Romance Languages, “New Methods of Reading Indigenous Latin America: Andean Women’s Resistance in the Discourses of Political Violence in Peru.”
- Nicolette Molina, Psychology, “Navigating Structural Inequities: Rethinking Self-injurious Thoughts and Behaviors in Postpartum Populations.”
- Ogbonnaya Okoro, Folklore and Public Culture, “The Impacts of Colonialism on Changing Gender Relations in Igbo land through the Lens of Folklore and Storytelling.”
- Nishat Parvez, School of Journalism and Communication, “The ‘Cha’ (Tea) Connection: Evaluating Gender, Religion, and Media Impacts in Bangladesh’s Informal Political Space.”
- Sanjula Rajat, Philosophy, “The Colonial Politics of Impurity: Anti-Trans Politics in India and the Consolidation of a Hindu Nation-State.”
- Bentolhoda Sobhani, Law, “That Night.”
- Yui Yamada, Asian Studies, “Same-Sex Love among Girls under the Censorship and Nationalism in Wartime Japan: Analysis of the Readers’ Column of a Girls’ Magazine.”

## Faculty Research Awards

- Joyce Chen, Music, “Cherchez la femme: Music by Baroque Women Composers.”
- Solmaz Kive, Interior Architecture, “Gendered Dimensions of Hostile Design” (Giustina Fund).
- Audrey Lucero, Education Studies, “Why Can You Just Be a ‘Nice’ Teacher?”
- Lanie Millar, Romance Languages, “Gender and Empire in Contemporary Lusophone Culture.” ■

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ACADEMIC YEAR

## HIGHLIGHTS, continued from page 36

(Vol. 93, No. 3, Summer 2024, pp. 417–444). The awards include the 2025 Barbara Kanner Award from the Western Association of Women Historians, the 2025 Koontz Award from the Pacific Historical Review, and the 2025 Berkshire Conference of Women Historians Article Prize.

### Kelp-Stebbins wins UO Presidential Fellowship

CSWS affiliate Kate Kelp-Stebbins, an associate professor of English and comics studies, received a Presidential Fellowship in the Humanities Award for 2025–26. According to the Provost's Office, the award recognizes Kelp-Stebbins' outstanding achievements and supports her work on comics in journalism and human rights. The UO President's office "supports these fellowships recognize highly productive faculty in artistic and humanistic fields who have established a distinguished record of creative and/or scholarly accomplishment." The open-purpose award permits scholars to put the significant funding to its best use, depending upon where they are in their progress on a given project.



Kate Kelp-Stebbins

### Millán wins book awards

CSWS affiliate Isabel Millán, associate professor of women's, gender, and sexuality studies, has won several awards for her book, *Coloring into Existence: Queer of Color Worldmaking in Children's Literature* (2023, New York University Press). In addition to winning two awards in 2024, the book recently received a 2025 ChLA Book Award from the Children's Literature Association, and a 2025 National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies Book Award. The work argues that queer picture books with main characters of color can disrupt structures of power in both literature and real life.

### Parvez wins ICA award

CSWS graduate student affiliate Nishat Parvez, doctoral candidate in the School of Journalism and Communication, has received a Top Student Paper Award at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, held in Denver in June 2025. The award was for a paper titled "Diplomatic Narratives and Strategic Communication: A Textual Analysis of US Embassy Press Releases on Bangladesh's 2024 National Election."

"I'm grateful for the continued support and intellectual community at CSWS, which has played an important role in shaping my research," said Parvez.

### Pulido elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

CSWS affiliate Laura Pulido, Collins Chair and professor of geography and Indigenous, race, and ethnic studies, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious honorary societies. Pulido is a qualitative social scientist who works at the intersection of geography and critical ethnic studies, especially Chicana studies.

### Sokolowski named USA Today Woman of the Year for Oregon

CSWS affiliate Susan Sokolowski, professor in the College of Design, was named USA Today's 2025 Woman of the Year for Oregon. An innovator in sports product design, Sokolowski is listed as an inventor on more than 100 domestic and foreign patents, many of them belonging to Nike, the company she worked for from 1998 to 2016. The inventions range from footwear

components to moisture management garments and sports bra cups. She has more than 30 years of experience in performance sporting goods for women and diverse and underserved populations.

### Stephen awarded Stanford Humanities Center fellowship

CSWS affiliate Lynn Stephen, Philip H. Knight Chair and distinguished professor of anthropology, has been named an external fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center. Selected from more than 325 applicants, Stephen will complete a book on transborder Mesoamerican Indigenous territories.

### Thorsson on finalist list for Oregon Book Awards

CSWS affiliate Courtney Thorsson, associate professor of English, is a finalist for the 2025 Oregon Book Awards' Frances Fuller Victor Award in General nonfiction for her book *The Sisterhood: How a Network of Black Women Writers Changed American Culture* (2025, Columbia University Press). The book also received an Honorable Mention for the Modern Language Association's William Sanders Scarborough Prize, which recognizes "an outstanding scholarly study of black American literature or culture published the previous year."

### Valiani edits special issue of *Science, Technology, and Society* journal

CSWS affiliate Arafat A. Valiani, associate professor of history, has edited a special issue of *Science, Technology and Society*, titled "Technopolitics in South Asia, China, and South Africa." Individual articles are already published online, with the entire 2025 journal issue currently in press. Valiani says the issue has several articles that may be of interest to CSWS affiliates, one of which address facial recognition payment technology and gender in China.

### Weise receives NEH grant for guest worker history research

CSWS affiliate Julie Weise, associate professor of history, has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. Her project, "Guest Worker: Lives across Borders in an Age of Prosperity, 1919–75," examines the experiences of guest workers in the middle of the twentieth century, focused on three cases—Mexicans in the US, Spaniards in France and Malawians in South Africa.



Julie Weise

### Tenure and Promotion

CSWS is delighted to extend congratulations to those members of the UO community who have received tenure and promotion in 2025, and especially to faculty in our CSWS community: Faith Barter, Associate Professor, English; Tanya Gupta, Associate Teaching Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Masami Kawai, Associate Professor, Cinema Studies; Leah Middlebrook, Professor, Comparative Literature; Isabel Millán, Associate Professor, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Woan Foong Wong, Associate Professor, Economics; and Kristin Yarris, Professor, Global Studies.

### Research Interest Groups

CSWS awarded grant support to four new and three renewing Research Interest Groups (RIGs) spanning the social sciences, humanities, law, and education for the 2025–26 academic year. These small grants allow faculty and graduate students to organize interdisciplinary groups that explore and examine the complex nature of gender identities and inequalities. RIGs help to fulfill feminist research, education, networking, and collaboration needs



# Thank You to Our 2024–25 Donors

**T**he Center for the Study of Women in Society's mission gives scholars the support they need to make a difference in the world. You can join our legacy of feminist research, teaching, activism, and community by donating today. Your gift will support the transformative work of intersectional feminist research and enrich the UO community by bringing to campus leaders who can speak to the ways in which gender, race, class, ability, and sexual orientation intersect and inform our vision of social justice.

Mail a check payable to "CSWS—UO Foundation" to: University of Oregon Foundation, 1720 E. 13th Avenue, Suite 410, Eugene, OR 97403-2253. For more information about giving to CSWS, please contact us at 541-346-5015 or go to [csws.uoregon.edu](http://csws.uoregon.edu). To make a major bequest, please contact the UO Foundation directly at 541-346-2113.

For the first time, CSWS participated in Ducks Give 2025, the University of Oregon's annual day of giving to raise funds for the CSWS Undergraduate STEAM Summer Fellowship (see article this issue). With your donations, we unlocked a \$2,500 Beaumont Challenge gift and raised more than \$4,000 for undergraduate research on gender at the UO. We thank you, our 2024–25 donors, for your ongoing support of our mission:

**Leah N. Adams-Schoen and Sarah J. Adams**  
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**Leah W. Middlebrook**  
**Erin E. Moore and Christopher E. White**  
**Paul W. Peppis and Libby Wadsworth**  
**Lawrence S. Rosenstone and Li Yang-Rosenstone**  
**Ellen K. Scott**  
**Aye Thuzar**  
**Jenee J. Wilde**

on campus by providing support for reading groups, guest speakers, workshops, symposia, and more.

New RIGs for 2025–26 include:

- Considering Contemporary Women's Studies and Black Studies Contributions to Postfoundational Methodological Thought in the Social Sciences (Lisa Mazzei, Education Studies, [mazzei@uoregon.edu](mailto:mazzei@uoregon.edu))—a reading group to discuss contemporary feminist philosophy of science and social science, Black studies and Black feminist theories of inquiry, and anti-oppressive scholarship.
- Feminist Science and Technology Studies (Olivia Matsuoka, English, [onm@uoregon.edu](mailto:onm@uoregon.edu))—a reading group for literature, comics, digital humanities projects, video games, and other texts related to feminist science and technology studies.
- Gender, Nation, and Mediterranean Mobilities (Michelle McKinley, Law, [michelle@uoregon.edu](mailto:michelle@uoregon.edu))—a networking and collaborative space for scholars focused on themes of gender, race, and mobility in the Mediterranean, including reading discussions, works-in-progress talks, and invited speaker panels.
- Pedagogistas: Feminist Pedagogies Lab (Kristin Yarris, WGSS, [keyarris@uoregon.edu](mailto:keyarris@uoregon.edu))—a space for sharing resources, collective support, and

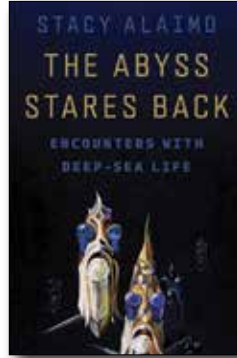
collaborative knowledge production through cowritten articles and podcasting.

Renewing RIGs for 2025–26 include:

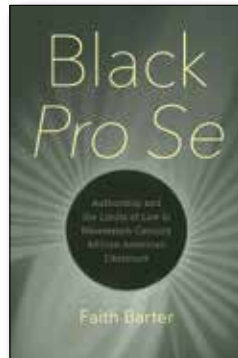
- Decolonial, Feminist Futures of Comics Studies (Anu Sugathan, English, [asugatha@uoregon.edu](mailto:asugatha@uoregon.edu))—a reading group to discuss texts that support an inquiry into the future of comics studies through antiracist, feminist, ecocritical, and interdisciplinary approaches, as well as hosting guest speakers and panels in collaboration with community partners.
- Decolonial Philosophies Collaboratory (Sanjula Rajat, Philosophy, [srajat@uoregon.edu](mailto:srajat@uoregon.edu))—a collaborative space for workshopping graduate student research on decolonial feminism(s), as well as organizing a trans-national interdisciplinary conference on the theme of "Decolonization and Global Justice."
- Intersectional Theory Primer for Psychology Students (Gretchen Nihill, psychology, [gnihill@uoregon.edu](mailto:gnihill@uoregon.edu))—a reading group and guest speakers to provide a strong theoretical foundation in intersectionality frameworks within subdisciplines of psychology.

Please reach out to coordinators to learn more about how to participate. RIG applications are due by May 1 for the following academic year. For more information, go to [csws.uoregon.edu/rig-funding](http://csws.uoregon.edu/rig-funding). ■

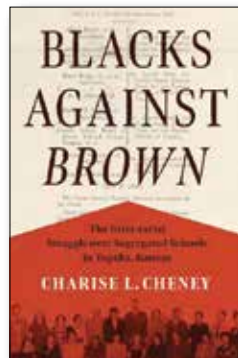
***The Abyss Stares Back: Encounters with Deep-Sea Life***, by Stacy Alaimo (University of Minnesota Press, 2025, 256 pages). From the publisher: “As we see the catastrophic effects of the Anthropocene proliferate, advanced technologies also grant us greater access to the furthest reaches of the world’s oceans, facilitating the discovery of countless new species. Sorting through the implications of this strange paradox, Stacy Alaimo explores the influence this newfound intimacy with the deep sea might have on our broader relationship to the nonhuman world. *The Abyss Stares Back* analyzes a diverse range of scientific, literary, and artistic accounts of deep-sea exploration, including work from the naturalist William Beebe and the artist Else Bostelmann, as well as results of the Census of Marine Life that began at the turn of the twenty-first century. As she focuses on oft-overlooked creatures of the deep, such as tubeworms, hatchetfish, siphonophores, and cephalopods, which are typically cast as ‘alien,’ Alaimo shows how depictions of the deep seas have been enmeshed in long colonial histories and racist constructions of a threatening abyss.”



***Black Pro Se: Authorship and the Limits of Law in Nineteenth-Century African American Literature***, by Faith Barter (University of North Carolina Press, 2025, 236 pages). From the publisher: “Black thinkers in the antebellum United States grappled with what it meant to inhabit a place, a history, and a violent legal regime. In newspapers and pamphlets, political speeches, and fiction, Black writers persistently imagined alternative and liberatory legal futures. In reading these writers as architects of legal possibility, Faith Barter mobilizes the coincidental intimacy of prose and the legal term *pro se*, which refers to litigants who represent themselves in court. The book studies multiple literary genres—short stories, novels, freedom narratives, speeches, confessions, periodicals, and pamphlets—alongside legal historical treatises, trial transcripts, judicial opinions, and statutes. Barter juxtaposes nineteenth-century law and literature to show how Black writers counterintuitively used legal forms to reimagine their own relationships to time and place.”

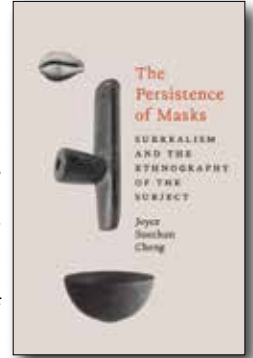


***Blacks Against Brown: The Intra-racial Struggle over Segregated Schools in Topeka, Kansas***, by Charise L. Cheney (University of North Carolina Press, 2024, 270 pages). From the publisher: “*Blacks Against Brown* documents the intra-racial conflict among Black Topekans over the city’s segregated schools. Black resistance to school integration challenges conventional narratives about Brown by highlighting community concerns about economic and educational opportunities for Black educators and students and Black residents’ pride in all-Black schools. This history of the local story behind Brown v. Board contributes to a literature that provides a fuller and more complex perspective on African Americans and their relationship to Black education and segregated schools during the Jim Crow era.”

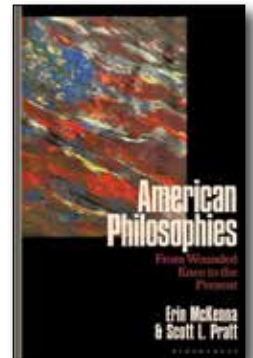


***The Persistence of Masks: Surrealism and the Ethnography of the Subject***, by Joyce Suechun Cheng (University of Minnesota Press, 2025, 256 pages). From the publisher: “In interwar Paris, the encounter between surrealism

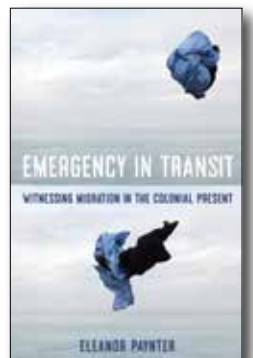
and the nascent discipline of ethnology led to an intellectual project now known as ‘ethnographic surrealism.’ In *The Persistence of Masks*, Joyce Suechun Cheng considers the ethnographic dimension of the surrealist movement in its formative years through a close look at the reviews *Documents* (1929–30) and *Minotaure* (1933–39) as well as the surrealist writer-turned-ethnographer Michel Leiris’s ethnography of possession. Analyzing surrealist aesthetic criticism, art, poetry, and field research in terms of a common interest in marginalized modes of subjectivity, Cheng argues that the surrealists used the figures of the mask, the veil, the hand, and the hat to radically reconceive the subject as nonhegemonic, nonanthropocentric, and feminine-identified.”



***American Philosophies: From Wounded Knee to the Present, 2nd Ed.***, by Erin McKenna and Scott Pratt (Bloomsbury Academic, 2025, 448 pages). From the publisher: “*American Philosophies* offers the first historically framed introduction to the tradition of American philosophy and its contemporary engagement with the world. Born out of the social and political turmoil of the Civil War, American philosophy was a means of dealing with conflict and change. In the turbulence of the 21st century, this remains as relevant as ever. Placing the work of present-day American philosophers in the context of a history of resistance, through a philosophical tradition marked by a commitment to pluralism, fallibilism, and liberation, this book tells the story of philosophies shaped by major events and illustrates the ways in which philosophy is relevant to lived experience. The 2nd edition of this book presents a survey of the historical development of American philosophy, as well as coverage of key contemporary issues in America including race theory, feminism, gender, Indigenous peoples, philosophies of disability, and environmentalism. In particular, it contains new coverage of Covid, the election of Donald Trump, American religious thought, and immigration history. It also takes seriously the dramatic political and social machinations of the past seven years and engages with emerging voices and traditions.”



***Emergency in Transit: Witnessing Migration in the Colonial Present***, by Eleanor Paynter (University of California Press, 2024, 296 pages). From the publisher: “*Emergency in Transit* responds to the crisis framings that dominate migration debates in the global north. This capacious, interdisciplinary study reformulates Europe’s so-called ‘migrant crisis’ from a sudden disaster to a site of contested witnessing, where competing narratives threaten, uphold, or reimagine migrant rights. Focusing on Italy, a crucial port of arrival, Eleanor Paynter draws together testimonials from ethnographic research—alongside literature, film, and visual art—to interrogate the colonial, racial logics that inform emergency responses to migration. She also examines the media, discourses, policies, and practices that shape lived experiences of migration well beyond international borders. Centering the witnessing of Black Africans in Italy, *Emergency in Transit* reveals how this emergency apparatus operates and posits a vision of mobility that refutes the notions of crisis so often imposed on those who cross the Mediterranean Sea.”





# \$50,035 Raised

with 69 donors

DuckFunder  
Campaign



\$50,000 Goal

**\$97,000 Calderwood Foundation Grant**

## ***50th Fundraising Impact: New Undergraduate Initiatives***

### **Initiative 1: CSWS Calderwood Undergraduate Seminars in Public Writing**

The CSWS Calderwood Seminars are designed to teach undergraduate students how to deeply listen to conflicting points of view so they can translate complex, specialized knowledge on women and intersectional gender issues for broad audiences across ideological divides.

### **Initiative 2: CSWS Undergraduate STEAM Summer Research Fellowships**

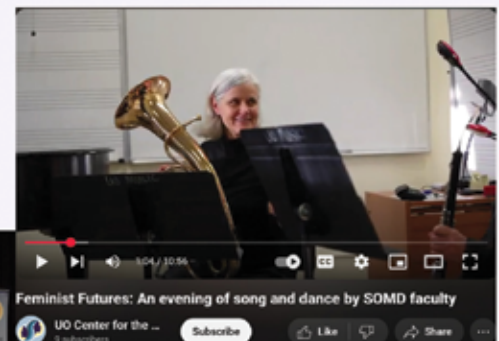
Our undergraduate fellowship will create opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaborations among science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) fields on campus and to enhance pathways for under-represented students in STEAM to succeed. CSWS provides grant funding for STEAM-field undergraduates and faculty mentors to partner on cross-disciplinary summer projects that support our mission.

## ***CSWS 50th Anniversary on YouTube***

*"We invited our alumni to give testimonials about the impact of CSWS for their lives and their careers, and to answer the question: What do Feminist Futures mean to you?"*

***Check out the CSWS  
YouTube channel for event  
highlights and amazing  
reflections on our 50 years  
of supporting feminist  
research and scholarship at  
the University of Oregon.***

Scan the QR code:





# 2024-25 EVENTS

**O** UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON

**A DECOLONIAL READING:  
THE CASE OF LATIN  
AMERICAN ANTIGONAS**

Friday | October 18th | 3:00pm - 5:00pm  
182 Little

Guest speaker  
**PROF. MIRA FRADINGER**  
Yale University

Thank you to  
our sponsors:

**Darshana Mini**

"Madakarani as Screen  
Pleasure: Scandal and  
Soft-Porn Imaginary"

In this talk, Professor Mini  
explores soft-porn's  
invocation of the figure of  
madakarani (sex siren) to  
chart out different spectral  
relations built through her  
presence as an embodiment  
of screen pleasures.

25  
October

*Outliers and Outlaws*

**DOCUMENTARY  
SCREENING AND  
Q&A**

Feb. 2nd | 2pm

Straub Hall, Room 183

1825 Oaks St., Eugene, OR

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

*Community  
Happy Hour  
& Open House*

FRIDAY, FEB. 14, 2025  
5-7 PM  
330 HENDRICKS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

**Margaryta  
Golovchenko**

The History of Art and  
Architecture

**WEDNESDAY  
FEB. 19, 2025  
12-1 PM**

330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

CSWS Noon Talks

**Gender as Target**

US 2024 Elections  
and Aftermath

**Panelists**  
Allison Gask, Political Science  
Astra Chari, Political Science  
Kaito Campos de Novais, Anthropology  
Brennan Fitzgerald, Chemistry and Biochemistry

Teach-in | February 28, 2025  
4-6 PM | Straub 145

CSWS Noon Talks

**Telling the Stories of  
Vietnamese Women Educators  
and Their New Fields**

**WEDNESDAY  
FEB 26, 2025  
12 PM**

**PROF. ALISA FREEDMAN**  
CSWS Faculty Research Fellow

CSWS Noon Talks

**Julie  
Weise**

Wednesday  
March 12, 2025

"Rethinking the  
Masculinization of the  
Postwar Labor Migrant"

330 Hendricks Hall

CSWS Research Interest Group Funding

**RIG Info Session**

Wed. April 9, 2025

3-4 pm  
Hendricks Hall | Room 330  
University of Oregon

**MADISON FOWLER & MOE GÁMEZ**

"Remembering  
Queer and Trans of  
Color Resistance at  
Stonewall National  
Monument"

CSWS NOON TALK  
APRIL 11, 2025  
330 HENDRICKS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

**MALVYA  
CHINTAKINDI**

"In Pursuit of 'Good Life':  
Gender, Caste, and Class in  
India's Shadow Economy"

12 PM Wednesday, April 16  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

CSWS NOON TALK

CENTER FOR THE  
STUDY OF WOMEN  
IN SOCIETY

**Spring  
Happy  
Hour**  
& Open House

FRI APRIL 18, 2025  
5-8 PM

330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon  
csws.oregon.edu  
for more information

CSWS Noon Talks

**"The Case of the Missing  
Clitoris: Dis/attending to  
Sex and Pleasure in  
Healthcare"**

April 25, 2025  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

Bex MacFady

SAMMY PLEZIA

**"GIRLS SHOULD BE LIKE THIS":  
Impacts of Beauty Standards on  
Adolescent Girls in Goa, India"**

APRIL 30, 2025  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

CSWS NOON TALKS

**GRETCHEN  
NIHILL**

"Signaling Safety for  
Women of Color:  
The Importance of  
Precision in Addressing  
Intersecting Identity  
Threats"

**MAY 21, 2025**  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

CSWS NOON TALKS

CSWS Noon Talks

**Yuan Fang**

"Mirror, Mirror, Who Held  
the Power After All?:  
Rethinking Sex and  
Gender in Ancient China  
through the Lens of  
Bronze Mirrors"

Friday, May 30, 2025  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

CSWS NOON TALKS

**RHIANNON  
LINDGREN**

"Love and  
Reproductive  
Struggles:  
A Feminist  
Politics of Care"

June 4, 2025  
330 Hendricks Hall  
University of Oregon

**SAVE**

**JUNE 9**

RELAX, VISIT, AND HAVE  
A MEAL & DRINK ON US!

CSWS  
END-OF-YEAR  
CELEBRATION

**THE**

**DATE**

**OAKSHIRE  
BREWING**  
207 Madison Street