

Keeping You Connected To The  
Humanities And Each Other

# 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES  
**CENTER for the HUMANITIES**







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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues and Friends of the Center,

As you may know, the 2019-2020 academic year marked my second as director of the Center. Though the last couple of months have been as strange and disruptive for us as for everyone else, with many postponed and canceled events, I nevertheless want to stress how much we were able to accomplish throughout the year, to note some new initiatives we took in the face of the pandemic, and to say a few words about our plans for next year.

We held three of the four visits originally planned as part of our Henry King Stanford Distinguished Professors series. Topics ranged from the relationship between climate change in the Caribbean and histories of inequality and colonialism to the history of stigmas surrounding various diseases to discussion of the challenge of making complaints about sexual harassment and other problems in the context of large institutions. In February, we also had our annual Edith Bleich lecture, in which Jennifer Morgan lectured on enslaved women and capitalism in the early period of the slave trade. More details on these lectures and the speakers are included later in this report.

Our faculty and dissertation fellows met regularly throughout the year, as did our Interdisciplinary Research Groups, made up of faculty and graduate students. Three of the four speakers that the Interdisciplinary Research Groups had scheduled were able to come to campus. We also had six faculty Book Talks at Books & Books before the bookstore had to close to comply with social distancing guidelines. In addition, we held workshops on applying for grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and on jobs outside of academia for doctoral students. Although the pandemic resulted in our canceling the second annual forum on undergraduate research in the humanities, we were able to continue serving our undergraduate students by partnering with the Toppel Career Center to offer a virtual panel on opportunities in the humanities. The pandemic



ic also prevented a number of students who had been accepted to prestigious undergraduate research conferences from being able to attend, but several took the opportunity to present their work through the conferences' virtual platforms and are planning to submit their selected papers to a journal. Although we were not able to celebrate their achievements in-person, we were pleased to share their success via Twitter and Instagram, where you can even access the link to some of their conference presentations.

In addition to the undergraduate career panel, we have offered several other new initiatives in response to the pandemic. In partnership with our friends at the University of Colorado Center for

the Humanities and the Arts, we set up a virtual book club for the end of the semester. We've been pleased to see so many UM community members, including alumni, employees, students, and friends of the university, join us for discussions of our first two selections, *The Book of Delights*, by Ross Gay, and Boccaccio's *Decameron*. We also created a "Humanities at Home" section on our webpage with virtual presentations by faculty members and links to offerings by other institutions. As part of a series created by the College of Arts and Sciences in conjunction with the Department of Development and Alumni Relations, I gave a lecture on the Black Death and the current pandemic. Finally, as part of a wider effort to celebrate graduating seniors in the humanities whose commencement ceremonies have been delayed, we created a virtual scrapbook honoring their time at the U, which you can review on our website.

Because of the budgetary uncertainty that the University of Miami, like so many institutions, faces, plans for next year are in flux, and it is clear we will be able to host few of the visiting speakers we would normally sponsor. However, one of our plans has been to feature more of our own faculty, and we have chosen to focus on this initiative next year. For example, we plan to offer a panel on commercial genetics testing in Spring 2021, in conjunction with the Miller School of Medicine. Our normal faculty Book Talks will continue but will likely take place virtually, at least through the fall, and we will also sponsor a new series of talks in which faculty members will discuss aspects of their research or developments in their field that are of interest to the general public. The 2020-2021 year will therefore be somewhat different for us, but we hope to make a virtue of necessity by moving forward with new types of events that will showcase the outstanding research being carried on in the humanities at the University of Miami.

We greatly appreciate the staunch support of Dean Bachas and the leadership of the College of Arts and Sciences, especially Senior Associate Deans Maria Stampino, Jennifer Ferriss-Hill, and Kenneth Voss. We are grateful to Provost Jeffrey Duerk for the funding his office provides. Our faculty board always provides excellent guidance. Our staff members, Dr. Meghan Homer and Ms. Ony Dunnam, continue to work extremely hard

and effectively. They have been extraordinarily resilient during this pandemic. I also wish to thank our graduate program coordinator, Barry Williams, and our undergraduate student assistants, Jack Morton, Katelyn Dorane, Piero Vasquez, and Andrés Arenas Grayeb, for their hard work this year. And of course, I am grateful to you, our colleagues and community members, for staying engaged and interested in our work in the humanities. We are pleased to list our donors for this past fiscal year at the end of this report.

I'll end by saying that we hope to see many of you (even if only virtually in some cases) at the many events in the humanities we plan to offer next year.

Hugh Thomas  
Director, Center for the Humanities  
University of Miami



# 2019-2020 HENRY KING STANFORD DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORS



## MIMI SELLER

"Caribbean Futures and the Coloniality of Climate Change"  
Thursday, October 3, 2019

Mimi Sheller, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology and founding Director of the Center for Mobilities Research and Policy at Drexel University in Philadelphia. She is founding co-editor of the journal, *Mobilities*, and past President of the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility. She is author or co-editor of ten books, including *Island Futures: Caribbean Survival in the Anthropocene* (Duke University Press, 2020); *Mobility Justice: The Politics of Movement in an Age of Extremes* (Verso, 2018); *Aluminum Dreams: The Making of Light Modernity* (MIT Press, 2014); *Citizenship from Below: Erotic Agency and Caribbean Freedom* (Duke University Press, 2012); *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (Routledge, 2003); and *Democracy After Slavery: Black Publics and Peasant Radicalism in Haiti and Jamaica* (Macmillan Caribbean, 2000). She is widely cited and considered a "key theorist in mobilities studies" and specializes in the post-colonial context of the Caribbean. As co-editor with John Urry of *Tourism Mobilities* (2004) and *Mobile Technologies of the City* (2006) and author of numerous highly cited articles, she helped to establish the new interdisciplinary field of mobilities research. She was awarded the Doctor Honoris Causa from Roskilde University, Denmark (2015) and has received research funding from the National Science Foundation, the British Academy, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Macarthur Foundation, the Mobile Lives Forum, and the Graham Foundation in Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. She has held Visiting Fellowships at the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania (2016); the Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University (2008); Media@McGill, Canada (2009); the Center for Mobility and Urban Studies at Aalborg University, Denmark (2009); and the Penn Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania (2010).

During her Henry King Stanford Lecture, Professor Sheller presented a discussion of climate change beyond the usual environmental and natural science framework, offering a perspective based on geo-

political, economic, and racial factors. Sheller shared her research on the politics of human movement and environmental justice as they relate to natural disaster and recovery, noting that the Caribbean has been identified as one of the global climate change "hot spots," being particularly sensitive to the effects of drought, ocean warming, biodiversity loss, and intensified hurricanes. Focusing on the extractive systems of the plantation that relied on forced labor and that drained Caribbean communities of their resources for the benefit of European economies, Sheller showed how they increased the Caribbean's vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. According to Sheller, political challenges, economic instabilities, and environmental dangers abound, each with roots in the colonial histories and ongoing neocolonial entanglements of the region. More broadly, Sheller argued that present environmental challenges cannot be decoupled from histories of colonialism, racism, and capitalism and provided a compelling argument for reparatory justice. Sheller noted that although systems often respond to natural disasters with anti-immigration sentiment and defeatist rhetoric that suggests there is no future for the Caribbean, there are options for moving forward and ensuring Caribbean communities are able to recover. According to Sheller, this type of progress, however, requires reparatory justice for the damage done by colonizing nations, international recognition of what is owed to climate refugees, and resistance to relegating vulnerable islands to extinction and depopulation.



## ALLAN M. BRANDT

"Enduring Stigma: Historical Perspectives on Disease Meanings and Their Impacts"  
Thursday, November 21, 2019

Allan M. Brandt is the Amalie Moses Kass Professor of the History of Medicine and Professor of the History of Science at Harvard University, where he holds a joint appointment between the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Harvard Medical School. Brandt served as Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences from 2008 to 2012. He earned his undergraduate degree at Brandeis University and a Ph.D. in American History from Columbia University. His work focuses on social and ethical aspects of health, disease, medical practices, and global health in the twentieth century. Brandt is the author of *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States since 1880* (1987); and co-editor of *Morality and Health* (1997). He has written on the social history of epidemic disease; the history of public health and health policy; and the history of human experimentation among other topics. His book on the social and cultural history of cigarette smoking in the U.S., *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America*, was published by Basic Books in 2007. It received the Bancroft Prize from Columbia University in 2008 and the Welch Medal from the American Association for the History of Medicine in 2011. Brandt has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2015, he was awarded the Everett Mendelsohn Excellence in Mentoring Award by the Harvard



Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He is presently writing about the history and ethics of stigma and its impact on patients and health outcomes. Brandt is currently a recipient of fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study.

Professor Brandt’s lecture stressed the psychological, medical, social, and economic costs of the stigmas attached to many diseases, including depression, delayed seeking of treatment, and the impact of such delays on health, before exploring ways in which such stigmas can be reduced. He provided a vivid case study by exploring his own experiences as a historian who had published on sexually transmitted diseases at the very time the AIDS epidemic was exploding. Recounting examples of explicit and implicit bias and discussing the importance of confronting one’s own implicit biases, he described how AIDS activists challenged the stigmas attached to the disease and at least partially reduced these stigmas, at the same time laying some of the groundwork for the profound if incomplete changes of attitudes towards sexuality that have developed in recent decades. Brandt covered more briefly other movements that have had some success in tackling stigmas attached to breast cancer and disabilities, as well as briefly mentioning some movements that have had less success, before turning to a discussion of stigma in the current opioid crisis. Brandt acknowledged that destigmatizing disease is a complex challenge, especially given the differences in the types of stigma attached to different diseases and continually changing social circumstances. Nonetheless, in the lecture and in a workshop the next day, he described various tools for change, emphasizing the importance of activism but also stressing education, decriminalization, and other legal methods. In particular, he noted some tools that humanists have particular skills at handling, such as the study of language and nomenclature or the use of theater and the arts. Above all, he stressed the importance of empathy in the struggle to destigmatize disease.

with Duke University Press in October 2019. Her previous publications include *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), *Willful Subjects* (2014), *On Being Included* (2012), *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2014, 2004), *Strange Encounters* (2000) and *Differences that Matter* (1998). Her writing has been translated into many languages including Korean, Turkish, Spanish, German, Finnish, and Swedish. Sara Ahmed’s book *The Promise of Happiness* received the FWSA prize for “ingenuity and scholarship in the fields of feminism, gender or women’s studies” in 2011 and she received The Kessler Award in 2017 for contributions to the field of LGBTQ studies. Ahmed also blogs at [feministkilljoys.com](http://feministkilljoys.com).

In her lecture, Dr. Ahmed addressed matters pertaining to complaint including the experience of making a complaint at a university, navigating institutional procedures, understanding and challenging the concept of utility, and exploring how the claim of supporting diversity work is often negated by nonperformative policies. During her presentation, Ahmed drew on the personal and public experiences of complainants that have contributed to her theories on complaint. Ahmed employed an extensive use of metaphors to assist the audience in understanding the enormous task of challenging an institution, especially when the institution was not necessarily designed to serve the challenger. In discussing the issues of otherness, Ahmed often returned to the image of a bird scratching at the surface of a problem while also depicting the same bird as someone who might disrupt typical use of spaces by claiming a postbox as its nest. Through such imagery, Ahmed was successful in communicating how the principles of queer use can be employed in the context of rethinking universities and other institutions. In evoking the image of physical spaces often described by her interview participants, Ahmed demonstrated the power of theoretical space. While acknowledging the systemic treatment of complaint as a source of shame and recognizing the daunting challenge of making a complaint, she noted the simultaneous power of complaint to illuminate and dissect institutional problems. In recounting the stories of students and faculty who have been mistreated, she exposed universities’ tendency to diminish cases of abuse, to file away complaints, to use nonresponse and exhaustion as strategy, to infantilize complainants, and to prioritize loyalty to the institution over its people.



SARA AHMED

"On Complaint"  
Thursday, February 6, 2020

Sara Ahmed is an independent feminist scholar and writer. She has held appointments in Women’s Studies at Lancaster University and Race and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her work is concerned with how power is experienced and challenged in everyday life and institutional cultures. She has recently completed a book, *What’s the Use? On the Uses of Use*, published





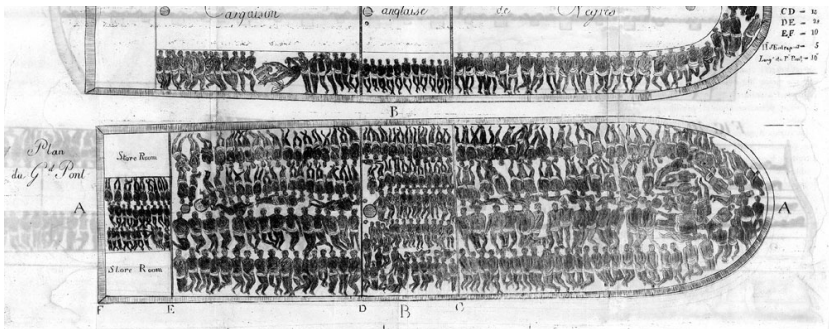
# EDITH BLEICH SPEAKER SERIES

## JENNIFER MORGAN

"Madwomen On The Slaveship: Reproduction and Racial Capitalism"  
Thursday, February 13, 2020

Jennifer Morgan is Professor of History in the department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University where she also serves as Chair. She is the author of *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) and the co-editor of *Connexions: Histories of Race and Sex in America* (University of Illinois Press, 2016). Her research examines the intersections of gender and race in the Black Atlantic world. Her most recent journal articles include "Partus Sequitur Ventrem: Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery," in *Small Axe*; "Accounting for 'The Most Excruciating Torment': Trans-Atlantic Passages" in *History of the Present*; and "Archives and Histories of Racial Capitalism" in *Social Text*. In addition to her archival work as a historian, Morgan has published a range of essays on race, gender, and the process of "doing history," most notably "Experiencing Black Feminism" in Deborah Gray White's edited volume, *Telling Histories: Black Women Historians in the Ivory Tower* (2007). She is currently at work on a project that considers colonial numeracy, racism and the rise of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in the seventeenth-century English Atlantic world, forthcoming with Duke University Press, and titled *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*.

In her lecture, Morgan argued that African women are key to understanding the development of early modern racial capitalism. Using economic terminology, she explored how the myth of kinlessness among Africans was central to the justification of racial slavery. Claiming that the core violation of their humanity can be traced to the erasure of kinship, Morgan cited reference to Africans' supposed kinlessness in early business accounts while also noting the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. According to Morgan, the disavowal of kinship justified slavery logic, positioning women at the very center of racial capitalism. Indeed, by positing that African women birthed strangers, not kin, slave traders and colonizers were able to defend racial slavery. An entire economy was built on the assumption that black women do not have the capacity to convert biological function into emotion, the very essence of humanity. Despite African women's critical role, historians note a conspicuous absence of women in slave records. As such, women have long been presumed to be inconsequential in early modern racial capitalism. By challenging this presumption, Morgan calls for a new political economy of women, transforming how historians conceptualize the history of slavery.





# WORKSHOPS

## MAREN WOOD

"How to Launch Your Career Beyond the Professoriate and Success Stories from PhDs Who Have" & "How to Make Good Career Decisions During Your PhD and Postdoc"  
September 16-19, 2019

PhD students must increasingly pursue jobs beyond the horizon of the traditional academic job market. During a presentation to graduate students, Wood cited historical trends that correlated with job market opportunities for people with university degrees which indicate positive prospects, including for PhD graduates. Despite a saturated market for tenure track jobs within universities, Wood's optimism about professional job prospects for graduate students is supported by statistics that reveal much opportunity for job placement over diverse fields. As such, a major talking point of her workshop emphasized the importance of knowing how to apply the skills sets acquired from a research degree to different types of jobs. Wood also emphasized the importance of vigorous and broadband networking which increases visibility. Standing face to face with an academic job market that offers fewer options, many PhD's have been able to pitch themselves - successfully - to companies outside their fields of research. Because today's job markets are very dynamic, more emphasis is placed on skill sets - and not the actual degree- for successful placement. Following her talk, Wood also led a small workshop for graduate students, guiding them through the process of identifying strengths and values as well as possible career paths. Wood's presentation and workshop suggests that completing a PhD has a lot of potential market value as the number of PhD's successfully exploring opportunities outside the traditional academic job market is increasing.

L. Maren Wood, PhD, is the founder and CEO of Beyond the Professoriate, a mission-driven organization that provides career education and professional development for graduate students and PhDs. Beyond Prof provides services to individuals,



and partners with institutions to support their efforts in empowering students and postdocs to leverage their education wherever smart people are needed. Dr. Wood has been a lead researcher on several important studies on the academic and non-academic job market for humanities and social science PhDs, working for the American Historical Association and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Her writing has appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and *University Affairs*. Her essay, "How to Move Beyond the Professoriate" is part of the edited collection, *Succeeding Outside the Academy*, published this fall by the University of Kansas Press. Dr. Wood grew up in Alberta, Canada. She earned her PhD in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Today, she lives in Denver.



## JOHN COX

NEH Grant Writing Workshop and NEH Mock Panel  
September 27, 2019

The National Endowment for the Humanities, funded by the federal government, is a crucial source of support for humanities scholarship in the United States. In the first half of a two-part event, John Cox reviewed the various programs of the NEH, particularly those of interest to scholars, and described the process of application and review for the most relevant ones. In the second part, four University of Miami scholars offered a mock-panel with Cox serving as a moderator. The panelists, each with a successful track record of winning NEH grants or comparable fellowships and representing different disciplines, analyzed the strengths and weakness of four proposals that, as the audience subsequently learned, obtained NEH funding and resulted in published books. Faculty and graduate students from the University of Miami attended in large numbers. In addition, scholars and other humanists from a variety of universities and organizations, including Florida International University, Florida Atlantic University, Barry University, Nova Southeastern University, Florida Gulf Coast University, and the Florida Humanities Council, visited our campus to attend this event. Beyond the workshops, John Cox generously met with fourteen individuals from UM and other institutions to discuss drafts of grant applications and ideas for proposals.

John Cox is Deputy Director of the Division of Education. He received his PhD in English from the University of Mississippi in 2000. Prior to coming to NEH, he was an associate professor of English and the director of graduate studies at Georgia College & State University. In addition, he has taught secondary school literature and composition in the United States and abroad. His book, *Traveling South: Travel Narratives and the Construction of American Identity*, was published by the University of Georgia Press in 2005. He has



also written and presented on William Bartram, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, and other topics related to American literature.

### UM Faculty Serving on the NEH Mock Panel Included the Following:

Anjan Chakravartty,  
Appignani Foundation Professor,  
Department of Philosophy

Christina Civantos,  
Professor,  
Department of Modern Languages and  
Literatures

Mary Lindemann,  
Professor and Chair,  
Department of History

Jessica Rosenberg,  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of English



# LECTURES

## KADJI AMIN

"Deidealization: A Heuristic for Politicized Fields of Study"  
Monday, October 28, 2019

In this lecture, Kadji Amin sought to bridge contemporary debates on affect and method occurring in literary studies, on the one hand, and in women's, queer, and trans studies, on the other. It contends that the two-step between idealization and critique, not the dominance of critique, is the overriding methodological problem for politicized fields of study. Returning to Melanie Klein, Amin considered the potential harms of idealizing reparation – an influential method in queer studies and queer of color critique. In the present, the weight of scholarly idealization in women's, queer, and trans studies falls on marginalized Black and brown bodies, placing particular burdens on scholars of color. Against the binary of idealization and critique, Amin proposed deidealization as a minor mode of the reparative that allows scholars to hold onto their political ideals while sympathetically recognizing how objects of study inevitably fall short of them. This lecture was made possible by the Gender Studies Interdisciplinary Research Group, the Department of History, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, the Department of English, and the Center for the Humanities.

Kadji Amin is Director for Graduate Studies and Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Emory University. Kadji Amin was previously an Assistant Professor of Queer Studies in the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Stony Brook University, a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in "Sex" at the University of Pennsylvania Humanities Forum (2015-16) and a Faculty Fellow at the Humanities Institute at Stony Brook (2015). He earned his Ph.D. in Romance Studies (French) with a graduate Certificate in Feminist Studies from Duke University in 2009. His research, which focuses on the disorienting effects of the queer and transgender past on politicized fields of scholarship, is published or forthcoming in *GLQ*, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *Feminist Formations*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *French Studies*, *Études françaises*, and *L'Esprit créateur*. He is coeditor, with Amber Jamilla Musser and Roy Pérez, of a special issue of *ASAP/Journal on "Queer Form"* and is the "Books in Brief" editor for *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*.

## SHALINI PURI

"Fieldwork, Memory Studies, and the Public Humanities in the Anthropocene"  
Thursday, January 30, 2020

Academic writing on both postcoloniality and the anthropocene often focuses on tragedy. The organizing vocabulary is often that of loss, death, stasis, crisis, catastrophe. During this lecture, Dr. Shalini Puri shares how her concerns diverge from these areas, seeking out instead narratives that honor life and live joyously in the uncertain present. Taking the Grenada Revolution as a case-study, she discussed the postcolonial anthropocene less through spectacular moments of violence or success, tragedy or triumph, than through quieter, slower, and more enduring everyday processes that involve both individual and collective practices of remembrance. Thinking through memorials, re-enactments, verbatim theater, landscape-as-setting, speculative and imaginative methods, Puri suggested ways that fieldwork informed by literary and performance studies can help reshape memory, action, and community. Drawing on theories of genre, affect, embodiment, social movements, and environmental justice, her central conceptual and methodological questions include: How might we strengthen the movement between Memory Studies and transformative action? How can fieldwork, suffused with the methods of

the humanities, help? What silences continue to loom large and why? What are appropriate ways of approaching these silences? What forms of agency and collaboration does fieldwork in the humanities demand and enable? And what forms of community, emotional sustenance, and joy does it offer? And finally, what might an eco-critical memory of the Grenada Revolution look like and accomplish? This lecture is presented by the Humanities Fieldwork Graduate Student-led Interdisciplinary Research Group with support from the Center for the Humanities, the Department of English, the Department of History, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, the Department of Anthropology, and the Graduate Student Association.

Shalini Puri is Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh. She works on postcolonial theory and cultural studies of the global south with a focus on the Caribbean. Her research spans memory studies, feminism, marxism, nationalism, incarceration, the arts, everyday cultural practices, fieldwork, and activism. She continues to be interested in the cultural practices, conflicts, and solidarities that have arisen out of the African and Asian diasporas set in motion by slavery and indentureship. Her 2014 book *The Grenada Revolution In the Caribbean Present: Operation Urgent Memory* grows out of an interest in an interdisciplinary humanities. Her book *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity* won the Gordon and Sybil Lewis Award for best book in Caribbean Studies in 2005. She co-edits the Palgrave Macmillan series "New Caribbean Studies," which features interdisciplinary and humanities-informed scholarship. Puri is a member of Pitt's Race, Poetics, and Empire research group. As a founding member of the recently formed Pitt Prison Education Project, she teaches Literature courses in which University of Pittsburgh students and incarcerated students studied together at a state prison. Her work in progress is on the global politics and poetics of water.

## TANIA LOMBROZO

"Explanation: The Good, The Bad, and the Beautiful"  
Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Like scientists, children and adults are often motivated to explain the world around them, including why people behave in particular ways, why objects have some properties rather than others, and why events unfold as they do. Moreover, people have strong and systematic intuitions about what makes something a good (or beautiful) explanation. Why are we so driven to explain? And what accounts for our explanatory preferences? In this talk Tania Lombrozo presented evidence that both children and adults prefer explanations that are simple and have broad scope, consistent with many accounts of explanation from philosophy of science. Although a preference for simple and broad explanations can sometimes improve learning and support effective inferences, under some conditions, these preferences can systematically lead children and adults astray. This lecture is presented by the Cognitive Studies Interdisciplinary Research Group with support from the Department of Philosophy and the Center for the Humanities.

Tania Lombrozo is a Professor of Psychology at Princeton University, as well as an Associate of the Department of Philosophy. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology from Harvard University in 2006 after receiving a B.S. in Symbolic Systems and a B.A. in Philosophy from Stanford University. Dr. Lombrozo's research aims to address foundational questions about cognition using the empirical tools of cognitive psychology and the conceptual tools of analytic philosophy. Her work focuses on explanation and understanding, social cognition, causal reasoning, and folk epistemology. She is the recipient of numerous early-career awards including the Stanton Prize from the Society for Philosophy and Psychology, the Spence Award from the Association for Psychological Science, a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation, and a James S. McDonnell Foundation Scholar Award in Understanding Human Cognition. She has blogged about psychology, philosophy, and cognitive science at Psychology Today and for NPR's 13.7: Cosmos & Culture.



# CENTER COLLABORATIONS

Throughout the course of the year, the Center for the Humanities continued to support campus partners and the University of Miami community. Although the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in delaying numerous collaborative events including a panel discussion about Board of Trustees member Marilyn Holifield's recent book, *Seven Brothers and a Sister: Black Student Activism in the 1960's* and The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists' Sixth Biennial Conference of C19, the Center responded to the health crisis by forging new partnerships and co-presenting new initiatives. The Center was pleased to co-sponsor and/or co-present the following initiatives:

## Food Day

Food Day inspires Americans to change their diets and our food policies. Every October thousands of events all over the country bring Americans together to celebrate and enjoy real food and to push for improved food policies. Organized by the Office of Civic and Community Engagement and co-sponsored by the Center for the Humanities, the University of Miami activities included a keynote presentation by Dr. Erika Rapaport, Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In her October 14th talk, "Tea Revives the World: How the Advertising Industry Taught Us All to Love Tea," Rappaport suggested that the history of tea helps reveal how big business, advertising, and empires have taught consumers to love tea and acquire a taste for globalization.

## "Undercurrents: Connection and Rupture in the Caribbean, from the Pre-Columbian Era to 1900"

The movement of people, goods, and ideas has long shaped the economic, political, cultural, and social features of the Caribbean. Rather than taking this circulation for granted, this symposium explored how the logistics, networks, and paths of movement varied over time and excluded as much as they included. In looking to establish with greater precision the relationships among the circulations of people, goods, and ideas, this symposium gathered scholars working in and across multiple disciplines, whose reflections will not only identify the specificities of local and regional dynamics, but also appraise their long-term impact on the Caribbean and its connections to the broader world. The Center for the Humanities was pleased to co-sponsor this event, which took place February 13-14, 2020 with the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and other campus units.

## "Seeing More Queerly"

The Center was glad to co-sponsor the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures' annual Graduate Student Conference. The conference focused on intersections of art, culture, sexuality, and politics in the re-imagining of societies in the contemporary world. Academics, students, and artists from around the world were invited to think and debate about History, Culture, Art, and Society from a gender and queer gaze as a part of this conference, which also featured a keynote address from one of the founding leaders in the contemporary feminist movement in Latin America, Ochy Curiel Pichardo.

## "One Book, One U" Common Read Program

The Center for the Humanities continues to be an avid supporter of the University's common read program, providing significant funding and administrative support. This year, the One Book, One U Selection Committee announced Edwidge Danticat's celebrated memoir, *Brother, I'm Dying*, as its selection. In telling the stories of her father and uncle, Danticat skillfully addresses issues of otherness, family dynamics, the Haitian diaspora, death and dying, social justice, and political unrest. Danticat gave keynote remarks

on February 17, 2020, to an audience of over 150 people, many of whom received free copies of the book and remained to have their copies signed. The Center's support also made the One Book One U program's related events possible, including panels on immigration, discussions of acculturation, a Haitian film series, and a discussion with Danticat led by students from the Haitian student organization, Planet Kreyol, and the English International Honors Society, Sigma Tau Delta

## "Muslim History and Europe"

The Center for the Humanities was pleased to co-sponsor a roundtable discussion organized by the Department of History on January 31, 2020. The event featured presentations from several experts including Dr. Emily Greble (Associate Professor of History at Vanderbilt University), Dr. Terrence Peterson (Assistant Professor of History at Florida International University), Dr. Christine Philliou (Associate Professor of History at U.C. Berkeley), and Dr. Dominique Reill (Associate Professor of History at the University of Miami).

## Undergraduate Scholarship

In an effort to support scholarship among undergraduates, the Center committed to support students in a variety of ways throughout the academic year. The Center pledged to help fund the members of the UM chapter of the International English Honors Society's travel to the annual convention, to co-sponsor four undergraduate students who were accepted to the inaugural Macksey Undergraduate National Humanities Research symposium, and to cover registration expenses for students accepted to the Nova Southeastern University's Humanities Student Conference. Although the above events were canceled or postponed due to COVID-19, several students took advantage of the opportunity to present their work via a virtual platform at the Macksey Symposium and to submit their related papers for publication.

## Student Organization Events

The Center for the Humanities continued to offer financial and communications support to student organizations seeking to present interdisciplinary and inclusive events on campus. In the Spring 2020 semester, the Center co-sponsored International Week 2020: "Generations of Achievers," featuring activities, performances, and dinners designed to showcase a variety of cultures and regions and celebrate diversity at UM and beyond. The Center also supported "GenderChill," the University of Miami's free expression fashion show benefiting TransSOCIAL, an organization dedicated to expanding safe and affirming resources to the Transgender and Greater LGBTQ+ community in South Florida.

## Virtual Book Club

In partnership with the Center for Humanities and the Arts at The University of Colorado Boulder, the Center for the Humanities led online discussions of Ross Gay's *Book of Delights*. Over the course of several Zoom sessions, alumni, students, and colleagues from around the globe participated in lively conversations. The Center hopes to continue the Virtual Book Club in the future.







# BOOK TALKS

**Joanna Johnson** | Department of English

*Topographies of Caribbean Writing, Race, and the British Countryside*  
Palgrave Macmillan

**Otávio Bueno** | Department of Philosophy

*Applying Mathematics: Immersion, Inference, Interpretation*  
Oxford University Press

**William Rothman** | Department of Cinema and Interactive Media

*Tuitions and Intuitions: Essays at the Intersection of Film Criticism and Philosophy*  
SUNY Press

**Alexandra Perisic** | Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

*Precarious Crossings: Immigration, Neoliberalism, and the Atlantic*  
Ohio State University Press

**Catherine Newell** | Department of Religious Studies

*Destined for the Stars: Faith, the Future, and America's Final Frontier*  
University of Pittsburgh Press

**Silva Mitchell** | Purdue University, Department of History

*Queen, Mother, & Stateswoman: Mariana of Austria and the Government of Spain*  
Penn State University Press





# FELLOWS' SYMPOSIUM

## Annual Fellows' Symposium

October 25, 2019

Presentations from the Center's 2018-2019 fellows included:

### SESSION 1 - 9:00AM - 10:00AM

- 1. "Reflections on Hatred"  
**Berit Brogaard** | Philosophy
- 2. "Locating Magic: The Spiritual Power of Place and Space in Seventeenth-Century Venice"  
**Anna Bennett** | History

### SESSION 2 - 10:15AM - 11:15AM

- 3. "Confidence Games: Steam-Age Expansionism and the Social Worlds of Money in Argentina"  
**Eduardo Elena** | History
- 4. "Food Faith: Modern and Historical Conversion to Dietary Practice"  
**Catherine Newell** | Religious Studies

### SESSION 3 - 11:30AM - 12:30PM

- 5. "Rilkean Memory"  
**Mark Rowlands** | Philosophy
- 6. "Sun Shou's 'Strange and Bewitching Appearances' In History, Literature, and Historical Imagination"  
**Rebecca Doran** | Modern Languages and Literatures

### SESSION 4 - 1:00PM - 2:30PM

- 7. "Octavia Butler's Resilient California in *Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents*"  
**Anne Schmalstig** | English
- 8. "Trans Narrative and Paranarrative: *The Case of Testo Junkie*"  
**Gil Mozer** | English
- 9. "Your Million Dollar Houses Will Soon Be Underwater: The Coming Catastrophe and Doomsday Urbanism in Miami"  
**Allison Schifani** | Modern Languages and Literatures



## 2019-2020 RESEARCH FELLOWS



**NELSON MARQUES**  
**History**  
**Spring Dissertation Fellow**  
*"Heroes of their Own Lives: Warfare and Identity in the Portuguese Atlantic, 1624 - 1668"*



**ANJAN CHAKRAVARTTY**  
**Philosophy**  
**Faculty Fellow**  
*"Scientific Disagreement, Rationality, and Society"*



**PAIGE MILLER**  
**English**  
**Spring Dissertation Fellow**  
*"Multilingual Modernisms: Beyond English in James Joyce, G.V. Desani, Samuel Beckett, and Jean Rhys"*



**MICHAEL BERNATH**  
**History**  
**Faculty Fellow**  
*"In a Land of Strangers: Northern Teachers in the Old South"*



**LILIANNE LUGO HERRERA**  
**Modern Languages and Literatures**  
**Spring Dissertation Fellow**  
*"Mediated Archipelagoes: Theater, Women, and Media"*



**LORELLA DI GREGORIO**  
**Modern Languages and Literatures**  
**Spring Dissertation Fellow**  
*"The Global Journey of Mexican and Southern Italian Cultural Products in the Time of Flows"*



**ERICA MOIAH JAMES**  
**Art and Art History**  
**Faculty Fellow**  
*"Decolonizing Time: Haitian Portraiture and Epistemologies of Vision"*



**EVELINA GALANG**  
**English**  
**Faculty Fellow**  
*"Beautiful Sorrow, Beautiful Sky"*



# NEWS FROM OUR FELLOWS

The Center for the Humanities invites all former Faculty Fellows and Dissertation Fellows to share news of the exciting work they are conducting in the humanities.

## Awards and Honors

**Anjan Chakravarty**, Appignani Foundation Professor (Philosophy), was awarded a Fellowship at the Institute Vienna Circle and elected to the Committee on International Cooperation at the American Philosophical Association.

**Heather Diack**, Associate Professor (Art History), was awarded a Provost Research Award for 2020-2021.

**Lorella Di Gregorio**, PhD (Modern Languages and Literatures), successfully defended her dissertation with distinction in 2020 and received her department's annual Outstanding Teaching Award.

**Mary Lindemann**, Professor (History), became President of the American Historical Association in January 2020 (and is Immediate Past President of the German Studies Association). Lindemann also presented a paper at the Department of History, Purdue University, on "Silent Witness: War and the Environment in Brandenburg, 1627-1680."

**Lilianne Lugo Herrera**, (Modern Languages and Literatures), completed her PhD in 2020 and received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award from her department, the Modern Languages Association Travel Grant, and the American Society for Theater Research (ASTR) Fellowship Award.

**Silvia Z. Mitchell**, Assistant Professor of Early Modern European History (Purdue University), was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure, effective August 2020. Mitchell earned her PhD in History from the University of Miami.

**Martin Nesvig**, Professor (History), reported that his book, *Promiscuous Power*, received honorable mention for the 2020 Howard F. Cline Book Prize from the Latin American Studies Association (LASA). (According to the LASA, the "Cline Book Prize in Mexican History is presented at each LASA International Congress to the author of an outstanding book of major importance to the development of the field of Mexican history, published in English or Spanish.)

**Gema Pérez-Sánchez**, Associate Professor (Modern Languages and Literatures), co-led one of only four MLA Working Groups accepted at the 2020 MLA Convention in Seattle, WA in January. The topic was "Affective Approaches to the Study of Contemporary Spanish LGBTQ Culture."

**Justin Ritzinger**, Associate Professor (Religious Studies), spent the summer of 2019 doing fieldwork for his new monograph on a small blue-collar Buddhist community in Taiwan. He presented at a conference and gave a lecture (translated as "Devoted to Modernity: Master Taixu's Maiteryan Thought and Practice,") at Peking University. He has also accepted a position as a residential faculty member with Mahoney Residential College.

**Drewry Wofford**, (History), successfully defended his dissertation, ("History at the Speed of Sound: A Transnational Case Study of the Concorde Supersonic Transport as a Reflection of Critical Issues in Postwar Europe") and completed his PhD in European History in 2020. He also served as guest curator at HistoryMiami for their Hall of Aviation exhibit and continues to work at HistoryMiami as their consultant for the Pan American World Airways CLR Grant project.

**Viviana Diaz Balsera**, Professor (Modern Languages and Literatures), was appointed as a Cooper Fellow in the College of Arts and Sciences from June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2023.

**Amelia Hintzen**, PhD (History), began her first tour as a Foreign Service Officer in Quito, Ecuador. Hintzen completed her PhD in History at the University of Miami in 2016.

## Publications

**Michael Bernath**, Associate Professor (History), collaborated with Professor Scott Heerman in editing a special issue of the *Journal of the Civil War Era* entitled "Cracks in the Foundation: The Fourteenth Amendment and its Limits." (Published in March, this issue resulted from a conference the pair organized in 2018, with the support of the Center, to mark the sesquicentennial of the 14th Amendment.)

**Anjan Chakravarty's** recent book, *Scientific Ontology: Integrating Naturalized Metaphysics and Voluntarist Epistemology*, was published in paperback by Oxford University Press.

**Juan Chattah**, Associate Professor (Music Theory), contributed a chapter, "Postmodern Opera 101: Irony, Nostalgia, and Bifurcated Narratives," in *Singing in Signs: New Semiotic Explorations of Opera* (Oxford University Press).

**Heather Diack** published two books including *Documents of Doubt: The Photographic Conditions of Conceptual Art* with University of Minnesota Press and *Global Photography: A Critical History* with Routledge Press, which she co-authored with Erina Duganne and Terri Weissman.

**Jennifer Ferriss-Hill**, Associate Professor (Classics), published her second book, *Horace's Ars Poetica: Family, Friendship, and the Art of Living*, with Princeton University Press in November 2019.

**Maria Galli Stampino**, Professor (Modern Languages and Literatures), edited and translated Lucrezia Marinella's *Love Enamored* and *Driven Mad*, with Janet E. Gómez as part of The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series.

**David W. Kling**, Professor (Religious Studies), published *A History of Christian Conversion* with Oxford University Press.

**Stephen Lazer**, Lecturer (History), at Arizona State University, published the book, *State Formation in Early Modern Alsace, 1648-1789* with University of Rochester Press.

**Mary Lindemann** published her German Studies Association Presidential Address, "How Great Wars End: Legacies and Lessons" in *German Studies Review*.

**Catherine Nealy Judd**, Associate Professor (English), welcomed her third book, *Travel Narratives of the Irish Famine: Politics, Tourism, and Scandal, 1845-1853*, in Peter Lang's Reimagining Ireland series.

**Catherine L. Newell**, Associate Professor (Religious Studies), published *Destined for the Stars: Faith, the Future, and America's Final Frontier*, with the University of Pittsburgh Press.

**Justin Ritzinger** published a book chapter, "Marketing Maitreya: Two Peaks, Three Forms of Capital and the Quest to Establish a Fifth Buddhist Mountain" in *Buddhist Tourism in Asia: Sacred Spaces within Global Networks* with University of Hawai'i Press. He also published an article, "Buddhism in China Today: An Ambivalent Revival," in the popular magazine, *Buddhadharma*.

**June Teufel Dreyer**, Professor (Political Science), published two short articles analyzing (1) the effect of the corona virus on the Chinese political system (2) the Chinese National People's Congress, for the Foreign Policy Research Institute's World Analysis series. These were quoted in various media outlets (including Associated Press and Voice of America).

**Robyn Faith Walsh**, Assistant Professor (Religious Studies), published "The Satyrical and the Gospels in the Second Century" (a paper that she originally presented to the Center for the Humanities' Antiquities Interdisciplinary Research Group) in *The Classical Quarterly*.



# DAVID JOHN RUGGIERO AWARD

The annual award for the best dissertation in the humanities was established with the generous support of Guido Ruggiero, Professor of History, in memory of his brother, David John Ruggiero.

## 2020 AWARD WINNER:

**Drew Wofford's** "History at the Speed of Sound: A Transnational Case Study of the Concorde Supersonic Transport as a Reflection of Critical Issues in Postwar Europe," embodies an ideal dissertation. It is well-written, highly analytical, deeply researched, and creates new inroads of knowledge and questions. Examining how and why the first supersonic plane was produced in Europe through British and French partnership, Wofford shows that Western Europe's post-WWII response to US aid and leadership was not passive or fawning, but rather, competitive far earlier than we have come to expect. In reconstituting the business and political history that brought the Concorde to life and ushered in its demise, Wofford introduces his readers to UK attempts to become part of Europe, French assertions that European membership could only be had on its terms, and US strategies to promote European revitalization while protecting its own economic hegemony. This history of aviation is gorgeously knowledgeable about details connected to flying while simultaneously weaving in big politics, big finance, and big continents. Firmly rooted in archival research in three countries and the historiographies of the European Union, France, the UK, and the US, Wofford's transnational history fascinates as much as it satisfies. It tells the history of the rise and fall of the Concorde and explains why, even today, European aviation remains competitive with its US forerunner. The 2020 Ruggiero Committee is pleased to award Drewry Frye Wofford II this year's dissertation prize and hopes to see the fruits of this labor published soon.

## HONORABLE MENTION:

**Lorella Di Gregorio** has produced a creative, ambitious, and well-researched dissertation that bridges two centuries, two continents, multiple forms of cultural production, and three language traditions, all the while writing compellingly in a fourth. Examining a rich assemblage of art, song, and literature from Mexico, Italy, and their respective borders, both physical and figurative, Di Gregorio reveals how popular forms of regional cultural production with roots in medieval Europe have come in globalized modernity to take on a multitude of new, divergent, and oftentimes unanticipated connotations. Thanks largely to the proliferation of social media and related technologies, these once localized cultural products have become simultaneously national and transnational.

Historically grounded, theoretically informed, and socially engaged, Di Gregorio's study of devotional paintings in the Catholic tradition (exvotos), popular Mexican ballads (corridos), Neapolitan folk-pop (neomelodica), and related cultural forms ranging from novels to television programs, draws on careful close readings, visual analysis, personal interviews with cultural producers, sociolinguistic survey data, and ethnographic research in both countries under study. Using the broad themes of migration and criminality to organize her impressive archive and structure what is arguably the first comparative inquiry of its kind, Di Gregorio demonstrates beautifully how cultural producers and consumers—including those grounded in precarious sociopolitical circumstances—have used these artistic forms as powerful tools to narrate little-known aesthetic histories that are simultaneously personal and collective, local and global. At a moment in dire need of productive transnational discussion and understanding, "The Global Journey of Mexican and Southern Italian Cultural Products in the Time of Flows," does this work with nuance and without romanticization. The Ruggiero Prize Committee is pleased to recognize Lorella Di Gregorio's outstanding dissertation with an award of Honorable Mention.

# FRIENDS OF THE CENTER

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Julie Macqueen Berlin	Angel Kaifer	Mihoko Suzuki
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	Mary Lindemann	

## COMMENTS FROM EVENT ATTENDEES

"We completely enjoyed Dr. Brandt's talk. He was engaging, interesting, funny, and refreshingly open and unassuming. He covered topics in the stigma area that I had not fully considered prior to the lecture, so it was quite informative."

"The topics in your lecture series are always very interesting. Thank you so much for providing us all with these opportunities to learn!"

"The speaker was extremely clear and compelling in the vision she presented of the slave plantation as a motor of modernity and of our current period, whether we call it the Anthropocene or the Plantationocene...A thought-provoking event." -Regarding Mimi Sheller's lecture

"The content of the lecture was poignant and thought provoking. What would the islands be like now if they hadn't been colonized? What language would they be speaking?" -Regarding Mimi Sheller's lecture

"What a wonderful opportunity to hear in person the ideas of such a powerful thinker." -Regarding Jennifer Morgan's lecture

"I admit that on a personal level, it was emotional for me to hear Sara Ahmed give a talk in person, as she was the first Pakistani-diaspora woman like myself whose scholarly work I encountered during my undergraduate studies. Equally as impacting was seeing my colleagues and supervisors so stirred by her words, with the power of her voice and physical presence elevating and amplifying what had thus far, only been known to us through the printed page. This was an evening that literally moved me to tears at one point, as I introduced myself and shook the hand of the writer whose body of work meant so much to me.

"Always a learning experience, which is why we come."





# GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

**The Center for the Humanities** brings a wealth of opportunities to the University and the South Florida community to learn about the latest developments in humanities scholarship. The Center’s programs promote mutual understanding among groups and cultures, provide support for research in the humanities, and enrich the intellectual culture on campus and beyond.

The Center relies on philanthropic support for its wide-ranging programs that stimulate public awareness and debate about the humanities. A thriving Center for the Humanities is vital to promote lifelong learning and intellectual growth for all.

By making a gift today, you can help support the many initiatives that enable the Center to maintain its excellence. Your gift, of any size, makes a direct impact on our scholars, our students, and our community.

## Targets of Opportunity

### *Give to the Center for the Humanities Annual Fund*

Unrestricted gifts to the Center provide the Director with crucial flexible funding to enrich successful programs, support exciting new initiatives, and help meet unanticipated needs. These gifts enable the Center to seize opportunities as they arise in order to enhance its outstanding programs.

Donors who support the Center with an annual gift of \$1,000 or more will become a member of the University’s James W. McLamore Society, and will receive invitations to exclusive University receptions and events.

### *Endow a Speaker Series*

Name and endow a speaker series for \$50,000 on a topic area that is important to you– e.g., medical humanities; science and humanities; the arts; music; literature; classics; or women’s / gender studies.

### *Endow a Faculty Fellowship*

Groundbreaking research produced by faculty fellows impacts the quality of undergraduate instruction at UM and elevates the University’s position in national rankings when they are published as articles in journals and as books. A named endowed fellowship starts at \$250,000.

### *Promote Humanities in the K-12 Classroom*

The Center has a strong commitment to bringing the latest humanities scholarship to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. The Center is seeking support for seminars led by UM humanities faculty aimed at local school teachers, who will in turn vitalize and enrich their instruction with cutting-edge humanities scholarship.

## Ways to Give

If you wish to send your contribution by check, please make it payable to the UM Center for the Humanities and mail your contribution to: Center for the Humanities, University of Miami, Post Office Box 248292, Coral Gables, Florida 33124.

You can make a gift online at [www.welcome.miami.edu/give](http://www.welcome.miami.edu/give). Please select "Give Now" and then scroll to the section of the page where schools and colleges are listed. Select the College of Arts and Sciences and then select the Center for the Humanities from the drop-down menu.

There are many other ways you can make your gift. To learn more about how you can help the Center – or to discuss a multi-year pledge, naming opportunities, or a planned gift – please contact Angie González-Kurver, Interim Executive Director of Development, at 305-284-4638 or [ajgonzalez@miami.edu](mailto:ajgonzalez@miami.edu)





# BOARD AND STAFF

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