COLUMBIA | SOCIAL DIFFERENCE
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT
THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE is an interdisciplinary research center supporting collaborative projects that address gender, race, sexuality, and other forms of inequality to foster ethical and progressive social change.

The Center’s work has two overarching research themes, Women Creating Change and Imagining Justice.
CSSD's mission is to support intellectual exchange and scholarly development at Columbia University through faculty-led collaborative working groups concerned with diverse questions related to the dynamics of social inequality and social justice. The impact of over a decade of support for the interdisciplinary and diverse scholars and practitioners included in these seminars and working groups is visible in the influential publications, novel ideas, curricular innovations, enduring international networks, and conferences and events for the broad public nurtured through our projects. Interdisciplinary scholars working in our two streams—Women Creating Change and Imagining Justice—have been transformed by this intellectual support.

The unique, faculty-directed working group structure at CSSD creates synergistic opportunities for intense intellectual engagement, individual and scholarly development, mentorship across ranks, publishing opportunities, intellectual development, and the conditions for building enduring international scholarly networks of exchange, all of which play central roles in supporting working group participants’ development as distinguished scholars. Alongside junior and senior faculty, undergraduate and graduate students gain access to prominent distinguished scholars, as well as support for publishing opportunities and access to international scholarly networks of exchange. Because working group themes emerge organically from shared scholarly interests among faculty colleagues, CSSD has been able to sustain its status as a vibrant hub of collaborative study and thought.

CSSD supports those working on multiple aspects of the global dynamics of power and inequality and the ways that forms of social difference, including gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity, organize these inequalities. Many faculty who lead the working groups and the scholars, artists, practitioners and community leaders who participate in them come from underrepresented groups whose research and teaching focus on topics also less represented in the traditional disciplines. Most have been minorities within the US academy, far outstripping their representation in the broader Columbia University community. As a university-based advanced study center dedicated to supporting faculty initiatives, CSSD recognizes that rigorous scholarship on subjects of deep social concern requires support for the diverse cadres who seek to understand, analyze and intervene on social issues.
ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

LILA ABU-LUGHOD
INTERIM FACULTY DIRECTOR

KHLOE SWANSON
EVENTS & ACCOUNTING COORDINATOR

ELEEN GILLOGLEY
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

2023-2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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ELEEN GILLOGLEY

ARRI S. ALLEN

EILEEN GILLOGLEY

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

LILA ABU-LUGHOD

I write to you at the end of an academic year like no other. It was a year of major transitions for Columbia and Barnard. It was a year darkened by the genocidal war on Gaza and suppression of our students’ anti-war protests. It was a year when the principles of academic freedom and free scholarly inquiry were being challenged both from within and without the university. Yet I also was honored to serve as Interim Director of the Center for the Study of Social Difference this past year. I am proud of what CSSD continued to enable our extraordinary and diverse faculty at Columbia and Barnard to do: to work collaboratively on significant social and cultural issues with vision and commitment.

The year began with transitions of leadership at both Columbia and Barnard, the sister institutions CSSD serves. With the departure of President Lee Bollinger, who had offered steady support to CSSD from its founding years, we found ourselves seeking new partnerships and reaching out to make our projects inclusive of new publics. Continuing to rely on the generosity of Ann Kaplan and the Women Creating Change Leadership Council, we saw the coming to fruition of the important multi-year work of our projects on Motherhood and Technology, Insurgent Domesticities, Transnational Black Feminisms, and Afro-Nordic Feminisms, whether through innovative publications, major conferences, international symposia, or community outreach.

The eleven working group projects we supported achieved so much. They built intellectual communities. They addressed social issues of urgent concern, whether the global challenges facing refugees in urban spaces around the world or the creativity of artists and global histories in the Luso-Hispanic world. More locally, they worked on social justice issues facing migrant groups and the incarcerated seeking educations. Ambitious questions of our times were addressed by other working groups tracing the circulation of concepts like “recovery” across domains of biomedicine, climate crisis, and economics, and “extraction” across media and planetary resource grabs.

We are grateful for renewed support for faculty working groups from Dennis Mitchell and the Provost’s office, support that recognized the unique interdisciplinary reach and cross-school collaborations of the faculty-led initiatives CSSD has fostered for over a decade. We now welcome to our Center two new working groups that will start meeting in September. Their titles promise much: Alternative Modes of Being brings together scholars of premodern Asia and the Middle East to seek ideas from the past that might help us through our current crises; Creative Resistances will explore arts and activism in the Americas in a context of repressive political regimes.

Even more exciting is that we will have new leadership. Professor Shana Redmond has agreed to be CSSD’s next Faculty Director. As you can read in the profile in this report welcoming her, Professor Redmond holds a joint position in the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, one of CSSD’s main partners. She brings deep scholarly commitments and leadership experience to this position and we look forward to the years ahead as she helps sustain CSSD’s work and shape its future.
I want to offer special thanks to Kasheba Marshall, our Associate Director, who has kept everything running smoothly while taking on unanticipated administrative challenges. She found herself last summer, fairly new to the position herself, having to orient me and also shepherd me through policies and arcane finances. This spring, we congratulate her on a personal achievement: she was awarded a Masters in Public Administration from SIPA. Kasheba was indispensable, including for her capable and good-humored supervision of a talented group of graduate assistants who worked with us. CSSD includes graduate students as partners in every faculty working group. We also like to include them in CSSD’s regular outreach, benefiting from their special skills and knowledge. We were fortunate to work with a dedicated team that included Evan Berk, Tomoki Fukui, and Khloe Swanson. Sharing our space in Schermerhorn with two of our partner units, the Institute for the Study of Sexuality and Gender and the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, has meant that we leaned on the generosity and experience of their staff. Special thanks go to Ryan Grubbs, Yasmine Butt, Shawn Mendoza, and Sharon Harris. The guidance of others in the administration at Columbia has also been crucial to us as we made our way through the transitions. Advice from Amelia Alverson, Joshua Sakolsky, and before him, Tanique Dunkley, was especially appreciated.

CSSD has become ever more precious in this year of unprecedented assaults on the foundational principles and ideals of the university. We continue to cherish the potential of the university to serve as a space of critical analysis, collegial exchange, ethical inquiry, and deep reflection based on research and expertise on issues of social inequality and injustice. We are looking forward to the work that all our projects will undertake over the next year, knowing that some of them have become strong enough to be able to secure continuing support.

As Paige West wrote last year in her director’s letter, our mission is to foster ethical and progressive social change by bringing scholarship, advocacy, and in-the-world projects together. I feel privileged to have been able to share in and learn from the creative and politically urgent scholarly work of all those who have carried forward the critical intellectual mission of CSSD. The scholars whose work you will read about in this 2023-2024 Annual Report are all dedicated to analyzing the world in the hope of changing it. It has been a pleasure and privilege for me to work with all these colleagues. I am thrilled that we will be embarking on new partnerships that will create new synergies.
Women Creating Change, celebrating its tenth year in 2023, engages distinguished feminist scholars from diverse fields throughout Columbia University. With project partnerships across departments and schools, WCC focuses on contemporary global problems affecting women and on the roles women play in addressing these problems.

Active Working Groups in 2023-24:
A] Afro-Nordic Feminisms
B] Geographies of Injustice: Gender and the City
C] Insurgent Domesticities
D] Motherhood and Technology
E] Transnational Black Feminisms
A) AFRO-NORDIC FEMINISMS

The Afro-Nordic Feminisms Working Group is a Black feminist research and pedagogical project that centers Afro-Nordic identity, culture, social movements, and social justice organizing. We are calling this initiative Afro/Nordic/Feminisms, as we are interested in the areas of inquiry and methodologies named by the interplay between the three terms.

The project brings together scholars in the US and the Nordics and scholars of different generations and disciplines. The members of our group all work on race, racialization, Blackness, and diaspora in the Nordic region, through a Black feminist lens. We all have different relations to the Nordic region and the terms that interanimate our engagement (Afro/Nordic/Feminism); some of us do this work in ways that are not typical in academic work and public scholarship. We share our scholarship and discuss issues that accompany the work such as positionality, politics of citation, storytelling, collaboration, archiving, language justice, and the politics of care, which include deep listening and witnessing as process.

PHOTO OF THE AFRO-NORDIC FEMINISMS WORKING GROUP’S NOVEMBER MEETING

DIRECTORS

MONICA L. MILLER
Ann Whitney Olin Professor of English and Africana Studies, Barnard College

NANA OSEI-KOFI
Professor of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies and Director of the Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program, Oregon State University

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Ayesha Verma, PhD Candidate, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Faith Adiele, Professor, Writing & Literature, California College of the Arts
Benjamin Mier-Cruz, Assistant Professor, Gender & Women’s Studies & Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Oda-Kange Midtvåge Diallo, Researcher, Arts & Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen
Elizabeth Löwe Hunter, PhD, Independent Scholar, Copenhagen
Jasmine KeleKay, Post-Doctoral Fellow, African American Studies, UC Berkeley
Ellen Nyman, PhD Candidate, Acting, Stockholm University of the Arts
Lena Sawyer, Associate Professor, Social Work, Gothenburg University
Temi Odumosu, Assistant Professor, Information School, University of Washington, Seattle
Tess Skadegård Thorsen, PhD, Independent Scholar, Copenhagen

EVENTS & SPEAKING

Sep. 21, 2023: Planning for In-Person Meeting in November
Oct. 18, 2023: Planning for In-Person Meeting in November
Nov. 9–11, 2023: In-Person Meeting in NYC
Dec. 4, 2023: Debrief & Planning for Meeting in Spring 2024
May 9–12, 2024: Panel: Presence, Protest, & Possibility: A Roundtable with the AfroNordic Feminism Group, Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies Meeting, Seattle Washington (Monica, Benjamin, Jasmine, Faith, Tess, Ellen, & Temi)
Oct. 15–20, 2024: Workshop on Pedagogy & Colonialism, University of Iceland (Benjamin, Tess, Oda-Kange, & Elisabeth)
PUBLICATIONS AND CURRICULAR AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS, 2023-24:

1) Attend a pedagogy and colonialism workshop at the University of Iceland (October 2024).
2) Consider launching a project to map the genealogy of Afro Nordic Feminist scholars and their contributions.
3) Potentially host podcast/textual conversations on navigating challenges in our scholarly work in the US/Nordics, focusing on scholarly positionality, language justice, and the field.
4) Explore smaller group collaborations on arts-based and/or activist-based research and writing.

B) GEOGRAPHIES OF INJUSTICE: GENDER AND THE CITY

Geographies of Injustice is a working group committed to exploring the question of subaltern urbanism and aesthetics from an explicitly South-South perspective by bringing urban studies into conversation with studies of social difference, inequality, and cultural production. We have a specific focus on representation and decolonization as they relate to subaltern urban architectural and infrastructural forms. We are particularly keen to bring studies of planning and built form into conversation with concerns about the particular vulnerabilities that minority communities face in navigating situations of urban marginalization.

Our latest project, “Iberian Moments” explores the ongoing impact of this Luso-Hispanic moment in shaping identities, social distinction, histories of merchant and commercial capitalism, and histories of aesthetic production and performance. Working with a broad notion of Luso-Hispanic globality, which dates to the fifteenth century and beyond, we are interested in how Luso-Hispanic trade relations, settlements, and intimacies beyond, we are interested in how Luso-Hispanic constituted a critical aspect of Spanish and Portuguese colonial expansion to the Americas, Asia, and Africa. We are especially keen to understand how Portuguese presence in South Asia markedly reshaped social structures of caste, gender, and religion, even as they set the terms by which new mixed-race communities would emerge in Southeast Asia or along coastal Africa, and how these processes relate to the trade in human chattel, and new extractive economies—that assemblage which is today referred to by the term racial capitalism—which effected an epochal geohistorical transition away from more dispersed, if complexly organized social formations of early modernity, to enable the ideological and the economic dominance of the North Atlantic.

One of our former projects, “Reconstructing Memory in Rio de Janeiroy Favelas and Mumbai’s Zhopdis” sought to develop a template for addressing spatial politics through engagements with historical memory, music, performance, and creative survival strategies of subaltern communities. Our working group drew on the convergent yet distinct urban trajectories of Bombay/Mumbai and Rio de Janeiro, cities associated with the slum and the favela, respectively, as connected sites from which to better apprehend today’s global housing crisis. We worked with community museums and grassroots organizations to develop solutions that will influence policy and sustainable urban planning. We approached self-housing settlements in Rio de Janeiro and Mumbai through connected histories of the Global South where cheap labor, urban conflict and precarious living conditions define the social life of peripheral capitalism.

* Tess Skadegård Thorsen joined a Danish delegation to Brussels in April 2024, meeting policy-makers and legislators for discussions on gender, racism, and AI regulation. On Apr. 16, she also gave a guest lecture at Copenhagen University on the Acts, (arti)Facts, and Politics of Representation in Danish Film.

* Skadegård Thorsen also co-authored a chapter in Danish with Mira C. Skadegård in the new book (Farve)blinde vinkler – om racialising, ulighed og andetgørelse i pædagogisk praksis. (Colour) Blind angles - on racialization, inequity, and othering in pedagogical practices. Their chapter is called Velmenerende og almindannende – Diskrimination, racisme og den gode intention i gymnasieundervisning. (Well-meaning and educational - Discrimination, racism, and good intentions in high-school education.)

* Tess Skadegård Thorsen contributed to a new policy brief for the Danish government on regulation of AI biases.

* Nana Osei-Kofi & Lena Sawyer co-authored, along with Kris Clarke, “Counter Archiving as a Decolonial Pedagogy of Collective Care,” published in Decolonising Social Work in Finland: Racialisation and Practices of Care in March 2024.

* Nana Osei-Kofi’s new book, AfroSwedish Places of Belonging (Northwestern University Press), was published in June 2024.

* Monica L. Miller & Nana Osei-Kofi co-authored the introduction to I Talk about It All the Time (Univ. of Wisconsin Press), translated by Olivia Gunn.


FUTURE PLANS

PHOTOS FROM THE GEOGRAPHIES OF INJUSTICE WORKING GROUP’S OCTOBER CONFERENCE, TITLED “IBERIAN SOUNDSCAPES,” AT YALE UNIVERSITY.
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WOMEN CREATING CHANGE

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Ana Luiza de Abreu Claudio, PhD Candidate, Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT: Isabella Maganda, Anthropology and Spanish & Latin American Cultures, Barnard College

Teresa Cebrián Aranda, Graduate Student, SIPA & Journalism School, Columbia University
Iuri Bauler, Teaching Fellow, Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University
Sohini Chattopadhyay, PhD Candidate, History, Columbia University
Ana Luiza de Abreu Claudio, PhD Candidate, Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University
Jessica Jacobo, Graduate Student, Journalism School, Columbia University
Isabela Souza, PhD Candidate, Geography, Fluminense Federal University

Camila Daniel, Três Rios Institute, Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro
Matias Echanove, Co-founder of the urbz collective
Rahul Srivastava, Co-founder of the urbz collective
Fernando Ermiro, Fundação Getúlio Vargas
Antonio Carlos Firmino, Geographer, Social Action Padre Anchieta (ASPA)
Graciela Montaldo, Professor, LAIC, Columbia University
Nilce Naira Nascimento, Ilê Omolú e Oxum - Rio de Janeiro; National Network of Afro-Brazilian Women & Health
Sergio Gardenghi Sulama, Office of Cultural Heritage, Rio de Janeiro
Luiz Fernando Vianna, Journalist, Batuta Radio

Publication of Iberian Moments Edited Volume:
Working with a broad notion of Luso-Hispanic globality that dates to the 15th Century and beyond, a collaborative group of scholars explores the ongoing impact of the Luso-Hispanic "moment" in shaping identities, social distinction, histories of merchant and commercial capitalism as well as histories of aesthetic production and performance. This volume investigates how Luso-Hispanic trade relations, settlements, and intimacies constituted a critical aspect of Spanish and Portuguese colonial expansion to the Americas, Asia, and Africa. In this synergistic discussion across disciplines, researchers engage with questions such as how the marked influence of Portuguese presence in South Asia reshapes social structures of caste, gender, and religion, even as they set the terms by which new mixed-race communities would emerge in Southeast Asia, or along coastal Africa and how these processes relate to the trade in human chattel. This sociopolitical and economic formation of new extractive economies, now referred to as racial capitalism, effected an epochal geohistorical transition away from more dispersed yet complexly organized social constructions of early modernity, enabling the ideological and economic dominance of the North Atlantic.

Oct. 6-7, 2023: Iberian Soundscapes | Collaboration with Yale University
May 23-24, 2024: Iberian Seascapes | Collaboration with the University of Lisbon


GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS

GRADUATE FELLOWS

EVENTS & SPEAKERS

PUBLICATIONS

DIRECTORS

GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS

GRADUATE FELLOWS

EVENTS & SPEAKERS

PUBLICATIONS

DIRECTORS

GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS

GRADUATE FELLOWS

EVENTS & SPEAKERS

PUBLICATIONS
C) INSURGENT DOMESTICITIES

‘Home’ is a boundary-forming tool, defining, homogenizing, and excluding based on family and national constructs. It resists reinterpretation and is pressured as a lived space. Insurgent Domesticities scrutinizes the insurgent facets of home life, exploring maintenance, creation, labor, and intimacies. Our collective delves into the nuanced aspects of domesticity, investigating its politics through histories of solidarity, disobedience, stealth, and militancy, spanning from the intimate scale of the clothesline to the macro level of state policies.

We champion liberatory historiographical methods and scholarly caregiving, transcending ideological frameworks that use ‘domesticity’ to organize, limit, or subjugate life. We draw from practices emerging from interiority, reshaping the figurations, materiality, and narratives of ‘home’ and ‘domesticity’ within the contemporary protectionist global climate, where ‘home’ remains fiercely guarded. Dissident domesticities, entwined with issues of governance, global economies, political borders, war, labor, and ecological crises, demand emancipating, subversive, and collaborative research approaches spanning territories and institutions. Through insurgent domesticities encompassing laundry, gardens, kitchens, and more, we focus on the active construction of home, transcending or transforming oppressive structures.

Insurgent Domesticities uncovers and exposes the inequalities and injustices embedded in the social, cultural, and political aspects of domestic life. As domesticity shapes identity, security, comfort, and belonging, it wields a dual nature, both confining and emancipatory. To counter its fluidity between safeguarding and critiquing notions of family, nation, and migration, our collective proposes understanding domesticity as a politicized field with myriad interdependencies demanding ongoing negotiation and theorization. Operating under the CSSD theme, Women Creating Change, Insurgent Domesticities engages distinguished feminist scholars from diverse fields to address contemporary global women’s issues.

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MANAGING EDITOR

Aastha D., Independent Scholar

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Hollyambar Kennedy, Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for the History & Theory of Architecture, ETH Zurich
Natalie Reinhardt, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Columbia University
Iulia Statica, Lecturer of Urban Design, Architecture, University of Sheffield
Madiha Tahir, Assistant Professor, American Studies, Yale University
Rishav Thakur, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Columbia University
Sarover Zaidi, Associate Professor, Jindal School of Art & Architecture, Jindal Global University

EVENTS

Sep. 23, 2023: Publishing Retreat to Finalize Manuscript
Nov. 17, 2023: Insurgent Domesticities General Editorial Meeting

PUBLICATIONS

Lilian Chee: Chapter titled “Domesticity and the Architecture Film: Caring-With Architecture,” in Architectures of Care: From the Intimate to the Common (Routledge, 2023).
Neferti X. M. Tadiar on Remaindered Life (Duke Univ. Press, 2022) in Public Books Magazine

FUTURE PLANS

At the Annual Writing Retreat in September 2023, the working group met and finalized the manuscript. It was submitted for review to multiple presses and is still undergoing review.
D) MOTHERHOOD AND TECHNOLOGY

The Motherhood and Technology Working Group explores the profound impact of technological innovations on motherhood. Advances in genomic and reproductive care, novel kinship structures, global power dynamics, and contested bodily politics mark this transformation. While technology drives these changes, the revolution in motherhood also arises from shifts in ethics, social structures, aesthetics, and lived experiences. Our goal is to understand how medical technologies have changed—and been changed by—the experience of motherhood worldwide.

The field is rich with paradoxes. Cryogenic technologies, such as egg freezing and embryo storage, offer women new choices in timing motherhood, yet they also highlight capitalism’s pressures. Surrogacy provides biological parenthood but operates within a financial market that exacerbates global inequalities, often burdening women of color in developing countries. Genetic editing advancements like CRISPR introduce unprecedented possibilities but pose significant ethical challenges. Advanced reproductive technologies can evolve cultural norms, yet they may also reinforce market pressures and heteronormative structures. These complex issues inform our scholarship.

We believe technology is not neutral; it reveals and shapes cultural forces. We are particularly interested in how access to biomedical technologies of motherhood both reflects and influences broader cultural trends, especially within “global care chains,” where care responsibilities disproportionately fall on women of color and those in the developing world. Our research considers the impact of these technologies on poor and working-class women, both internationally and in the first world.

Guided by the interdisciplinary approach of medical humanities, we address these challenges by studying the interplay between medico-scientific ideas and cultural practices. Medicine, from intimate care to public health policy, offers valuable insights into the social role of motherhood, while humanistic approaches can enrich medical perspectives. This expansive view allows us to develop scholarly interventions in debates around technology and motherhood, and to create cultural artefacts that narrate these dilemmas and propose solutions for the public.

DIRECTORS

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RISHI K. GOYAL
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GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Niyati Shenoy, PhD Candidate, MESAAS, Columbia University

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*A also working group members

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Anna Krauthamer, PhD Candidate, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University
Lilith Todd, PhD Candidate, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University
Katherine Begerlein, PhD Candidate, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University

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Emily Bloom, Mellon Public Humanities Fellow, Sarah Lawrence College
Randi Hutter Epstein, Lecturer, English, Yale University
George Estreich, Professor, Creative Nonfiction, Oregon State University
Meredith Gamer, Assistant Professor, Art History & Archeology, Columbia University
Megan Glasmann, Law Student, S.J. Quinney College, University of Utah
Kathleen Hammond, Assistant Professor, School of Law, Toronto Metropolitan University
Jennifer Luong, Constitutional & Human Rights Lawyer, University of Toronto
Katherine Magyarody, Independent Scholar, University of Toronto
Selina Makana, Assistant Professor, History, University of Memphis
Mary Dickey Lindsay, Professor Emerita, School of Nursing, University of Memphis
Nancy King Reame, Mary Dickey Lindsay Professor Emerita, School of Nursing, Columbia University
Naazanene Vatan, MPhil Candidate, Health, Medicine and Society, University of Cambridge
Hannah Zeavin, Assistant Professor, History, UC Berkeley
Helen Zhao, PhD Candidate, Philosophy, Columbia University

EVENTS

Apr. 29, 2024: (Postponed to the fall) I Cannot Control Everything Forever: Emily Bloom Book Launch Event. Written in the crucible of the working group’s discussions and guest lectures, Emily’s book is “an eloquent and intimate debut memoir about navigating the gap between expectation and reality in modern motherhood.”

Dec. 11, 2023: Meeting of Motherhood and Technology Working Group
PUBLICATIONS AND CURRICULAR AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

* Arden Hegele and Rishi Goyal, Working Group Co-Directors, are guest-editing a special issue of The Journal of Medical Humanities, scheduled for release in late 2024. Titled “Conception and Its Discontents,” the issue stems from a conference of the same name held in May 2023, exploring the impacts of emerging technologies and contemporary societal norms on the experience and meaning of reproduction.


* Dr. Nancy Reame, a Working Group member, organized a panel on New York State’s surrogacy law at the “Conception and its Discontents” conference in May. She currently serves as Associate Editor at Frontiers in Reproductive Medicine, is on the Medical Advisory Board of the National Menopause Foundation, consults for Surrogacy360.com, and is currently researching toxic exposures from tampons. Her recent Menopause editorial is titled “Direct-to-Consumer Menopause Care: what do we know about its consumers?” She was screened for the AAAS Kavli Science Journalism Awards and has several other publications listed on Socialdifference.columbia.edu.


* Katherine Bergevin’s May 17, 2023 op. ed., “Like today, 18th-century laws about pregnancy aimed to control women,” was published in the Washington Post.

FUTURE PLANS

As our affiliation with CSSD concludes in summer 2024, the Working Group is completing our final end-product—the publication of a special issue on “Conception and Its Discontents” in the Journal of Medical Humanities. This work is the capstone of three years of workshops and meetings, guest lectures and assigned readings. We are proud of the work of the group, whose achievements include organizing and hosting a major conference on “Conception and Its Discontents” in May 2023 and incubating several publications from group members (notably Emily Bloom’s book, as well as many articles both scholarly and public-facing). Other future plans include featuring a course on the topic of Motherhood and Technology through the Medical Humanities major. We are grateful to the CSSD for supporting this work!

E) TRANSNATIONAL BLACK FEMINISMS

The Transnational Black Feminisms Working Group envisions transnational Black feminisms going beyond mere survival and state recognition, aiming to foster different perspectives on belonging, community, justice, and equity. Rooted in historical struggles such as anti-slavery movements, colonial resistance, and anti-violence activism like Black Lives Matter, these efforts pave the way for radical social change.

We have named this initiative transnational Black feminisms because it foregrounds the long history of Black feminist praxis and theorization, dating back to the 19th century. “Black feminisms” also reflects our understanding of the importance of racial politics in the development of capitalism and global politics—what Cedric Robinson called “racial capitalism”—as well as our goal of integrating a gendered analysis into the concept of racial capitalism. Given today’s heightened anti-Black racism, centering blackness through a feminist, queer, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist lens becomes crucial for envisioning and pursuing justice.

Addressing the issue of Black women’s marginalization within mainstream feminism, the initiative seeks to highlight the diasporic, imaginative, and radical history of Black feminist politics. Through examining connections between Black feminism, transnational feminism, queer politics, anti-imperialism, and anti-capitalism, the Working Group explores intersecting oppressions and strategies for liberation. By delving into the complexities of transnational Black feminisms worldwide, from the Caribbean to Africa, South America, and Europe, the group aims to evaluate the coherence of a global Black feminist politic. The study also seeks to identify overlaps, contradictions, and synergies among Black feminism, Indigenous feminism, Latinx feminism, and Asian feminism.

DIRECTORS

PREMILLA NADASEN
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TAMI NAVARRO
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WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

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Abosede George, Tow Associate Professor, Africana Studies & History, Barnard College
Keenanga Yamhatta Taylor, Professor, African-American Studies, Princeton University
Manijeh Moradian, Assistant Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College
Dana Ain Davis, Professor, Women’s & Gender Studies, CUNY Graduate Center
Celia Naylor, Professor, Africana Studies & History, Barnard College
Yvette Christiansø, Claire Tow Professor, Africana Studies & English Literature, Barnard College
Natasha Lightfoot, Associate Professor, History, Columbia University
Robyn Antoine-Spencer, Professor, African American Studies & History, Wayne State University
Vanessa Agard-Jones, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Columbia University

EVENTS

Mar 22, 2024: Pre-Conference Workshop
Mar. 22, 2024: Panel Discussion: Marxism and Transnational Black Feminist Liberation

FUTURE PLANS

This final conference brings our working group to a close. It has been a difficult, but very generative time as we navigated COVID the first year of our working group. The pre conference gathering and panel discussion, followed by BCRW’s S&F conference the next day proved to be generative and a gratifying way to culminate the working group. Thanks so much to CSSD for all your support and the crucially important space you provide for scholars and researchers at Barnard/Columbia and across the city.
IMAGINING JUSTICE

IMAGINING JUSTICE brings together scholars, activists, and artists on projects that envision new ways of fighting inequality and promoting gender, racial, economic, and environmental justice in global and domestic contexts.

Active Working Groups in 2023-24:

A) Extractive Media: Infrastructure & Aesthetics of Depletion
B) Migrant Personhood and Rights: Crises of Recognition
C) Prison Education and Social Justice Curricula
D) Recovery
E) Refugee Cities: Urban Dimensions of Forced Displacement
F) Seeds of Diaspora
Questions of resource extraction are now front and center in almost every academic discipline across the humanities and social sciences. Propelled by the urgency of planetary climate crisis, scholars are reinventing their core research questions to ask how we came to this pass, and also where do we go from here? The Extractive Media working group seeks to take this conversation beyond fossil fuels to track the ways in which energy economies span continents and oceans, differentially affect unequal bodies and lives, and bleed across disparate sites such as the coal mine and the computer screen.

We begin with the question of how media forms (print, architecture, photography, cinema, or, more recently, computational media) have historically contributed to material and imaginative modes of extraction, and, further, how we might turn to these very forms to find new possibilities for equitable futures. Extraction refers to the creation of surplus value through a forceful removal—whether of mineral resources from the earth, molecules from the air, labor from working bodies, or attention from networked users. Recent developments have taken extraction out of mine shafts and pits; extraction can now be theorized as being everywhere from megacities to computer screens. Media are understood at once as communications, aesthetics, technologies and infrastructures. Extractive media, then, are configurations of material conditions that make such processes of removal possible. Analyzing coal mines, railways, steamships, and oceans as part of a global extractive media complex, for example, connects the nineteenth-century turn to fossil fuel capitalism to today’s geopolitics of energy and gives us new perspectives about the ongoing debate about carbon emissions. The group has met several times since Spring 2023 to hold workshops and seminars on the topic. The core group has grown from a few disciplines at Columbia to a wider range of disciplines in the New York area. There is a robust presence of graduate students in the group.
B) MIGRANT PERSONHOOD AND RIGHTS: CRISES OF RECOGNITION

How does a nation-state reach the point where it becomes national policy to remove thousands of children from their parents as a deterrent to seeking asylum? How does a nation-state reach the point where it prosecutes individuals for providing water to migrants in a desert? How does a nation-state reach the point that it bans people from entering the country based on their religion?

During his first week in office, Donald Trump issued an executive order that banned foreign nationals from seven majority-Muslim countries from entering the United States. In response, there were spontaneous protests around the country and broad condemnation of the sweeping anti-immigrant nature of the policies. This pattern repeated in the succeeding months, as the executive branch continued to focus on anti-immigrant initiatives, such as family separation on the border and policies limiting receipt of public benefits by immigrants. Despite this, large segments of the public remain favorable to immigrants and immigration and perennial conflicts over immigration policy have increased, even resulting in a 35-day shutdown of the federal government.

Our project addresses anti-immigrant sentiments and policies by engaging both academic research and the expertise of community-based migrant advocacy organizations to develop novel questions and approaches that address current immigration issues. The project will culminate with a series of public interventions that allow academics, activists, artists, and advocates to communicate and cooperate in imagining justice and recognition for migrants.

EVENTS & SPEAKERS

Nov. 15, 2023: Seminar with Macarena Gómez-Barris, “Elemental Thinking & the Representation of Extraction”
Jan. 25, 2024: Seminar with Brian Jacobson on “Extraction Time”
Mar. 4, 2024: Seminar with Eleanor B. Johnson and Jonah Rowen
Apr. 24, 2024: Seminar with Stephanie O’Rourke, “How to Scale a Volcano”

PUBLICATIONS


CONFERENCE PAPERS, ROUNDTABLES, AND OTHER EVENTS

ZEYNEP ÇELİK ALEXANDER

Spring 2023: Roundtable on Publishing, annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians, Montreal
Spring 2023: “Drawn in Section: Property Lines in the Forest of Dean in the 1840s,” annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians, Montreal
Spring 2023: “Drawn in Section: Property Lines in the Forest of Dean in the 1840s,” Property working group, Humanities Center, University of Rochester
Fall 2023: “Paper Beats Rock,” Boston University, Department of Art History and Architecture, Boston
Fall 2023: “Paper Beats Rock,” eflux, Brooklyn, NY
Spring 2024: “Data,” School of Architecture, Montana State University

DEBASHREE MUKHERJEE

Spring 2024: Camera South Asia II conference, Columbia University
Spring 2024: Roundtable on Extraction and Media Methods, Society for Cinema and Media Studies, Boston

FUTURE PLANS

The Extractive Media Working Group is planning to continue the seminars in Fall 2024, as well as two workshops organized in collaboration with ISERP and Heyman SOF. The group also hopes to have a conference in Fall 2025.

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DIRECTORS

THEA ABU EL-HAJ
Professor in Education and Education Program Director/Chair, Barnard College

J.C. SALYER
Associate Professor of Practice in Human Rights and Anthropology, Barnard College

UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANT

Yasmin Naji, Bachelor of Arts, Barnard College, Columbia University
WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Ariana Mangual Figueroa, Associate Professor, CUNY Graduate Center
Kayhan Irani, Artivista
Corinne Kentor, formerly Teachers College & Presidents’ Alliance
Naor H. Ben-Yehoyada, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Columbia University
Nara Milanich, Professor, History, Barnard College
Ayten Gundogdu, Tow Associate Professor of Political Science, Barnard College
Garnett Russell, Associate Professor, Teachers College, Columbia University
Chandler Miranda, Assistant Professor, Education, Molloy University
Jennifer Queenan, New York City Department of Education
Lara Evangelista, New York City Department of Education
Reva Jaffe-Walter, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, Montclair State University

PUBLICATIONS AND CURRICULAR AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

The Working Group collaborated with the Arab American Family Support Center on a study assessing anti-immigrant experiences of youth in public schools. Our academic expertise helped community organizations support asylum seekers by developing research on current country conditions. We also initiated engaged pedagogy classes at Barnard Human Rights Program, where students partnered with legal services to create country conditions reports. Additionally, we began crafting a website, incorporating group expertise and contributions, to provide analysis and resources for academics, students, community groups, and activists amidst the anti-immigrant climate.

FUTURE PLANS

This has been the final year of the Migrant Personhood Working Group. The group plans to complete the MigrantPersonhoods.org website. Once the website is complete, it may seek support to hold an event in the next academic year.

C) PRISON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The aim of this project has been to bring together Barnard and Columbia faculty and graduate students with alums of Columbia’s prison education programs to think together about how to strengthen the courses and other educational opportunities Columbia presently offers to incarcerated students; to develop new courses and faculty training supports for those initiatives; and to think about and develop a more systematic set of classes to be offered to Columbia and Barnard undergraduates dealing with social justice and its relationship to carceral systems.

DIRECTOR

JEAN HOWARD
English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Patrick Anson, PhD Candidate, English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University
**GRADUATE FELLOWS**

*ALSO WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Nick Ide, PhD Candidate, Physics, Columbia University
Mia Cecily Florin-Sefton, PhD Candidate, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University

**WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Catherine Suffern, Program Manager, Justice-in-Education Initiative
Julie Crawford, Mark Van Doren Professor of the Humanities, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University
Claudia Rincón, Associate Director, Psychology, Columbia University
Samuel Kelton Roberts, Associate Professor, History, Columbia University
Jeremy Dodd, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Physics, Columbia University
Eileen Gillooly, Executive Director, Heyman Center/Society of Fellows, Columbia University
Alisa Solomon, Professor, Journalism, Columbia University
Geraldine Downey, Robert Johnston Niven Professor of Humane Letters, Psychology, Columbia University
Deb Fitzgerald, Executive Assistant, Hudson Link
Frances Negron-Muntaner, Julian Clarence Levi Professor, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University
Caroline Marvin, Director of Academic Affairs, Psychology, Columbia University
Ivan Calaff, Professional Studies, Columbia University
Marcel Agüeros, Professor, Astronomy, Columbia University
Jennifer Middleton, Lamont Assistant Research Professor, Earth Observatory, Columbia University
Julie Peters, H. Gordon Garbedian Professor, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University
Rebecca Jordan-Young, Ann Whitney Olin Professor, Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Barnard College

**EVENTS & SPEAKERS**

Mar. 4, 2024: Prison Education Informational Panel: This event brought together six panelists — formerly incarcerated students and Columbia graduate students who have experience supporting prison courses — as well as some thirty attendees to discuss prison education opportunities and to recruit graduate students to the work in future years.

**GRANTS**

Jean Howard spearheaded a successful effort to obtain a significant grant from the Open Society Foundation to provide financial support for formerly incarcerated students to matriculate at General Studies to finish their BA degrees.

**CURRICULAR AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

The work of this final year was to get members of the working group to devise and actually to teach classes at Taconic and Sing Sing Prisons and to codify the procedures, handbooks, and protocols that will enable other faculty and graduate students in the future to begin prison teaching more easily than has been true in the past.

This past academic year, a number of members of the working group taught prison courses. Professor Jennifer Middleton, supported by graduate student and working group participant Nick Ide, taught “Earth: Origin, Evolution, Processes, Future” at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in the fall semester. Currently, Professor Alisa Solomon is teaching “Journalism and Public Life” at Sing Sing; Professor Samuel Kelton Roberts is teaching “Histories of Public Health in Communities of Color: The Built Environment in the 20th Century United States” at Taconic Correctional Facility; and Professor Julie Crawford, supported by advanced English PhD student Gabrielle DaCosta, is teaching “Paradise Lost, Frankenstein, and Toni Morrison’s Paradise” at Taconic.

In addition, working group member Catherine Suffern, now working as Program Manager for the Justice-in-Education Initiative Prison Education Program, has updated the comprehensive handbook for faculty and graduate students teaching in prison, and she and Patrick Anson organized a highly successful informational session for graduate students wishing to become course facilitators for prison classes on March 4. We have also been codifying our procedures into digital forms so that our information on prison education practices, strategies, and opportunities can be passed on to others.

**FUTURE PLANS**

The The Prison Education and Social Justice Working Group is in its final semester, but the intention is for its members to continue contributing to prison instruction going forward, as well as to helping students returning from prison to continue their education at Columbia or other institutions of higher education. Prison education is an established, if under-recognized, part of Columbia life. As a collectivity, the The Prison Education and Social Justice Working Group is committed to seeing it thrive and evolve.
In accordance with the CSSD’s designated focus on Imagining Justice, our working group critically considers the circulations of “recovery” in arenas such as biomedicine, pandemic politics, climate change, economics, and other fields of governance.Aligned with current scholarly and activist efforts to think through the transformations in social relations required for meaningful versions of repair and recuperation, we are particularly interested in challenging presumptions of the feasibility/desirability of a return to a prior normative state. Instead, we aim to consider how a transformative justice approach might spur new imaginations of not only social justice, but also embodiment, health, individual well-being and collective disease. Because the grounding metaphors for “recovery” in social and political life derive from biomedical discourse, and because technoscientific solutions are often deemed to be integral to modes of recuperation, our proposed method for addressing these questions is F/ISTS (Feminist Intersectional Science & Technology Studies).Exploring notions of “recovery” through the dual lenses of transformative justice and feminist/intersectional STS, we will pay close attention to the reciprocal relations between technoscientific practices and knowledges, on the one hand, and multiple intersecting axes of power on the “other.”


* "Humanitarianism as Handmaiden" The Baffler, no. 71. (November/December) 2023.

* “Hayv Kahraman and her More-than-Human Others: Paintings from Bioscience to Botany and Back” Catalogue Essay, Moody Center for the Arts, Rice University, Spring 2024.


**FUTURE PLANS**

* Recovery Roundtable at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Social Study of Science, Amsterdam, July 2024 (Working group members Elizabeth Bernstein, Kerwin Kaye, Samuel Roberts, and Amy Zhou will participate).

* Publication of a journal special issue incorporating the contributions of working group members; 2024-2025 academic year will be spent preparing articles for this, and this will hopefully culminate with a Bellagio residency to complete this work.

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**E) REFUGEE CITIES: URBAN DIMENSIONS OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT**

We are a Columbia University-based group of scholars from across disciplines and institutions interested in bringing together the increasingly interrelated fields of Refugee Studies and Urban Studies. While there are few, if any, scholars or institutions that explicitly and intentionally consider these fields together, the expanding number of internationally displaced people settling in cities and interacting with and in urban spaces across the globe merits sustained engagement and analysis. The aim of this working group is to center and examine the social, political, and material interrelatedness of refugees and cities in varying geographical areas.

**DIRECTORS**

**AMY CHAZKEL**
Bernard Hirschhorn Associate Professor of Urban Studies, Department of History, Columbia University

**BAHIA M. MUNEM**
Lecturer, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Columbia University

Cities are generally conceptualized as permanent (made of brick, mortar, and metal), modern, and planned. They are governed by nation-states and are part of complex networks of global capital and knowledge. In contrast, the spaces where refugees settle (or are settled) are generally considered temporary. However, this does not match the actual experience of refugees, since many come from and inhabit cities. Our group aims to address such pressing issues of humanistic (and humanitarian) concern as the status and deep history of sanctuary cities, the extent of and limitations to national sovereignty, and struggles for the right to the city. We are interested in examining these urban sites as spaces of reception, rejection, hypervisibility, and invisibility. As a group that includes scholars whose research has investigated cities both past and present, we are interested in thinking about the ways in which internationally displaced people settle in cities as part of a long history of the improvised, often dissident use of urban space, and the historical construction of social inequality across different geographic scales.
**GRADUATE ASSISTANT**

May Niiya, Master of Arts Student, American Studies, Columbia University

**WORKING GROUP MEMBERS**

Alex Aleinikoff, Dean, University Professor, The New School; Director, Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility

A. George Bajalia, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Wesleyan University

Naor Ben-Yehoyada, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Columbia University

Hiba Bou Akar, Associate Professor, DSAPP, Columbia University

Emma Shaw Crane, Assistant Professor, Urban & Environmental Studies, Loyola Marymount University

Matthew DeMaio, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, George Washington University

Catherine Fennell, Associate Professor, Anthropology, Columbia University

Fanny Julissa García, Oral Historian

Achilles Kallergis, Assistant Professor, New School for Social Research; Director, Project on Cities and Migration, Zolberg Institute

Nadia Latif, Lecturer, Anthropology, Columbia University

Giorgia Mirto, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Columbia University

Mae Ngai, Lung Family Professor of Asian American Studies and Professor of History, Columbia University

Anooradha Siddiqi, Assistant Professor, Architecture, Barnard College

Kian Tajbakhsh, Lecturer & Presidential Fellow, Committee on Global Thought; Adj. Professor, SIPA, Columbia University

Neni Panourgìa, Affiliated Faculty, Hellenic Studies, Academic Adviser, JIE, Columbia University

Anna Simone Reumert, Postdoctoral Fellow, Zolberg Institute, The New School

Anooradha Siddiqi, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Columbia University

Amin Younes Aossar, PhD Candidate, Centre for Advanced Migration Studies, University of Copenhagen

Faime Alpagu, Postdoctoral Researcher, MAX KADE Foundation

**EVENTS & SPEAKERS**

Oct. 11, 2023: Refugee Cities Working Group Meeting; working group members read and provided feedback on an article-in-progress by Emma Shaw Crane.

Nov. 17, 2023: Refugee Cities Working Group Meeting; working group members read and provided feedback on a book proposal by Nadia Latif.

Feb. 9, 2024: Refugee Cities Working Group Meeting; working group members read and provided feedback on a manuscript-in-progress by Anna Reumert.

Mar. 22, 2024: Refugee Cities Working Group Meeting; working group members read and provided feedback on a book-chapter-in-progress by Mae Ngai.

**FUTURE PLANS**

The Refugee Cities Working Group is planning a two-day writing retreat in order to workshop up to ten 5,000-word articles for a special issue of the Journal of Refugee Studies, for which the group plans on submitting a proposal. At the retreat, working group members will workshops pieces for inclusion in the special issue and co-author an editor’s introduction.

The group will continue to meet in 2024-2025 and is in talks with the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at The New School to have multimedia projects centered in the digital humanities published in their online journal. We will end the year with a public panel for the special issue launch.
F) SEEDS OF DIASPORA

‘Seeds of Diaspora’ convenes an interdisciplinary group of academics and practitioners from the arts, sciences and humanities who work on the social and cultural meaning of uncultivated plant life. Our initial sessions and presentations have included in-the-field plant identification, maps, images, practices, and texts to study ecological, herbalist, culinary, agricultural, literary, artistic, anthropological, and other cultural traditions. In our second year, we are planning a series of internal and public-facing events that can help us to identify plants that occupy intersectional positions across different cultures.

Ultimately, using what we learn from one another and making use of our respective expertise, we plan to select a short list (5-8) of non-cultivated plants found in New York City, and consider how they each embody native and non-native landscape imaginaries. In an era of fraught nationalism, mass migrations and climate change, as the boundaries between ecosystems and society are constantly reconfigured, we will emphasize the potential of plants to connect and to describe cultural landscapes past, present, and future.

LYNETTE WIDDER
Professor of Practice, Sustainability Management, SPS, Columbia University

RALPH GHOCHE
Assistant Professor in the Department of Architecture at Barnard College

DIRECTORS
Fern Thompsett, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Columbia University

GRADUATE ASSISTANT
Anthony Acciavati, Diana Balmori Assistant Professor, Architecture, Yale University
Michael Balick, New York Botanical Garden & Columbia University
Anelise Chen, Assistant Professor, Climate School, Columbia University
Anette Freytag, Professor, Landscape Architecture, Rutgers University
Lucas Mertehkian, New York Botanical Garden
Naeem Mohaiemen, Associate Professor, School of the Arts, Columbia University

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS
Shahid Naeem, Professor, Ecology, Evolution, & Environmental Biology, Columbia University
Matthew Palmer, Senior Lecturer, Ecology, Evolution, & Environmental Biology, Columbia University
Darby Minow, Adj. Assistant Professor, School of the Arts, Columbia University
Lex Taylor, Independent Scholar
Wendy S. Walters, Associate Professor, School of the Arts, Columbia University

EVENTS & SPEAKERS

Sep. 27, 2023: Planting Stories: Introduction ~ The group read several stories pertinent to the working group theme, and engaged in a broad-ranging collective discussion to define the parameters of the work to be undertaken by the group as a whole.
Oct. 27, 2023: Foraging Tour in Central Park ~ The group engaged the services of Steve Brill, a local wild foods expert, who gave us a guided tour of edible and medicinal plants that grow in Central Park.
Dec. 1, 2023: Swiss Landscape Architect Dieter Kienast’s Love for Spontaneous Urban Vegetation. ~ Group member Anette Freytag gave a talk based on her research into Kienast’s work and the way in which he focused on feral and wild plants growing in urban settings.
Jan. 25, 2024: Postwar plant mapping ~ Lynnette Widder guided a discussion on her current research into mapping the plants growing in damaged parts of Berlin during the postwar years.
Feb 23, 2024: Screening of ‘Jole Dobe Na’ ~ Naeem Mohaiemen screened his film and curated an open discussion afterwards with a focus on the ‘plant feelings’ portrayed within the film.
Mar. 28, 2024: Creative writing with diasporic plants ~ Anelise Chen discussed her current writing project, writing from the perspective of plants introduced into North America by various waves of immigrant workers, and solicited feedback from the group.
Apr. 19, 2024: Atmospheric Pastoral: The Sheep Meadow with Wendy S Walters
Apr. 24, 2024: From Earth to Art. Seeing, Acquiescing, or Contesting the Anthropocene. Public talk by Eric Verdeil

FUTURE PLANS

In the 2024-25 academic year, we will continue our monthly presentations featuring interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners. This fall, Matt Palmer and Anthony Acciavati will present. We also plan to enhance community engagement with public events, including a talk by Palestinian artist Jumana Manna on her films ‘Foragers’ (2022) and ‘Wild Relatives’ (2018), and insights from Eric W. Sanderson on the Welikia Project, which is building on the Mannahatta Project to encompass all five boroughs of NYC. Seeds of Diaspora is excited to deepen its collaboration with the New York Botanical Gardens, focusing on their Herbarium and rare books collections. Project leaders are exploring a new collaborative course for the 2025-26 academic year, building on research of 5-8 non-cultivated plants native to NYC, examining their roles, distribution, and cultural significance within local communities through student-led projects.
CSSD WELCOMES NEW FACULTY DIRECTOR & TWO NEW WORKING GROUPS

The Center for the Study of Social Difference is thrilled to welcome Professor Shana L. Redmond as our new Faculty Director. Professor Redmond (she/her) is Professor of English and Comparative Literature and holds a joint position at the Center for the Study of Ethnicity & Race (CSER), one of CSSD’s five partners. A writer and interdisciplinary scholar of race, culture, and power, she is the author of *Anthem: Social Movements and the Sound of Solidarity in the African Diaspora* (NYU Press, 2014) and *Everything Man: The Form and Function of Paul Robeson* (Duke UP, 2020), which received a 2021 American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation with the special citation of the Walter & Lillian Lowenfels Award for Criticism. To learn more about Professor Redmond’s excellent work, go to socialdifference.columbia.edu/news or click the link here.

“*I am deeply committed to collaborative study; I see its need and believe in its transformative potential. It is that focus on collaboration in thought within CSSD that drew me to this position and I look forward to the insights and knowledge that our working groups and programming will produce.*”

PROFESSOR SHANA L. REDMOND

Additionally, CSSD welcomes two new Working Groups beginning in the fall of 2024: Alternative Modes of Being, directed by Professor Mana Kia (MESAAS), and Creative Resistances: Arts and Activism in the Americas, co-directed by Maria José Contreras (School of the Arts, Theatre, Columbia University) and Jacqueline García Suárez (Latin American and Iberian Cultures). Learn more about these two new projects on our website.

WOMEN CREATING CHANGE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

“In our current global environment, it is extremely important that we understand the influence of women on the economic, political, and cultural forces that shape our surroundings. Our programs seek to incorporate academic research about women and other underrepresented groups in the classroom and to better inform global decision making.

Our faculty leverage donor support in an impressive way to produce extraordinary global projects. Please join us in supporting this dynamic research and outreach.”

Ann KAPLAN, Columbia University Trustee Emerita
Partner, Circle Wealth Management

“Your gift to the Center for the Study of Social Difference:

Sustains our future

Fortifies our research

Supports our students

contact socialdifference@columbia.edu for more information"

Columbia University’s Women Creating Change Leadership Council comprises individuals committed to exploring issues that affect women and how women address global gender challenges. The mission of the Council is to promote interdisciplinary collaborative research and to sponsor events that publicize this vital work. Council members assist the faculty in framing how their academic endeavors can create a more significant impact. The WCC Leadership Council provides a critical link between the University’s faculty-led projects and the global business, academic, and civil society community.

**WCC LC MEMBER LIST**

ANN KAPLAN [Chair], New York
ANNETTE ANTHONY, London
ANJALI BANSAL, India
JEWELLE BICKFORD, New York
ALELIA BUNDLES, Washington D.C.
LISA CARNOY, New York
ISOBEL COLEMAN, New York
ANNA-KATE CURTIS, New York
JAMILA DAVIS, New York
ANGELA DORAN, New York
DANIELE DUELL, New York
JANICE REALS ELLIG, New York
MELISSA FISHER, New York
ALYSON NEEL, Baton Rouge
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CAROLEE LEE, New York
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LYNN MESTEL, New York
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DIANA MOREINIS NASSER, São Paulo, Brazil
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DIANA TAYLOR, New York
JACKI ZEHNER, Utah
BRINGING TOGETHER PARTNERS TO CREATE CHANGE

CSSD projects have received support from external partners and from Columbia University, including:

- LUCE FOUNDATION
- NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
- HEMISPHERIC INSTITUTE FOR PERFORMANCE & POLITICS
- INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES
- HEYMAN CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES
- Institute for the Study of Sexuality & Gender
- Center for the Study of Ethnicity & Race
- Arts & Sciences Departments
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- Institute for Comparative Literature & Society
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- Office of the President
- Office of the Provost
- Office of the Executive Vice President for Arts & Sciences
- Center for Gender & Sexuality Law
- Barnard Center for Research on Women
- Institute for Religion, Culture, & Public Life
- Columbia Law School
- Columbia Global Centers
- Columbia School of Social Work
- Columbia Climate School

Written by CSSD Working Group Directors and Staff
Prepared and Edited by CSSD Staff, with special thanks to Evan Berk

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