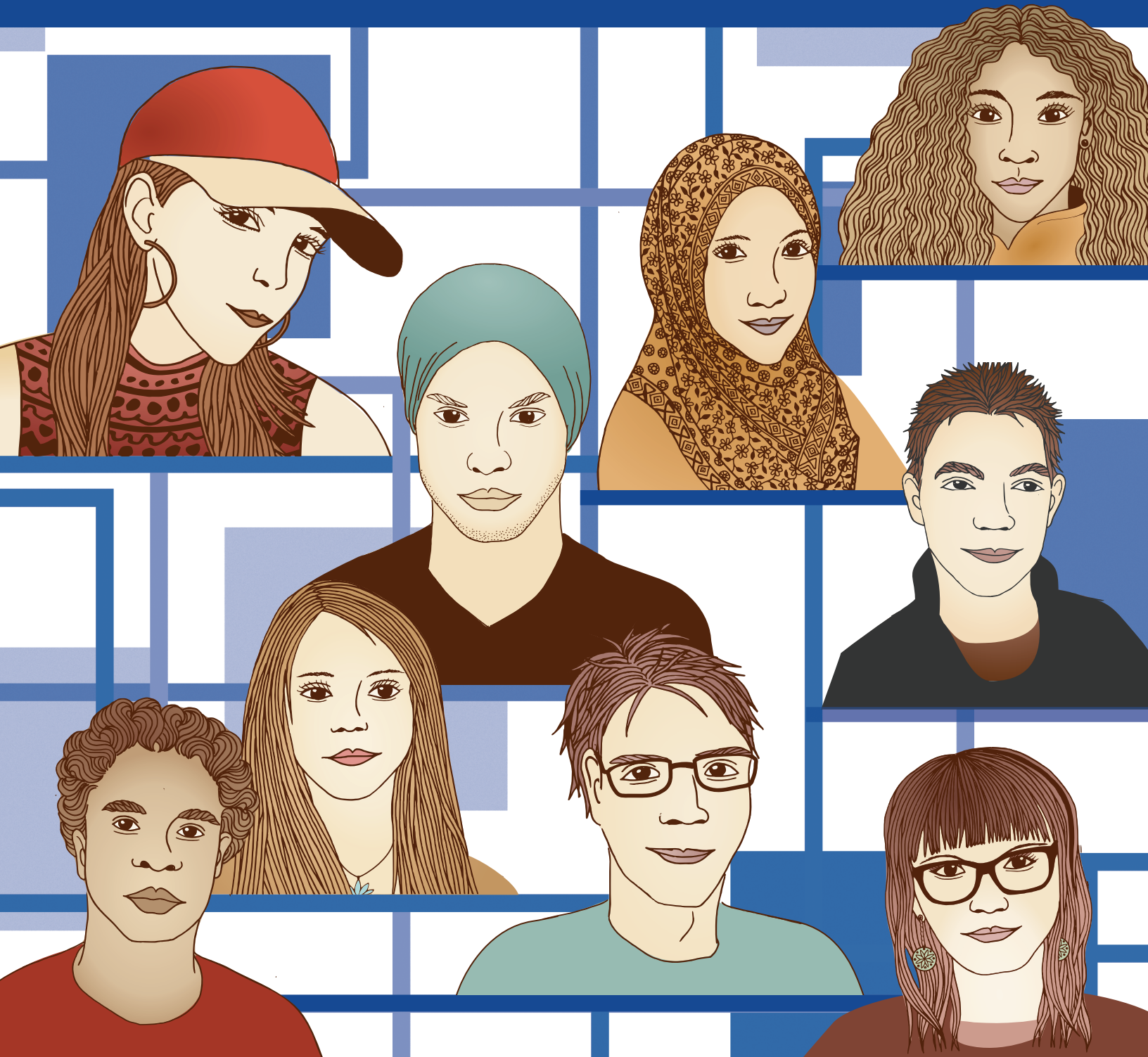


Boston University Center for the Humanities
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



Volume 13
2020-2021

(617) 353-6250
buch@bu.edu
725 Commonwealth Avenue, B02
Boston, Massachusetts 02215



Staff 2020-2021

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 Tamzen Flanders, *Administrator*
 Ashley Mulcahy, *Administrative Coordinator*
 Christine D'Auria, *Graduate Coordinator,
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 Maurice Lee, *English*
 Stephanie Nelson, *Classical Studies*
 Adela E. Pineda, *Romance Studies*
 Michael Zell, *History of Art & Architecture*

Purpose

The Center for the Humanities supports the work of humanities scholars and students at Boston University through fellowships, awards, and events such as our forums that promote dialogue between humanities disciplines and public constituencies in ways that are vital to civic life.



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Letter from the Director



The fifth year (2020-2021) of my directorship of the BU Center for the Humanities has seen an expansion of our programming and initiatives as we continue to extend the Center's reach and respond to the needs of our student, faculty, and public constituencies.

On June 16, 2020, we expressed our sadness and anger over the murder of George Floyd by police. In denouncing the systemic and historically entrenched racism that underlies the constant harassment and deadly violence against Black people and our support for the protestors acting in the name of racial justice, we also vowed to take concrete steps to confront racism and injustice directly. Thus, during the 2020-2021 academic year we provided funding for an initiative to support the development and teaching of additional courses in African American humanities areas; we created a new podcast *Black Memoirs in the Global Age*; and we continued to plan our three-week summer program for low-income first-generation college bound high school students who live in the BU "neighborhood" but are far removed from the opportunities the University provides.

This last initiative, our program, **The One and the Many at Boston University**, is funded by a generous, multi-year grant from the Teagle Foundation. The students will be studying a classics-based humanities curriculum, beginning with ancient Greek and Roman literature, through nineteenth-century essays and lectures by prominent social activists, to documentary films of our contemporary moment.

One of the Center's central goals is to expose our students to life and work as humanists both within and beyond academia. To this end, we continued our programs for undergraduates, including summer internships. Despite the pandemic, we managed to preserve our Boston area undergraduate internship program, with the exception of the *Boston Globe*, which suspended all of its summer internships. The following sites hosted BUCH interns virtually in summer 2020: *Beacon Press*; *Brattle Theatre*; and the Communications Office of BU's thriving and innovative *School of Public Health*. Summer 2021 will include an additional internship sponsored by the law firm *Burns & Levinson*, which was made possible by BU alumna Christine Fletcher, a partner at the firm. And the *Boston Globe* will resume its internship program. So in summer 2021, we will have undergraduate interns at five Boston area sites.

Our effort to find novel ways of supporting graduate study in the humanities was exemplified by the third year of our highly successful summer internship program for humanities PhD students. A collaboration with the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs, these internships provide professional opportunities outside of the academy that complement our Graduate Dissertation Fellowships. In summer 2020, we sponsored graduate internships at the following sites (though all internships were conducted virtually due to the pandemic): *Boston Public Library*; *Boston Athenæum*; *Boston Red Sox*; *Boston Mayor's Office*; and *Massachusetts Historical Society* and the new *Health Humanities* initiative at BU. In summer 2021, *Red Sox* and *Health Humanities* will drop out, and we will add the *Peabody Essex Museum*. Some of the internship sites will be open and enable in-person internships, some will be virtual.

We will continue to encourage undergraduate and graduate student participation in all of our BUCH programs and events and to encourage collaboration between undergraduate and graduate humanities students of the kind displayed in our incarceration film series. For example, our April 21, 2021 event, "Piper Kerman in Conversation About *Orange Is the New Black*," co-sponsored by BU's School of Law, featured the renowned memoirist and screen writer addressing systemic injustices within the prison system, and her work on prison reform. Held on Zoom, like all programming this year, the event, which had over two hundred audience members, revealed the inadvertent advantages of virtual programs.

The heart of the Center's enterprise is the assistance we provide humanities faculty through project awards, fellowships, publishing stipends, and other types of funding. In particular, the Fellows Seminar, comprised each semester of faculty and graduate students on research leaves funded by the Center, is central to our mission.

The intellectual energy and generosity on display during the bi-weekly meetings is a pleasure to see, as is the transformation of each group from a disparate collection of researchers into a democratic community of scholars. A few highlights follow.

Our fall 2020 seminar was launched with a stunning presentation by Professor of Philosophy Juliet Floyd. A Wittgenstein specialist, who studied with Stanley Cavell at Harvard, Floyd discussed her forthcoming collection on Cavell's work, *Continuing Cavell: "Must We Mean What We Say?" at Fifty*, in particular, her introduction to the collection, "Cavell's Revolutionary Uses of Wittgenstein." We all came away from the seminar enlightened about some of the most complex and influential philosophy of the twentieth century. In November, Mariah Gruner, a graduate student in the American & New England Studies Program shared her groundbreaking dissertation on nineteenth-century needlework and quilting. Her exploration of the political uses of these domestic arts revealed how women of the time used material crafts to construct public culture and assume political agency. Drawing parallels to contemporary examples of "craftivism and subversive stitching," Gruner showed continuity across time in women's materialist interventions. In a subsequent seminar led by Associate Professor of Religion Margarita Guillory, we learned about how witches of color and Black witches in the twenty-first century have appropriated digital methods to further non-traditional forms of worship. This thoroughly compelling and original work furthers Guillory's lifelong interest in how African American women seize power over their lives by manipulating material objects. By showing how Africana religious communities exploit online resources such as Tumblr, Instagram, and TikTok to educate wider audiences about Africana religious beliefs and to legitimate diasporic conjuring practices, Guillory revealed how emerging technological media revitalize contemporary worship.

The spring 2021 seminar began with an ambitious presentation by Professor of Chinese & Comparative Literature Cathy Yeh on "The Rise of Star Culture in Modern China." Emphasizing the increasing importance of newspapers and magazines in twentieth-century China, Yeh showed how mass media was used by elites to expand general understanding of homoeroticism, bisexuality, and transgender and non-binary people. New cultural spaces created by mass media helped to usher in greater public openness to differences of identity and desire, and also extended the power of literary and aesthetic form itself. Next, in presenting her dissertation on Nikosthenes workshop artists who introduced remarkable innovations into late archaic vase painting, graduate student Jen Tafe demonstrated the role of originality in ancient creative production that was less about individual artists than about artist collectivities drawing across cultures for creative inspiration. Together, these artists sought to establish the distinctiveness of their products and find them commercial niches in the global marketplace. Tafe illuminated the relationship between tradition and change in scholarship on a leading ancient aesthetic. Finally, in her presentation on "The Kibbutz Life Cycle," Assistant Professor of Anthropology Merav Shohet discussed how the aged are cared for in twenty-first-century Israeli kibbutzim. The value placed on youth and the privileging of health and vigor by a larger Israeli culture that remains dependent on the pioneer ideals of its founders, while shaped by the military demands that affect the lives of all citizens, makes the ethics of care especially complex and challenging for kibbutz communities. Equally problematic, Shohet demonstrated in her fascinating study, is the fact that these communities have increasingly embraced neoliberal values of privatization despite their ongoing ideological commitment to equality, cooperation, and mutual responsibility.

Let me close by acknowledging what a difficult year this has been for all of our constituents at the Center for the Humanities—students, faculty, and staff. We have navigated a great deal of uncertainty, and much about the return to university life in the coming 2021-2022 academic year remains unclear. What I think we can all feel is a certain gratitude for the ways in which we have helped each other prevail. My heart goes out to those who have lost loved ones in the pandemic and to those who have experienced other losses and upheavals. But I hope we can take solace in the fact of endurance itself, that our institution and its various parts have proven strong and survived, however changed we are going forward by what we have experienced.

Susan Mizruchi
Director, Center for the Humanities



New High School Summer Humanities Program

With generous funding from the Teagle Foundation, the Center for the Humanities now offers a summer program in the humanities for high school students from the Boston metropolitan area. Expanding the Center's commitment to community-based programming, **The One and the Many at Boston University** (O&M) encourages interest and participation in the humanities among local high school students through an interdisciplinary curriculum centered on classic works.

Taught by three outstanding BU faculty members, O&M's summer 2021 cohort will explore the literature and history of the ancient world with James Uden, associate professor of classical studies; social movements for social change with Paula Austin, assistant professor of history and African American studies; and the history and evolution of documentary film with Marisa Milanese, master lecturer in the Arts & Sciences Writing Program. Each instructor will engage the students through a range of mediums, genres, and forms. Classic examples of poetry, film, essays, and speeches will enable the exploration of questions about human identity and social life, civic responsibility, and the impact of political movements.

"The foremost goal of O&M is to inspire students about the humanities, give them tools to succeed in college, and further their personal and intellectual development in a nurturing, student-centered program," says Center Director and O&M Project Leader Susan Mizruchi. "In a holistic sense, our program is designed to promote intellectual curiosity while creating bonds among students that endure beyond the summer." Both the academic curriculum as well as co-curricular programming on the topics of food justice and neighborhood-based photography, encourage students to see themselves as important contributors to a community that celebrates diversity and inclusivity.

Complementing the program's social justice curriculum, O&M students will receive instruction in areas related to college readiness, including writing and critical reading, time management, and self-advocacy. Undergraduate student mentors and a team of graduate student tutors will support the students in these areas, working with them in small-group settings and one-on-one mentoring sessions.

Mentoring is a cornerstone of O&M, a commitment strengthened by the program's partnership with Summer Search Boston, a post-secondary preparedness organization that recruited students for participation in O&M. Our mentoring director, Maya Atakilti, a graduate student in BU's dual program at the School of Public Health and the School of Social Work, is an alumna of Summer Search with firsthand knowledge of the support that today's university students need.

Mizruchi sees the Center as uniquely positioned to provide an encouraging, challenging environment for O&M students and has underlined the significance of this program to everyone involved: "By developing faculty aptitudes for serving more diverse and variously-prepared students and opening up different employment pathways for our graduate student directors and tutors as well as our undergraduate mentors, we seek to make a lasting impact on all program participants."

The Center anticipates that our O&M program will continue to evolve over time while preserving its guiding principle that humanistic inquiry provides the basis for civic participation and community building.

The One and the Many Team

Faculty



Paula Austin
History



Marisa Milanese
Writing Program



James Uden
Classical Studies

Mentoring & Community Support Staff



Maya Atakilti
Mentoring Director



Kimber Chewning
Co-curricular Coordinator



Christine D'Auria
Program Coordinator

Graduate Tutors



Kristin Lacey
English



Joanne Lafortune
African American Studies



Ian Nurmi
Classical Studies

Recruiting Partner



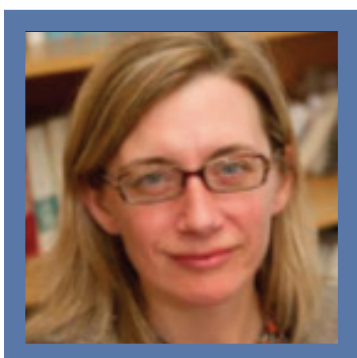
Ashley Gordon
Summer Search Boston

Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows



Adriana Craciun

Emma MacLachlan Metcalf Chair; Professor of English
*Arctic Enlightenments: Deep Time Floras and the Svalbard
Global Seed Vault*



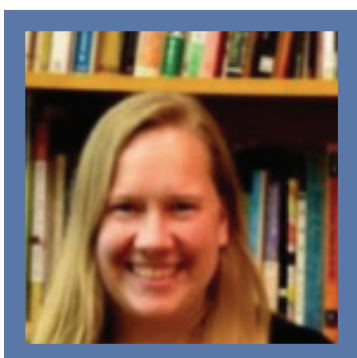
Jodi Cranston

Professor, Renaissance Art
*Animal Sightings: Art, Animals, and Court Culture in Early
Modern Europe, 1450-1550*



Juliet Floyd

Professor, Philosophy
*Cavell's Revolutionary Uses of Wittgenstein in "Must We Mean
What We Say?"*



Sarah Frederick

Associate Professor, Japanese and Comparative Literature
*Yoshiya Nobuko: A Queer Writer and Japan's Twentieth
Century*

Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows



Margarita Simon Guillory

Associate Professor, Religion

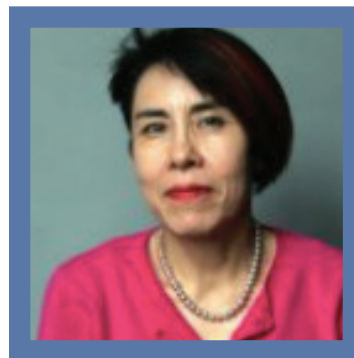
Africana Religion in the Digital Age



Lida Maxwell

Associate Professor, Political Science and Women's,
Gender, & Sexuality Studies

Queer Love



Catherine Vance Yeh

Professor, Chinese and Comparative Literature

*The Public's New Darlings: Mass Media and the Birth of
Modern Star Culture in China, 1890s-1930s*

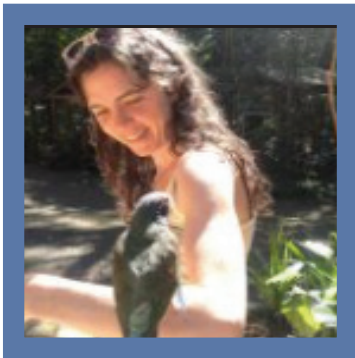
The Fellows Seminar has been the core of the intellectual community at the Boston University Center for the Humanities since 1984. The Seminar meets throughout each semester to discuss work in progress by one or more of its members.

Junior Faculty Fellows



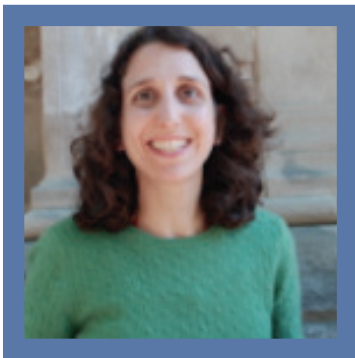
Hannah Čulík-Baird

Assistant Professor, Classical Studies
Cicero and the Early Latin Poets



Michaela McSweeney

Assistant Professor, Philosophy
Abstract Structures



Merav Shohet

Assistant Professor, Anthropology
*Resentments and Regrets: Silenced Reverberations of Aging
in a Changing Kibbutz*

A gathering for multidisciplinary research and debate, the Fellows Seminar assists scholars in the development of their work and engages the larger questions of culture and imagination that humanities disciplines have always examined.

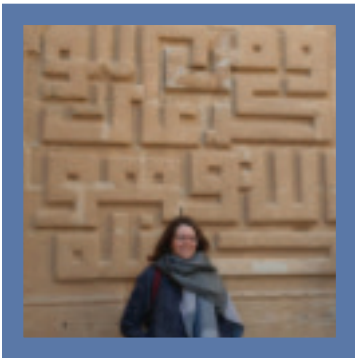
Graduate Dissertation Fellows



Mariah Gruner

American & New England Studies

Materializing Gender, Stitching Selfhood: American Women's Decorative Needlework, 1820-1920



Lydia Harrington

History of Art & Architecture

"Improve and reform them": Vocational Boarding Schools and the Modernization of Three Late Ottoman Arab Cities



Rachel Ravina

English

"Fanatics of a Dream": American Literature, Peace Reform, and Enlightenment Paradoxes



Jennifer Tafe

History of Art & Architecture

Nikosthenes: Innovation and Identity in Late Archaic Vase Painting

BUCH Podcast: Black Memoirs in the Global Age

Over the past year, the United States was reawakened to the historic and persisting effects of state violence and systemic racism against Black people. Reinvigorated here at home, the Black Lives Matter movement has reverberated across the world in protests, demonstrations, articles, books, exhibits, and other forms of consciousness raising. The Center has contributed variously to these different kinds of outreach, including the inauguration of a podcast, whose first season (2020-2021) was called ***Black Memoirs in the Global Age***. In three separate episodes, prominent academics interviewed major authors about their lives and their recently published memoirs.

The first episode featured Nigerian-American writer and activist **Bassey Ikpi**, author of ***I'm Telling the Truth, but I'm Lying***, interviewed by **Dr. Sandro Galea**, dean of Boston University's School of Public Health. They talked about what it is like for Ikpi to live with bipolar II and anxiety, a struggle that is as much about family life—how such afflictions affect relationships with parents, children, and siblings—as it is about individual suffering. They discussed how each of them has navigated different worlds—in the US and Nigeria (Ikpi); in Malta and Canada (Galea). And they shared ideas about ways to destigmatize mental health problems in society at large, as well as in Black and immigrant communities.



Orlando Patterson, John Cowles Professor of Sociology at Harvard, and **Patricia Williams**, University Distinguished Professor of Law and Humanities at Northeastern, discussed Patterson's 2019 book, ***The Confounding Island: Jamaica and the Postcolonial Predicament***. This wide-ranging exchange between a leading sociologist and a renowned legal scholar touched on subjects central to African American life today including the nature of colonial relations; the complex dynamics between fathers and sons (as reflected in Patterson's recollections of his father, a Jamaican police-detective); the role of public figures like Clarence Thomas and gender politics in the Black community; and the place of music and Olympic track in Jamaican society.

In the final segment, **Louis Chude-Sokei**, George and Joyce Wein Chair in African American Studies and director of African American Studies at Boston University, and author of ***Floating in a Most Peculiar Way: A Memoir***, was interviewed by **Caryl Phillips**, professor of English at Yale. Beginning with Chude-Sokei's admiration for David Bowie, whose music inspired the book's title, Chude-Sokei and Phillips explored the challenges of belonging among diasporic Blacks. Their honest and open-ended discussion addressed differences of opinion within the Black community: how the varieties of Black experience—diasporic, colonial, and American—and different ancestral legacies (including slavery) complicate political unity and coalition building in society at large, and in contemporary academia.

The podcast will return for a second season this coming year (2021-2022) under the title ***Memoirs in the Global Age*** and will feature **Dan-el Padilla Peralta**, author of ***Undocumented***, interviewed by **Junot Diaz**; **Roya Hakakian**, author of ***A Beginner's Guide to America***, interviewed by **Claire Messud**; and **Cathy Park Hong**, author of ***Minor Feelings***, interviewed by **Sianne Ngai**.

A Conversation with Piper Kerman

On February 22, 2021, the Center for the Humanities, the Law Student Affairs Office, the Law Student Government Association, and Kilachand Honors College co-hosted an event featuring Piper Kerman, author of the bestselling memoir *Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison*.

Kerman's talk was part of the Center's incarceration film series, begun in November 2019 with the aim of highlighting the role of the humanities in representing the experiences and politics of incarceration and in promoting prison reform.

Kerman's talk drew attention to the essential link between the humanities and social justice. She described storytelling as a critical means for advancing cultural enlightenment and political change. A theater major in college herself, Kerman described how understanding narrative structure helped her to produce a drama with wide audience appeal.

Today, Kerman teaches memoir writing to incarcerated people and says that "every prison story is a survival story." The close examination of human experience that is central to the humanities furthers the sharing of such stories with the public, while also helping individuals to achieve psychological and spiritual insight under the conditions of incarceration.



Kerman also addressed differences between her memoir and the popular television serial based upon it. While the memoir provided a portrait of a privileged woman's fall into the spheres of crime and punishment, the TV show draws viewers into a complex, fictionalized world beyond one woman's lived reality.

The event was held on Zoom and had attendees from across the BU community. Kerman linked multiple resources in the Zoom chat with information about criminal justice activist groups in Massachusetts and the United States more broadly.

Responses in the chat and subsequent emails with follow-up questions demonstrated audience members' interest in these resources. It is now up to audiences to mobilize new understandings and questions that will contribute to redressing the pervasive injustices of our carceral system.

Boston University Center for the Humanities, Law Student Affairs Office, Law Student Government Association, and Kilachand Honors College Present:

**PIPER KERMAN IN CONVERSATION ABOUT
ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK AND
SYSTEMIC ABUSES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM**

WITH PANELISTS:

KAREN PITA LOOR
ASSOCIATE DEAN, BU SCHOOL OF LAW
CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LAW

SUSAN MIZRUCHI
DIRECTOR, BU CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES
WILLIAM ARROWSMITH PROFESSOR IN THE HUMANITIES

CARRIE PRESTON
DIRECTOR, KILACHAND HONORS COLLEGE
ARVIND AND CHANDAN NANDLAL KILACHAND PROFESSOR

MODERATING THE EVENT:

DOMINIQUE MCCLEAN
LAW SGA PRESIDENT

DATE AND TIME:
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**





**REGISTER AT
[HTTPS://PIPERKERMANBU.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://piperkermanbu.eventbrite.com)**

Humanities in the World: Alumni Career Panel

On March 8, 2021, the Center for the Humanities partnered with BU Alumni & Friends to present the “Humanities in the World: Alumni Career Panel.” This virtual event, moderated by Center Director Susan Mizruchi, brought together five distinguished College of Arts & Sciences humanities alumni to share thoughts about their career trajectories with a primarily undergraduate audience. The panelists presented a range of professional experiences in fields including publishing, law, and finance. Despite the variety of their professional roles, all agreed that the critical thinking, research, writing, and communication skills that they acquired as BU humanities students prepared them for fulfilling careers. The panelists emphasized that studying the humanities had afforded them a high degree of flexibility throughout their professional lives. Below are two student perspectives from BUCH undergraduate staff who attended the event.

Giovanni DiMaggio, CAS Economics and Political Philosophy, 2022: “I’ve always had a passion for the humanities, but I did not consider majors in the humanities to be viable until being introduced to the world of classical studies during my freshman year of college. I came to BU from a STEM high school and always pursued ‘safer’ disciplines. This panel showed me that there is room for the humanities in the professional world. In fact, the panelists pointed out that there are many career entry points for humanities students. Understanding the trajectories of prominent figures with various humanities backgrounds reassured me of the utility of the humanities in the job market.”

Catherine Devlin, CAS History, 2022: “I grew up in a family that celebrated the humanities. My grandfather was an English professor, and my sister and most of my cousins studied the humanities in college. While I never felt pushed to study any subject, my concept of careers in the humanities has always been rather narrowly defined. I was therefore interested in the nonlinear career paths described by some of the panelists. As I approach my senior year of college, I feel pressure to have a concrete career plan. The panelists eased this worry by emphasizing how their humanities education allowed them to succeed in a number of different roles as they worked towards their current careers. The featured speakers were candid about both their struggles and successes, including indecision after college and eventual fulfillment.”

Panelists made clear that, contrary to popular belief, students are best served by studying what they are passionate about. Profound engagement with a field or subject is the path to learning how to think, act, work, and *be* in the world.



John “Jack” J. Lynch, Jr. (English), President, Chief Executive Officer and Director, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Jay Fielden (English), Editor and Writer, Former Editor-in-Chief, Esquire

Christine Fletcher (French Language & Literature), Partner, Burns & Levinson LLP

Josh London (English), Chief Marketing Officer, Reuters and MD, Reuters Professional at Thomson Reuters

Philip Carey (Classical Civilization), Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Lion Capital Advisors LLC

Summer 2020 Internships in the Humanities

Despite the pandemic, the Center continued our program of funded graduate and undergraduate internships in summer 2020. Our graduate internships were created in partnership with the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs, and our undergraduate internship program is supported in part by the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, and the Anthony & Mary Vigna Summer Internship Fund.

Summer 2020 PhD Internships in the Humanities

In summer 2020, our internship program once again placed doctoral students at the Boston Mayor's Office, the Boston Athenæum, the Boston Red Sox, the Boston Public Library, and the Massachusetts Historical Society, as well as at the newly established BU Health Humanities Initiative. All partnering institutions offered students valuable remote internship experiences in the face of an unforeseen global health crisis.

Not only did the pandemic alter the format in which internships were conducted, but it determined the projects that interns pursued. At the Boston Red Sox, doctoral candidate Maddie Webster (American & New England Studies) explored how the pandemic was affecting professional baseball. She compiled a bibliography of news stories and wrote a summary of what had transpired at Fenway Park since the beginning of the pandemic. At the BU Health Humanities Initiative, PhD intern Marina Wells (American & New England Studies) created a website designed to help the BU community to consider how the COVID-19 pandemic is "as much a cultural and moral crisis as a medical and public health one." Wells noted that working on this interdisciplinary health humanities project, provided "a disciplinary ecosystem" to integrate into her own scholarship.

The work of other interns was shaped by national responses to the crisis of racial injustice. At the Boston Mayor's Office, PhD intern Colleen Foran's (History of Art & Architecture) projects focused on how racial reckoning affects public art. When two local statues came under public scrutiny, Foran searched records to produce guides for members of the Boston Art Commission, who determined the fate of these statues. "Being part of that decision-making process made me think much more critically about what it means to represent diverse publics in Boston," said Foran.

Interns also drew on the disciplinary methods of their fields to further the missions of these partner institutions. At the Boston Public Library, PhD intern Kimber Chewing (History of Art & Architecture), who specializes in the history of photography, worked with the Digital Commonwealth to make underutilized photographic collections publicly accessible. She created a series of blog posts in which she demonstrated how the 14,000 plus photos in the US Soldier Systems Center collection could address larger questions such as "How photographs can make obscure historical forces visible" and "How a big project can be made easily digestible to the public."

Several interns applied the methods of their academic fields to projects that bridged scholarship at the university level and K-12 education. At the Massachusetts Historical Society, PhD intern Sean Case (History) prepared study aids for students in grades 6 through 12 who are participating in a year-long program intended "to foster a deeper appreciation of history through engagement with primary sources."

The Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs
and the BU Center for the Humanities present:

**Stipend-Supported
Summer 2021
PhD Internships
in the Humanities**

boston athenæum
boston mayor's office
boston public library
ma historical society
peabody essex museum

DEADLINE: January 31, 2021
Zoom Panel with Site Representatives
December 18, 2020 | 2-3pm | [Register Here](#)

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

At the Boston Athenæum, Katherine Mitchell (History of Art & Architecture) wrote a syllabus and lesson plans for the Athenæum's 2021 Educators' Workshop on abolitionism and the underground railroad. "While I work with primary sources frequently in my own academic coursework and research, I had not thought extensively about how to translate these sources for students at all levels before this internship," said Mitchell. Assisting with the Athenæum's 2020 Educators' Workshop on women's suffrage afforded new teaching strategies. "I have used the resources I discovered and creative lesson planning I learned about during the workshop in my own classroom at BU," said Mitchell.

Summer 2020 Undergraduate Internships in the Humanities

Undergraduates held remote internships at Beacon Press, the Brattle Film Foundation, and the BU School of Public Health Communications Office that provided students with opportunities to apply their humanities education to the workplace. At the School of Public Health, English major Doulas Darrah wrote about proposed legislation to criminalize gender-affirming healthcare for adolescents. "The story began as a relatively simple one about two BU researchers who were concerned about the mental health impacts of these bills. As I spoke to more people and researched it further, the story grew longer and more complex." Darrah discovered that "a fact can be true in a vacuum but 'the truth,' to whatever extent it exists . . . forces the journalist to make difficult decisions." In applying the skills that he acquired as an English major to a journalistic context, Darrah developed a more nuanced grasp of journalism.



Providing students with opportunities to enrich their understanding of prospective professions remains a central goal of the internship program. English major Anna Driscoll confirmed that her internship at the Brattle Film Foundation allowed her to "gain valuable experience working in arts administration." Priyanka Ray (English) found that interning at Beacon Press helped her to cultivate a better understanding of the editorial field. "Before my internship at Beacon, I did not have a great idea of editors' day-to-day tasks. I left the editorial department feeling prepared for further internships or entry-level positions in this field," said Ray. Indeed, upon the completion of her internship, Beacon Press offered Ray a full-time position as a publicity assistant.

We are delighted that in summer 2021 BUCH's internship programs have expanded to include a PhD internship at the Peabody Essex Museum and an undergraduate internship at Burns & Levinson LLP.

The Center remains grateful to our partner institutions for their commitment to preparing BU humanities students for fulfilling careers.

Summer 2021 Graduate Interns

Sophia Hadley, English, Boston Athenæum
Carlos Muñoz-Cadilla, History of Art & Architecture, Boston Public Library
Kayli Rideout, American & New England Studies, Massachusetts Historical Society
Althea Ruoppo, History of Art & Architecture, Boston Mayor's Office
Astrid Tvetenstrand, American & New England Studies, Peabody Essex Museum

Summer 2021 Undergraduate Interns

Julia Bulafka, English, Beacon Press
Catherine Devlin, History, Burns & Levinson LLP
Kelsey Lu, Philosophy and Political Science, Boston Globe
Lukas Ruschak, History, Brattle Film Foundation
David Winner, Philosophy and World Languages & Literatures, BU School of Public Health

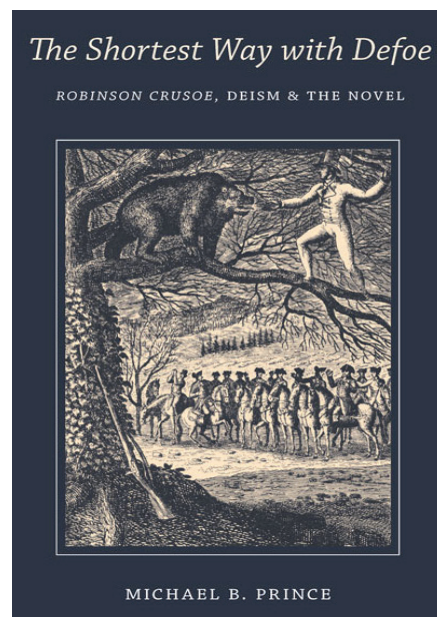
Critical Conversations

In 2019, the Center inaugurated **Critical Conversations**, a new section on our website that publicizes the extraordinary variety of ongoing research by humanities scholars at BU and promotes exchange among colleagues across disciplines and periods.

Book Reviews

In the 2020-2021 academic year, we continued our book review series in which humanities faculty review recently published work by colleagues with different specialties or in different disciplines. David Eckel (Religion), a scholar of Buddhism, reviewed the recent book by his departmental colleague Jonathan Klawans, *Heresy, Forgery, Novelty: Condemning, Denying, and Asserting Innovations in Ancient Judaism*. James Johnson (History) reviewed Michael Prince's (English) new book, *The Shortest Way with Defoe*. And Abigail Gillman (World Languages & Literatures) reviewed the recent study of Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) by Jennifer Cazenave (Romance Studies).

In summer 2020, Critical Conversations expanded beyond faculty reviews to incorporate a wider range of voices and experiences. In response to social ferment in the nation and world at large, Critical Conversations developed into a digital space for communal reflection.



Faculty Interviews

BUCH Graduate Program Intern Arthur George Kamy interviewed humanities faculty members: Gregory Williams (History of Art & Architecture) and Anthony Petro (Religion and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies). Professor Williams was awarded a 2020 NEH Summer Stipend to work on his book project *Practical Aesthetics: The Object of Postwar Art and Design in West Germany* about German artists such as Franz Erhard Walther whose work incorporates the subjects of minimalism, environmentalism, and phenomenology. Professor Petro, NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor, discussed his effort to establish the health humanities as a permanent presence at BU, noting how the health humanities remind us that pandemics are “cultural and even moral events that emerge from longer histories and play out in cultural terms.”



Image Source: BU Health Humanities

Graduate Student Interviews

In October 2020, BUCH Administrative Coordinator Ashley Mulcahy interviewed Brian Barone, PhD candidate in Musicology & Ethnomusicology, about his work with the Inclusive Early Music project. Through its comprehensive bibliography and teaching resources, the project challenges general understanding of music making before 1750, providing a model of how scholars and students in other humanities disciplines might re-envision more inclusive versions of their fields and curricula.



In the spring of 2021, Kamyra created a multipart segment called “**Graduate Voices**,” featuring interviews with six graduate students from a cross-section of humanities disciplines about their experiences during the pandemic.

A common theme was their dependence on and gratitude for the support of librarians and archivists. Working with images of anti-slavery and suffragette textiles made available by staff of several shuttered institutions, Mariah Gruner (American & New England Studies) emphasized that “the dissertation process never actually happens in isolation—it’s informed by our access to material resources and systems of support.”

Relying on library catalogue stand-ins for books that she could not review in person, book historian Emily Gowen (English) commended the assistance she received from “archivists and librarians who know the strengths and weaknesses of their own catalogues.” Accumulating digital images of illustrations of the Persianate poem *Shahnama* thanks to the help of staff from museums around the world, Hyunjin Cho (History of Art & Architecture) applied digital humanities methods to highlight patterns and continuities among nineteenth-century versions of the poem.



The pandemic brought fundamental questions of method into sharp focus. Kira Ganga Kieffer (Religion) reflected on her study of vaccine skepticism in the ephemeral archive that is the internet. “Applying rules of traditional

research to a new medium—identifying field-specific authorities and chasing down the different people who cite them—reveals the contours, controversies, and conversations within a given field,” Ganga Kieffer observed.



The pandemic also affected graduate students’ work as instructors. Merve Rumeysa Tapınç (Philosophy) noted that her class, Medical Ethics and Contemporary Issues in Ethics, “attempted to use the tools of philosophy to better understand how we ought to behave during the pandemic.”

Joanne Lafortune (African American Studies) built on class discussions about both COVID and Black Lives Matter to inspire students to greater social activism.

We are committed to maintaining Critical Conversations as a robust, inclusive digital space for interdisciplinary reflection in the coming years.

Conversations in the Arts & Ideas Presents Teju Cole



Renowned novelist, essayist, cultural critic, and photographer Teju Cole was the featured guest of the **2020/2021 *Conversations in the Arts & Ideas*** series, sponsored by the Center for the Humanities, Kilachand Honors College, the Office of the Provost, the Arts & Sciences Dean's Office, the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, the BU Arts Initiative, and the College of Arts & Sciences Core Curriculum.

“Known and Strange Things: An Evening with Teju Cole” staged a wide-ranging public conversation between Cole and Crystal Williams, a poet and BU's vice president and associate provost for community & inclusion.

In a discussion centered on Cole's conception of the term “accompaniment,” Cole and Williams foregrounded the social contexts that shape creative production and make it possible. Being accompanied, in Cole's view, means acknowledging one's debt to others and the dependence of intellectual and creative practices on the work of predecessors. Cole advocated a capacious approach to aesthetic production, invoking a “forest of voices” as the source of any individually-authored work.

Cole also addressed the strategic uses of polemical language in contemporary movements against racist oppression, encouraging multiple modes of critique as necessary to dismantling systems that subjugate people on the basis of identity.

The next morning, Cole met with students from Core and Kilachand who had studied his work and had prepared questions for him. In response to student concerns about our “broken” social and political order, Cole asserted that “the world will never be fixed,” but affirmed that “we have roles in repair.” In discussing the subject of canonization, he suggested that categories such as “greatness” tend to “flatten the conversation and shut it down,” instead of promoting understanding of “how canons are formed.” In sum, Cole challenged the BU community to think deeply about artistic production, reception, and context.

Big Fat Books Symposium: *Ulysses* at 100

On April 30, 2021, Boston University's department of World Languages & Literatures, together with other humanities departments, hosted the fourth **Big Fat Books** symposium, an annual event that explores a work of world literature that has been especially influential. This year's focus was James Joyce's *Ulysses* as the novel nears its hundredth anniversary.

Professor Stephanie Nelson (classical studies), who hosted the symposium, explained that as "king of the big fat books, *Ulysses* seemed like a perfect selection, especially in light of its centenary." Titled "*Ulysses* at One Hundred," the symposium featured a keynote address by Clayton and Thelma Kirkpatrick Professor of English at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Vicki Mahaffey, as well as presentations by BU faculty from different departments and a panel led by undergraduates.

The range of disciplines represented at the symposium revealed the novel's broad appeal and impact. In the second panel, Global *Ulysses*, speakers illuminated connections between themes in *Ulysses* and their work in areas including movement and migration, Queer Studies, nationhood, and East Asian literature.

The event also featured a roundtable with readings of *Ulysses* translated into Polish, Japanese, Arabic, Russian, Hungarian, and Spanish. Panelists discussed how the novel is understood in different cultures and how literary translators overcome language barriers. Nelson noted that "it might have been expected that a text as challenging as *Ulysses* would have problematized translation, but Joyce was more interested in the subconscious associations we make through language than in any fixed or dogmatic meaning, and this comes out strongly in how different languages differently represent the myriad associations that the human mind is constantly making."

Highlighting the importance of student and faculty interaction at the conference, Nelson observed, "The university is about sharing our love of learning, and sometimes that happens best outside of a classroom. *Ulysses* is also wonderful because it is both challenging and rewarding to anyone, no matter how much or little you know about literature—so the teachers here are students as well, which is what we all ought to be." In this spirit, the last panel of speakers featured students from Nelson's class *The Odyssey* and *Ulysses*.

"*Ulysses* at One Hundred" modeled what academic communities stand to gain when people step out of their silos to approach a complex work of literature from multiple perspectives.



Race, Blackness, and Romanticism: Dialogues



This past year the Boston Area Romanticist Colloquium partnered with the State University of New York at Buffalo to host a series of dialogues, which was convened remotely by Patricia A. Matthew, associate professor of English at Montclair State University and 2020-2021 Center for Diversity Innovation Distinguished Visiting Scholar at SUNY Buffalo.

These dialogues examined the eighteenth-century roots of anti-Black racism and highlighted the work of an interdisciplinary range of contemporary scholars and artists. The dialogues will be featured in a special issue on this topic that Professor Matthew is currently editing for *Studies in Romanticism*.

The dialogues began with Simon Gikandi, Robert Schirmer Professor and chair of English at Princeton University, and Lisa Lowe, Samuel Knight Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, Race, and Migration at Yale University. They reflected on how traditional historical archives, typically assembled by people in power, cannot do justice to the Black experience.

The archive, Gikandi noted, is defined by an absence of racially marginalized voices. Lowe discussed the Cuban artist Maria Magdalena Compos-Pons's work *Sugar* (2010-11), which confronts how enslaved people are objectified by official archival practices of accounting.

In the second dialogue, the writer Paterson Joseph and artist Peter Brathwaite discussed how their work reclaims the humanity of overlooked Africans in literature and art history. Joseph discussed his recently completed novel about the eighteenth-century Black writer and shopkeeper Ignatius Sancho. Brathwaite discussed his viral internet project, *Rediscovering Black Portraiture*. For this project, Brathwaite posted photographs of himself dressed as the Black figures that appear in the margins of early modern paintings.

In the third dialogue, Jessica Marie Johnson, assistant professor of history at Johns Hopkins University, and Christienna Fryar, lecturer in Black British History at Goldsmiths, University of London, discussed their work on the Caribbean. Johnson noted how a "murderously patriarchal environment" eroded, but also necessitated, kinship between enslaved and free Black women. Fryar shared her work on Jamaica, where even after emancipation in 1834 the citizenship of Black people was strictly curtailed.

For the final dialogue, Marcos Gonzalez, assistant professor of English at Adelphi University, and Travis Chi Wing Lau, assistant professor of English at Kenyon College, reminded scholars of race to be self-critical and to practice generosity in their communities. These dialogues were searching and timely, and over the course of two months drew an international audience of more than two hundred people from twenty-two countries.

Museums & the
Black Lives Matter
Movement



BU Center for the Humanities
Seeing & Not Seeing Faculty Seminar
History of Art & Architecture
Guest Lecture Series

Join us for a virtual panel discussion
on the role of museums in the

Black Lives Matter Movement

with Smithsonian Curators:

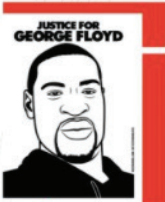
E. Carmen Ramos
Acting Chief Curator
and Curator of Latinx Art
Smithsonian American Art Museum

Aaron Bryant
Museum Curator, Photography, Visual
Culture, and Contemporary History
Smithsonian Institution
National Museum of African American
History & Culture

Ariana A. Curtis
Curator of Latinx Studies,
Smithsonian Institution
National Museum of African American
History & Culture

Wednesday January 27, 2021
5:30-7:00 pm

Register at : <https://bit.ly/3u54N2021>



BU Center for the Humanities, African American Studies, American & New
England Studies, Latin American Studies, and the Departments of
History of Art & Architecture, Sociology, Political Science, and History

James Johnson
History
Conversations in the Arts & Ideas

Victor Kumar
Philosophy
Democracy and Culture

Robert Murowchick
Anthropology/Archaeology
Asian Cultural Heritage Forum

13th Annual Boston University Classical Studies Graduate Conference

A Traveller in an Antique Land
Travel and Traveling in the Ancient World
Saturday April 10, 2021
Keynotes:
Professor William E. Miersse, University of Vermont
Professor Gregory Nagy, Harvard University

Register at bu.edu/classics/events/graduate-student-conference/

BOSTON UNIVERSITY Presented by the Boston University Department of Classical Studies and sponsored by the Boston University Center for the Humanities

Louis Chude-Sokei
African American Studies
Writing Black Lives

Daniel Dahlstrom
Philosophy
Boston Phenomenology Circle

Sean Desilets / J. Keith Vincent
Writing Program / WLL
Faculty Gender & Sexuality Group

Anna Elliott
World Languages & Literatures
*Translating the Future Finale:
A Flight of Tokarczuk Translators*

9:00am-9:45am
KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Hayriye Kayi-Aydar, The University of Arizona, "Positioning Theory to Transform Language Classroom Talk"

10:00am-11:15am
• Re-imagining Traditional Approaches to Foreign Language Teaching
• Towards Inclusive Foreign Language Pedagogy

11:20am-12:45pm
• Innovative Tools & Strategies for Remote Teaching
• Promoting Metacognition in Foreign Language Learning

1:15pm-2:30pm
• Two Models for Online Language Teaching

2:40pm-3:00pm
• Student-centered Teaching Practices

Register at [HTTP://BAPC2021.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://BAPC2021.EVENTBRITE.COM)

2021 BOSTON AREA PEDAGOGY CONFERENCE

TEACHING DURING THE PANDEMIC: CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

• FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2021 •

TO VIEW COMPLETE PROGRAM, VISIT WWW.BU.EDU/WLL/NEWS/BAPC2021
ALL SESSIONS TO BE HELD REMOTELY ON ZOOM

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE BAPC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: SHILPA PARNAMI (SPARNAMI@BU.EDU), ROBERTA MICALLEF (MICALLEF@BU.EDU), JAEMIN KIM (JMKONG@BU.EDU)

ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES & LITERATURES
SPONSORED BY THE BU CENTER FOR HUMANITIES & THE GEDDES LANGUAGE CENTER

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Jeffrey Rubin
History
Seeing and Not Seeing

Anita H. Savo
Romance Studies
Printed Afterlives: Early Hispanic Books and Manuscripts in the 19th Century

Stephen Scully
Classical Studies
Graduate Student Conference of Classical Studies

ILLUSTRATIONS BY PABLO PICASSO COMMISSIONED BY GEORGE MACEY, 1934

SIMONE BETA
UNIVERSITÀ DI SIENA

LYSISTRATA'S VOICES:
TEN WAYS TO TRANSLATE AN
ARISTOPHANIC COMEDY

FEBRUARY 22, 2021
4-6PM

REGISTER:
[TINYURL.COM/Y5N4CF5D](https://tinyurl.com/y5n4cf5d)

BOSTON UNIVERSITY PRESENTED BY:
THE BOSTON UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES,
THE STUDY GROUP ON MYTH AND RELIGION, AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

Shilpa Parnami
World Languages & Literatures
Annual Pedagogy Symposium

Ana María Reyes
History of Art & Architecture
Guest Lecture Series

Joseph Rezek
English
Boston Area Romanticist Colloquium

African American Studies Program

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

The Black Left Feminism of
Claudia Jones

Dr. Carole Boyce Davies
Professor of English and African Studies,
Africana Studies and Research Center,
Cornell University

Caribbean born radical, Claudia Jones (1915-1964) was a Communist activist, feminist and Black nationalist who worked in the United States until she was deported for her political activities. She relocated to the UK where she started Britain's first major Black Newspaper, the West Indian Gazette, and the now famous Notting Hill Festival. She was buried to the left of her hero, Karl Marx in Highgate Cemetery, London.

Tuesday, Mar. 9, 2021 at 6-7:30 PM ET
[Register online](#)

Supported by BU Center for the Humanities
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BLACK HISTORY SEASON!!!



Kate Snodgrass
 Boston Playwrights' Theatre
Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project

Kate Snodgrass
 Boston Playwrights' Theatre
Boston Theater Marathon XXIII

Daniel Star
 Philosophy
Boston University Ethics Seminar 2020-2021

Stephen Scully
 Classical Studies
Myth & Religion Study Group

Stephen Scully
 Classical Studies
Boston Area Roman Studies Conference

Sophie Seita
 English
Beethoven Was a Lesbian

Merav Shohet
 Anthropology
Silences and Reverberations: Studying Historical and Contemporary Vietnam into the Future

James Siemon
 English
Folger Institute Membership

James Siemon
 English
Shakespeare Studies Editorial Assistant

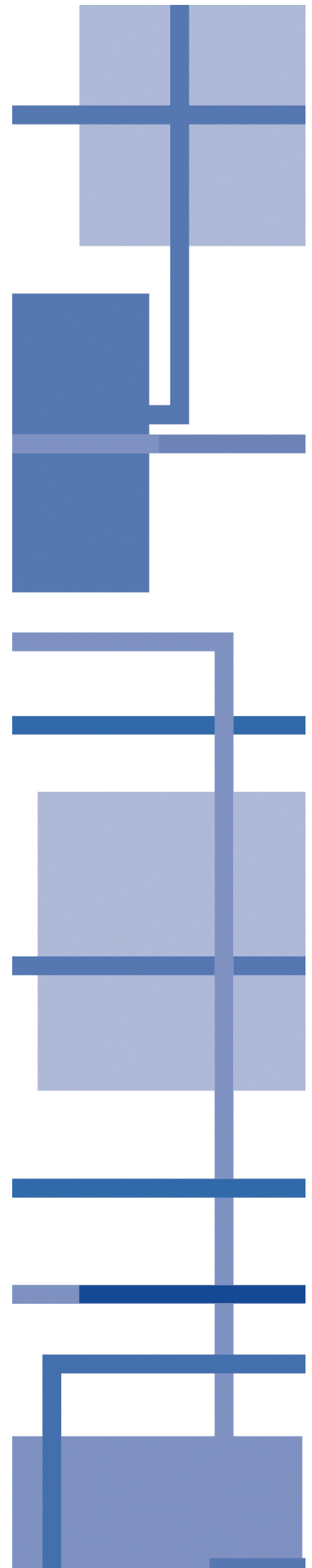
J. Keith Vincent
 World Languages & Literatures
Fitzgerald Translation Prize

Gregory Williams
 History of Art & Architecture
Mary L. Cornille Graduate Student Symposium in the History of Art & Architecture

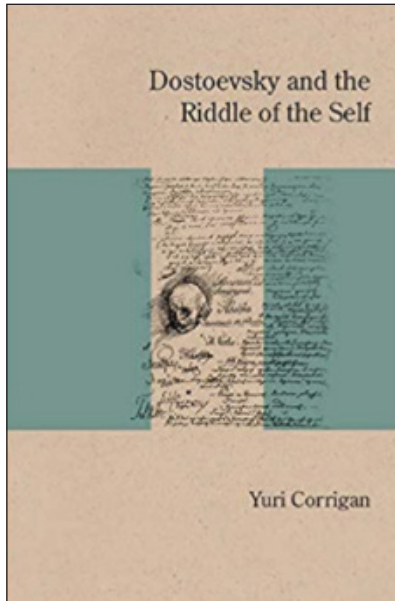
Yoon Sun Yang
 World Languages & Literatures
Recent Books in East Asian Literature

Catherine Vance Yeh
 World Languages & Literatures
Chinese Translation Prize

Jeremy Yudkin
 Musicology & Ethnomusicology
Center for Beethoven Research



Publication Production Awards



Yuri Corrigan

World Languages & Literatures

Dostoevsky and the Riddle of the Self (Russian edition)

Margaret Litvin

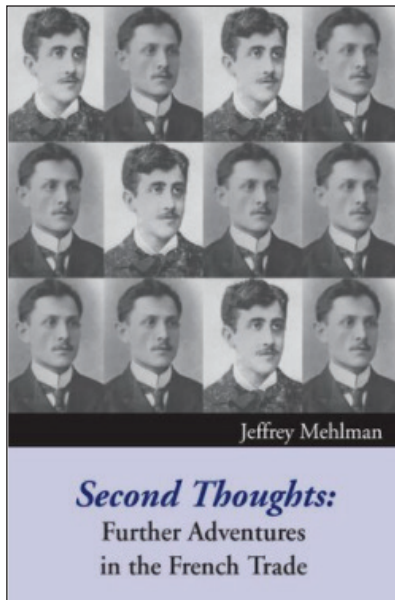
World Languages & Literatures

Russian-Arab Worlds: A Documentary History

Rodrigo Lopes de Barros

Romance Studies

Singing for the Revolution: Punk Rock Music and the Protests for Free Public Transportation in Brazil (1996-2011)



Christopher Maurer

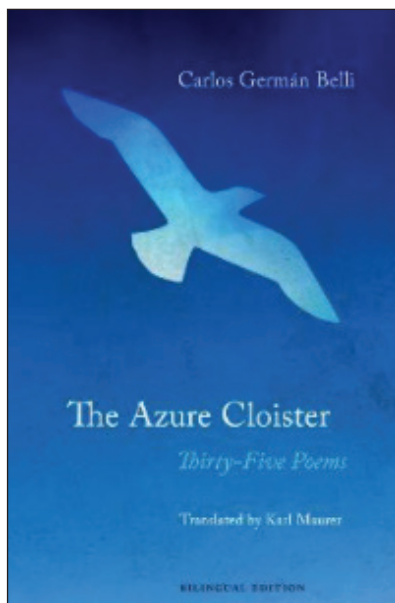
Romance Studies

Azure Cloister: Thirty-Five Poems of Carlos Germán Belli

Jeffrey Mehlman

Romance Studies

Second Thoughts: Further Adventures in the French Trade



Takeo Rivera

English

Model Minority Masochism: Performing the Cultural Politics of Asian American Masculinity

Gregory Williams

History of Art & Architecture

Labour in a Single Shot: Critical Perspectives on Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki's Global Video Workshop



Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cynthia Becker | History of Art & Architecture |
| Abigail Gillman | World Languages & Literatures |
| Irit Kleiman | Romance Studies |
| Erin Murphy | English |
| Stephen Prothero | Religion |
| Robert P. Weller | Anthropology |

Junior Faculty Fellows

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Jennifer Cazenave | Romance Studies |
| Takeo Rivera | English |

Graduate Dissertation Fellows

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Emily T. Gowen | English |
| José Luis Nogales Baena | Romance Studies |
| Ryan Pasco | Classical Studies |
| Emily Anne Williamson | Anthropology |



Undergraduate Student Awards

The Dean Elsbeth Melville Latin Prize
Hallie Baggaley, Classical Studies

The John Oddy Memorial Award
Nicole Beymer, Linguistics
Kalliope Glavas, Classical Studies & Philosophy
Sarah Hancock, Neuroscience
Kira Nash, Classical Studies & History
Catherine Peerson, Classical Studies & English
Kira Solovay, Classical Studies
Yarden Tsfoni, Archaeology

The Alice M. Brennan Humanities Award

Sydney Adams, English
Julia Bulafka, English
Shanshan Cao, Philosophy
Sarah Craig, English
Emma Deegan, Anthropology
Sarah E. Ferris, Archaeology
Rebecca Fuhrmann, Anthropology
Kathryn Hayes, History of Art & Architecture
Elizabeth Rosato Jones, History of Art & Architecture
Rebecca Kielar, History of Art & Architecture
Brian Ko, Classical Studies
Ione Madsen Hardy, Linguistics
Aashutosh Mukerji, Philosophy
Lukas Ruschak, History
Leah R. Schwartz, History
Carolyn Welter, History
Andrea Guttormsen Wetzler, World Languages & Literatures
Katelyn Willim, Archaeology
Katherine Wright, English

The Robert. E Yellin Award

Katherine Hendrick, Archaeology
Anna Rafferty, English
Abigail S. Roberts, Linguistics
Ferryn Sosenko, Linguistics

The Edwin S. and Ruth M. White Prize

Jennifer Price, World Languages & Literatures
Adriana Laura Celaya, Linguistics
Ryan Chon, Linguistics

Graduate Student Awards

The Clarimond Mansfield Award

Elisheva Ash, Graduate Program in Religion
Chaeyoung Lee, Musicology & Ethnomusicology

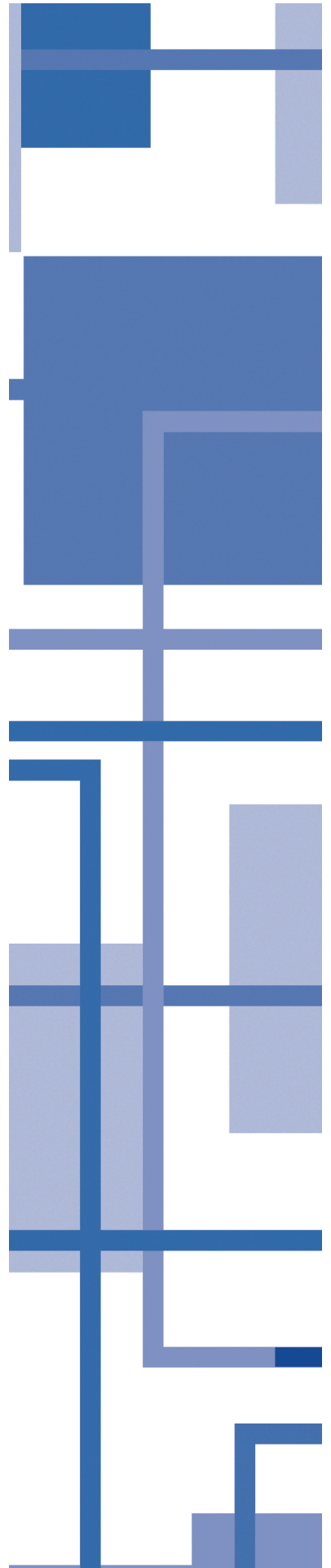
The Helen G. Allen Humanities Award

Ian Nurmi, Classical Studies
Noa Saunders, English

The Edwin S. and Ruth M. White Prize

Charley Binkow, History
Kimber Chewning, History of Art & Architecture
Hyunjin Cho, History of Art & Architecture
Arthur George Kamy, American & New England Studies Program
Alyssa Kreikemeier, American & New England Studies Program
Rebecca Leiby, Philosophy
Joshua Paul, Classical Studies
Joel Van Fossen, Philosophy
Cecilia Weddell, Editorial Studies
Rachel Wilson, History

All Graduate Student Award recipients also receive
The Angela J. and James J. Rallis Memorial Award.





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