



# 25<sup>th</sup> Women's & Gender Studies Conference

# **(Re)making the World**

A “How-To” Conference on  
Feminist, Crip, and Decolonial  
Worldmaking

**April 17-18, 2026**



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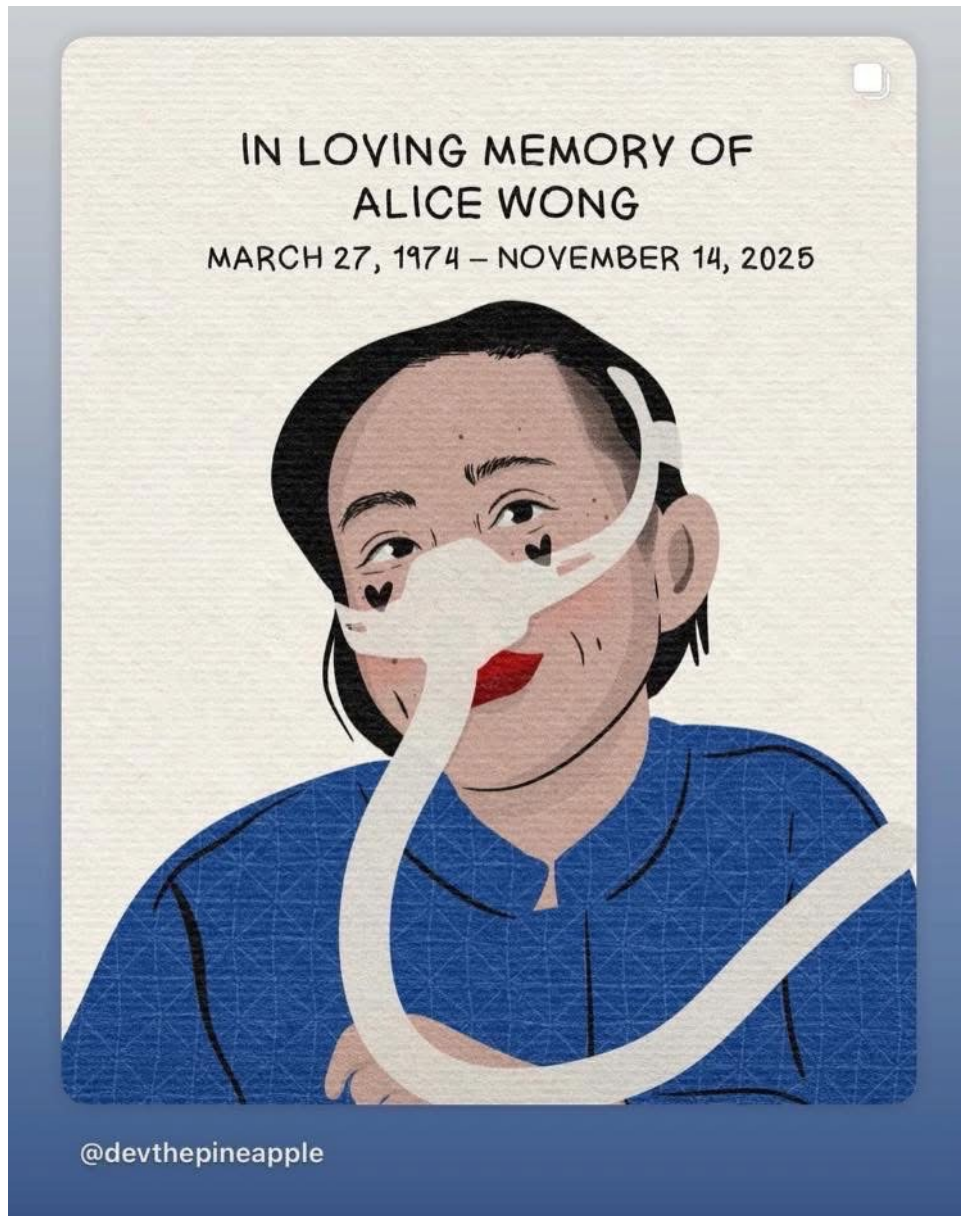
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School of Business Photo by Isabel Chenoweth

## HONORING ALICE WONG



We honor our ancestor Alice Wong — writer, editor, and founder of the Disability Visibility Project — whose work transformed how we understand disability, community, and storytelling. Wong insisted that disabled people are not problems to be solved but worlds to be known, and she built platforms where those worlds could speak in their own voices. Through collections such as *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century* and *Disability Intimacy: Essays on Love, Care, and Desire*, as well as her own memoir, *Year of the Tiger: An Activist's Life*, she gathered and generated stories that refuse erasure and reimagine what access, care, and justice can look like. As Yosmay del Mazo, a contributor to Alice Wong's March 25th Celebration of Life, noted, “her possibilities exist at the crossroads of time where she has always been and where she is waiting for us.” That sense of presence — both enduring and still unfolding — captures Wong’s legacy: an invitation to meet disability not as limitation, but as a site of community, connection, creativity, and collective future-making.

# ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This section contains general information about the conference.

## Information/Registration Desk

Towards the main entrance of the School of Business there will be an information desk which will be occupied throughout the entirety of the conference.

## Quiet, Scent-Reduced, Low-Sensory Spaces

We have set aside several rooms in the School of Business for Quiet Space. Please feel free to visit these spaces as needed. We ask if you anticipate having to use these spaces, please refrain from wearing and/or using various products that may contain strong scents, including but not limited to perfumes, hair products, body lotions, shampoo/conditioners, body wash, soap, laundry detergents, fabric softener, etc.

SB 114

SB 243

SB 405

SB 406

## Campus Police

203.392.5375

## Emergency

Dial 888 on any of the red or black phones you see in the hallways or press the blue button on the emergency call boxes that are located near buildings across campus and in parking lots.

## Smoking

Smoking and tobacco use are prohibited in all facilities and areas of Southern Connecticut State University Campus with no exception. This includes but is not limited to all indoor and outdoor areas and properties. This includes cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, electronic cigarettes or any other device intended to stimulate smoking, the use of smokeless tobacco, including snuff; chewing tobacco; smokeless pouches; and other forms of loose-leaf, smokeless tobacco; and the use of unlit cigarettes, cigars, pipe, tobacco, hookah and any other device using smoke and vapor.

## MASKS

Masks will be available at the Information Desk of the School of Business. We encourage people to wear masks throughout the conference.

# SCSU WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES GENERAL INFORMATION

## Women's & Gender Studies Department

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## Women's & Gender Studies Team

Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, Department Chairperson  
Jessany Maldonado, Department Graduate Coordinator  
Cheryl Padilla, Secretary  
Jennie McDermott, Graduate Assistant  
Chelsie Wagner, Graduate Assistant

## Women's & Gender Studies Steering Committee

Rosalyn Amenta  
Kauther Badr  
Siobhan Carter-David  
Alex Girard  
Brandon Hutchinson  
Sobeira Latorre  
Yi-Chun Tricia Lin  
Heidi Lockwood  
Jessany Maldonado  
Virginia Metaxas  
Kari Swanson





## Conference Committee

Kauther Badr, Co-Chairperson

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Jessany Maldonado

Lisa Marotta

Cheryl Padilla

Jessica Powell

Thierry Thesatus

Miaowei Weng

## Learn more about the Women's & Gender Studies Department at SCSU

To learn more about the Women's & Gender Studies Department at Southern Connecticut State University, visit us on our webpage [www.southernct.edu/wgs](http://www.southernct.edu/wgs) or scan the QR code below.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## SCSU Offices and Departments:

Dr. Sandy Bulmer and Office of the President  
Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs  
Office of Student Affairs  
Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
College of Arts and Sciences  
School of Business  
College of Education  
College of Arts & Sciences  
Department of Communication, Media, and Screen Studies  
Department of History  
Department of Sociology  
Africana Studies

## SCSU Grants:

Faculty Development Grant  
Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee Grant  
Student Success and Equity Grant

## Graphic Design and Publicity:

Alex Girard  
Office of Integrated Communication and Marketing

## Remaining Acknowledgements:

We, too, acknowledge the following (too long to be listed), whose work – artistic, activist, scholarly, and all – is at the core of what moves us in our conference planning and organizing since 1991: 200 + conference presenters & attendees; the Community Fair vendors; our big-hearted volunteers; and our generous donors, of their time, energy, and resources.

## Feedback Survey

We look forward to receiving any feedback that you are willing to share with us. Here is a link <https://forms.office.com/r/Eb0C6vrtgG> to the feedback form or you can scan the QR code provided below to access it. If interested, please fill this out no later than May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026.



# INGRID WASHINAWATOK EL-ISSA SERVICE AWARD



## **Susan Garlington, SCSU Scholar, Campus Leader**

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a double minor in Women's & Gender Studies and Anthropology

## **Danielle Campbell, SCSU Scholar, Community Organizer**

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science, Journalism; Master of Science in Sociology; Master of Arts in Women's & Gender Studies

## **About the Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa Service Award**

In Fall 2004, with then Vice President of Student Affairs Richard Farricelli's assistance, we established the Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa Service Award to recognize outstanding Women's & Gender Studies student scholars in community service in honor of Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa (July 31, 1957--March 4, 1999), a sister, hero, and warrior of all times.

A member of the Menominee Nation, Ingrid Opetaw Metaehmoh (Flying Eagle Woman) Washinawatok El-Issa was among the most promising Native American leaders of her generation. As activist, writer, public speaker, educator, and director of a philanthropic foundation (Fund for Four Directions), she dedicated her life to the cause of Indigenous peoples around the world. A devoted mother and wife, Ingrid was also a prominent leader of the 36,000-member Native American community of New York City, co-founder of Indigenous Women's Network and chair of the Indigenous Caucus in the UN.

In February 1999, she visited the Uw'a Nation (Colombia) with two companions, Lahe'enaie Gay and Terrance Freitas, to establish an Indigenous education program for Uw'a children. As Ingrid and her companions were leaving to return home, they were kidnapped on their way to the airport and killed by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) eight days later, on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1999.

The world, Indigenous and beyond, mourns deeply the loss of Ingrid - that mourning has now turned into all forms of celebration of Ingrid's life, work, and legacy. The establishment of this memorial service award is, indeed, a celebration of work and service to the world.

# KEYNOTE & PLENARY SPEAKERS

## Dr. Nirmala Erevelles

Professor of Social and Cultural Studies in Education  
University of Alabama

Dr. Nirmala Erevelles is a professor of social and cultural studies in education at the University of Alabama. Her teaching and research interests lie in the areas of disability studies, critical race theory, transnational feminism, sociology of education, and post-colonial studies. Erevelles uses a materialist intersectional analysis to foreground the dialectical relationships between disability and race, class, gender, and sexuality and its brutal implications for (disabled) students in U.S. public schools and (disabled) citizens in transnational contexts.

Erevelles has published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals in education and in the humanities. Her book, *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts: Towards a Transformative Body Politic*, was published by Palgrave in November 2012 and was awarded the Critic's Choice Award from the American Educational Studies Association. She is currently working on a book-length manuscript tentatively entitled *Crippling Empire: Theorizing Intersectionality as if Black/Brown/Disabled Lives Matter*.

## Opening Plenary Speakers and Performers

“Indigenous Teachings and Indigenous Worldmaking”

Speakers:

Souksavanh Keovorabouth (Diné), Arizona State University

Wunneanatsu Lamb-Cason (Schaghticoke/HoChunk,) Brown University

## Closing Plenary Speakers

“Feminist, Crip, Decolonial Pedagogies as Liberatory Practices”

Speakers:

Jen Deerinwater (Cherokee), Journalist and Founding Executive Director of [Crushing Colonialism](#)

JuPong Lin, Story Maker, Earth Justice Activist and Art Educator

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## 2026 SCSU Women's & Gender Studies Conference At-a-Glance

The entire conference is held in the School of Business building except for the keynote program on Friday night, which takes place in the Adanti Student Center Ballroom.

### Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026

- 12:00 pm - Registration Opens
- 12:30 pm - Community Fair Opens
- 1 pm to 2:15 pm - Opening Plenary
- 2:15 pm to 2:45 pm - Reception/Beverage breaks
- 2:45 pm to 4 pm - Concurrent Session A
- 4:15 pm to 5:30 pm - Concurrent Session B
- 5:30 pm - Community Fair Close
- 6 pm to 8 pm - Dinner and the Keynote Program

### Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

- 8:30 am - Registration, Breakfast Buffet, and the Community Fair opens
- 9:30 am to 10:45 am - Concurrent Session C
- 11 am to 12:15 pm - Concurrent Session D
- 12:30 pm to 1:45 pm - Lunch Buffet
- 1:45 pm to 3:00 pm - Concurrent Session E
- 3:15 pm to 4:30 pm - Closing Plenary
- 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm - Closing Reception

## Honoring #MMIWG2S



**ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE!**

# DETAILED CONFERENCE SCHEDULE WITH SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Registration Opens at 12 pm Information Desk first floor School of Business

Open Reception starts at 12 pm in room SB 102

Community Fair Opens at 12:30 pm in room SB 132

Opening Plenary 1 pm to 2:15 pm in room SB 122

*“Indigenous Teachings and Indigenous Worldmaking: Lessons for the Next Seven Generations”*

*Speakers:*

Souksavanh Keovorabout (Diné) Arizona State University

Wunneanatsu Lamb-Cason (Schaghticoke/HoChunk), Brown University

*Moderators:*

Kauther Badr, Southern Connecticut State University

Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, Southern Connecticut State University

Concurrent Session A 2:45 pm-4 pm

*A1 “Locating Disability & Navigating Cyberspace” in Room SB 105*

Panel

**Venus Obazuaye**, “How to Crip the Man: Experiments in documenting Disability History”

Crippling the Map is a research collaboration with the University of Illinois Chicago’s Disability Cultural Center (DCC) aimed at recording the rich disability history of UIC and the wider city of Chicago. Pulling from the stories of faculty, staff, and community members, the interviews will help design a map that displays how and where in Chicago disability has impacted space. This roundtable session will share preliminary findings and themes from analyzed interviews and offer space to collectively consider how to receive and tell disability histories, building steppingstones towards dreaming disability archives at more universities.

**Kylie Harrington, Spencer Evans**, University of Connecticut, “How to Wield the Double-Edged Sword”

This presentation will share the findings of a qualitative research study that explored how LGBTQIA+ chronically ill/disabled individuals use online spaces for their own empowerment despite negative or hostile experiences (the double-edged sword). Initial data collection and analysis revealed that participants find both positive and negative experiences in online spaces that interact uniquely with their

multiple identities. Despite the double-edged sword of online spaces, LGBTQIA+ chronically ill/disabled individuals wield it to further their identity formation, community connection, access to resources, and make it work for them rather than the other way around.

*A2 “Competing Logics of Care: Surveillance, Chronicity, and Post-Crisis Life” in Room SB 122*

Panel

**Emmett Lockwood**, York University, Canada, “Care as Surveillance from the Structural to the Interpersonal”

We exist within a medical paradigm where care is conceptualized as the surveillance of the body. This surveillance has been utilized toward oppressive ends but has also been internalized as lateral surveillance. This presentation discusses how surveillance pervades our academic institutions to further marginalize Mad, and disabled students; how surveillance pervades our interpersonal relationships around caregiving and receiving to manage precarity; and to dream what it would look like for us to not just merely hold a lens up to surveillance but to truly engage in hacking and crippling of our own relationships around care through our collective care practices.

**Gwen D’Arcangelis**, Skidmore College, “Care After Crisis: Feminist and Chinese Medicine Lessons from COVID”

**For this session, masks are strongly encouraged and will be available at the door.**

This paper responds to the conference’s call for feminist, crip, and decolonial how-to worldmaking by asking how we build care capable of sustaining life amid ongoing harm, not just crisis. As the acute phase of COVID-19 fades from view, its uneven afterlives—ongoing death, disability, and long COVID—expose the limits of crisis-oriented public health and fragile infrastructures for chronic care. Drawing on feminist care ethics, healing justice, and disability justice, and interviews with Chinese medicine practitioners, the paper highlights practices grounded in balance, adaptability, and baseline health for sustaining care and survival over time.

*A3 “Building Safer Classrooms Through Curriculum and Practice” in Room SB 201*

Panel

**Joshua Chlebowski**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Embedded Opportunities: Leveraging K-12 Academic Standards to Prevent Gender-Based Violence”

As insidious patriarchal and cisgendered movements persist, the necessity of preventing gender-based violence (GBV) increases. Embedded within academic standards, the field of education provides opportunities for exploring, discussing, and ultimately intervening against GBV systems. Our classes can—and must—become spaces of unlearning, fulfilling content-rich requirements while simultaneously strengthening learners’ resolve to break cycles of gender-based violence in society. Building on feminist pedagogical insights, this session will examine opportunities available to educators through local and national content-area standards, ultimately demonstrating practicability of merging GBV prevention with the K-12 classroom.

**Esra TÖRE**, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Türkiye & Indiana University, USA, “How Educators Build Belonging: DEIB Micro-Practices from Classroom Life”

This paper examines how educators construct belonging through everyday classroom practices, moving beyond formal DEIB policies toward lived enactments of inclusion. Drawing on a qualitative multiple case study in private K–12 schools, the paper integrates teacher interviews and classroom observations across preschool, primary, and middle school settings. Findings identify key micro-practices including differentiated instruction, flexible learning environments, cultural representation, and student voice that foster participation, recognition, and psychological safety. The study argues that belonging is not a policy outcome but a pedagogical practice, contributing to feminist, crip, and decolonial approaches to reimagining classroom life.

*A4 “Who Gets to Speak? Voice, AI, and Censorship” in Room SB 202*

Workshop

**Adam Alzatma Alaaeddin**, “Feminist Future of Voice and Visibility: AI, Resistance, and Decolonial Storytelling”

This interactive workshop examines how artificial intelligence can both reinforce and disrupt systems of colonial, patriarchal, and ableist power. Drawing from feminist and decolonial practices in Gaza and the Arab world, participants will explore ethical AI storytelling as a tool for reclaiming narrative authority and amplifying marginalized voices. Through collaborative exercises, the session offers practical strategies for inclusive digital pedagogy, multilingual storytelling, and community-based worldmaking grounded in care, access, and resistance.

**Princess Zuri McCann**, Sacred Heart University / Yale Law Library, “Benefits of the Verse Novels: Underrepresented Storytelling, Poetry, Book, Bans, and A.I.”

This joint presentation and workshop will cover the verse novel. The presentation focuses on the popularity of middle and young adult verse novels. Many of these novels amplify the diverse stories of marginalized and underrepresented youth. Given recent book bans, this joint presentation and workshop focus on how K-12 students and college students can use verse novels as a starting point for diverse stories during times of contention and censorship. The workshop will cover creating diverse verse narratives while considering verse novel form and student reliance on AI for reading and writing.

*A5 “Institutional Failures: Disability, Education, and the Politics of Management” in Room SB 203*

Panel

**Rae Johnson**, “Dear Management”

Why are some workplaces seemingly overrun by the same type of person, who rarely looks like me? How much responsibility do managers hold in retaining an intersectional and (neuro)diverse workforce? How to empower those navigating this landscape fraught with unspoken rules and social expectations? An educational psychology informed lens of a decade-long workplace retrospective - recalling "well-intentioned" managers to distill self-advocacy lessons for all present. Armed with evidence-based

practices, identity validating descriptions from personality quizzes, astrology, insights from self-reflection, we feed our self-efficacy: motivating us to set goals, idealistic dreams, and intentions to act in pursuit.

**Jay Thomas**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Miseducation of Disabled Students”

The concept for the video “The Miseducation of Disabled Students” derives from my experiences as a student in the special education program. While I consider myself lucky that I had a positive experience, many of my friends had various learning and social interaction disabilities, which made them a target of mocking, bullying, and disciplining. As such, I witnessed ableism in the public school system. I ask what fuels this negative attitude towards disabled people. How far does it go back? What are the roots of this discrimination? What social framework is responsible for this negative attitude? All of those are questions that I explore and hopefully answer.

*A6 “A Living Crip How-To: A Workshop on Doing Accessible Pedagogy and Navigating Disabled Labor” in Room SB 204*

Workshop

**Jiya Pandya, Kim Fernandes**, Yale University, Brown University, “A Living Crip How-To: A Collaborative Workshop on Doing Accessible Pedagogy and Navigating Disabled Labor through and beyond the University”

This workshop and skill-share on crip pedagogy aims to have participants leave with a set of digitized resources on crip classroom practices and crip labor hacks for disabled educators. Through facilitated small group conversations, we seek to develop collaborative crowd-sourced toolkits to deepen access work in and beyond the university. These toolkits will be focused on access in terms of participants’ pedagogical visions themselves. We will turn to resource-sharing on navigating the academy as disabled workers. We envision this session as a small but meaningful step toward building the worlds that we, as disabled instructors, would want to see across different kinds of educational environments. We welcome both participants from and those outside of traditional classroom spaces.

*A7 “Harm Reduction: History, Principles, and Practical's” in Room SB 302*

Workshop

**Westley Cardani**, Connecticut College, “History, Principles, & Practical's of Harm Reduction”

Harm reduction has become a common concept in feminist spaces, but is it time to contextualize what has often been rendered a buzzword? Using resources from the National Harm Reduction Coalition (NHRC), we’ll improve our understanding of what harm reduction is and where it comes from. Then, using materials from the nonprofit End Overdose, we’ll work to put those principles into action with an opiate overdose prevention training. Participants will leave with an understanding of harm reduction and how to better support/care for people who use drugs. Bring a laptop or other device with Internet access if possible.

*A8 "Seeing Otherwise: Feminist Revisions and Practices of Attention" in Room SB 303*

Panel

**Stephani Bauduccio**, Southern Connecticut State University, "Woman of Wonder: The Witch as a Feminist Figure in *Circe* by Madeline Miller"

*Circe*, by Madeline Miller, is a mythological retelling of how Circe grows into her witch identity by discovering her true self and what it means to be in her feminine power. Using her inherent magic, divine feminism provides a lens into Circe protecting herself and exemplifying her strength as a woman-witch. Applying ecofeminism examines how she works alongside nature, animals, and Earth via dedicated witch-crafting and herbalism. As the novel progresses, Circe shifts away from patriarchy and into an interdependent and inter-defining feminism that proves the fragility of masculinity through her relationship to and working alongside both divinity and ecology.

**Laura Noe**, Southern Connecticut State University, "Look Up"

This presentation examines the contemporary impact of Iceland's 1975 women's strike. During this strike, over 90% of women in Iceland withdrew from the labor force to demonstrate the impact their presence and labor have on daily life. Drawing on interviews conducted in January with organizers Gerður Oskarsdóttir and Audur Onnu Magnúsdóttir of the Icelandic Women's Rights Association, this project explores ongoing challenges, including gender backlash, rising political conservatism, and the Nordic paradox. It argues that gender equity is not a fixed achievement, but an ongoing process requiring constant surveillance, vigilance, and sustained collective action.

*A9 "Embodied Manifestos: Feminist Art, Voice, and Public Intervention" in Room SB 304*

Workshop / Exhibit

**Sonja Czekalski**, Central Connecticut State University, "Vagina Dress"

This participatory workshop and immersive installation explore sex education, bodily autonomy, and radical joy through both studio practice, craftivism, and community installation. Attendees are invited to view and participate in the installation by meditating with their sacral chakra and visiting two art making stations. In one station, participants may draw a reflection of their sacral chakra meditation. A Second station will be dedicated to decorating handmade anatomically informed clitoral sculptures made from handmade toilet-paper clay. Participants are invited to hang their drawings within the installation and add their decorated sculptures to the "Yes, It's a Vagina Dress" collaborative sculpture throughout the duration of the conference.

**Chelsie Wagner, Anne Cyril, Fabiola Elias, Chris Lopez, Myesha Mapp, Jennie McDermott, Megan Morgan, Marquitta Preston, Ansley Reyes, Gianna Rubino, Gabriella Santana, Imani Smith, Rakeria Thompson, Ben Walter**, Southern Connecticut State University, "A Chorus of Refusal: Feminist Manifestos of Care and Resistance"

An art collective featuring the manifestos from the fall 2025 WGS 500 Feminist Theories & Practices class.

**Sabine Woman**, The New School, “How To (and Why We Must) Include Sex Workers: ‘butterfly angel club’ is a living installation illustrating the essentialness of sex workers in our mutual solidarity”

When we talk about immigrant justice, disability rights, trans rights, women’s rights, and labor solidarity, sex worker solidarity is essential. ~butterfly angel club~ is a living exhibition of archival and contemporary work made by sex workers. ~butterfly angel club~ puts workers as the narrators of their own story through physical media, photography, zines, magazines, literature and more.

## Concurrent Session B 4:15 pm to 5:30 pm

*B1 “Obscuring Violence: Rhetoric, Scholarship, and the Politics of Recognition” in room SB 105*

Panel

**Flaviana Dos Santos**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Rhetoric and Violence: A Comparative Analysis of Right-Wing Political Discourse and Femicide in the United States and Brazil”

In the mountainous state of Uttarakhand, maternal and neonatal healthcare is shaped by geographical isolation. This presentation employs a transnational feminist framework to examine how cultural traditions, medical practices, and women’s voices intersect with terrain to affect healthcare access in communities across the state. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach that centers women’s lived experiences, this project proposes community-informed interventions to address disparities. This study contributes to feminist global health discourse by positioning maternal and neonatal health through a transnational feminist lens to address reproductive injustice.

**Louise Tucker-Kellogg**, Simmons University, “The Genocide of Indigenous Americans and Other Blind Spots in Contemporary Concentration Camp Scholarship”

While most modern concentration camp scholarship attributes the origins of concentration camps to the 1898 Spanish policy of Reconcentrado in Cuba, I argue that concentration camps were used over half a century earlier by European settlers against Indigenous Americans. This omission from concentration camp scholarship points to a more general mechanism of erasure, and I study how the same mechanism is used to sanitize present-day confinement of Indigenous, Black, and Brown people, so that concentration camps can continue in the US under the guise of a standard carceral system.

*B2 “Health and Power: Gender, Structural Abandonment, and the Politics of Survival” in room SB 122*

Panel

**Marissa Faroni**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment: Why Women Deserve Separate Treatment”

Traditionally, treatment for co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders uses group treatment methods while in early stages of recovery. Men tend to outnumber women in these groups, even though they have similar rates of co-occurring disorders. Reasons for this gap include increased stigma towards women with co-occurring disorders, women being less likely to seek treatment due to the multiple roles they are expected to fill as women, and lack of programming aimed directly at women.

Marissa has worked this semester on creating a curriculum for a Women's Intensive Outpatient Program to help promote the creation of separate gender-based treatment programs for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

**Allison Grossman**, California Institute of Integral Studies / Alfred University, “Unlearning What We Were Taught to Accept: Necropolitics, Privilege, and Women’s Health”

This presentation considers how necropolitical policies have normalized a collective acceptance of the systematic devaluing of women’s health. Using my research on environmental and reproductive justice as the foundation, I will address how privilege maintains necropolitical health processes. Moving beyond critique, the session offers a reimagining of feminist futures and activism. We will outline strategies for identifying necropolitical logics in health policy, media narratives, and everyday institutional practices, and for transforming that recognition into coalition-based activism that resists individualized blame and centers collective care.”

*B3 “Bird Watching as a Decolonial Feminist Pedagogical Practice” in room SB 201*

Workshop

**Alma Khasawnih**, the College of New Jersey, “Bird Watching as a Decolonial Feminist Pedagogical Practice”

This is a deliberative pedagogical bird watching workshop. Bring binoculars if you have them. Birding can be a unique hands-on experience that can rupture the assumed stability of systems of power and privilege, while simultaneously creating an opening to imagining alternative liberatory futures. Conversations about bird sex and sexuality, migration, diversity, food scarcity, and the joy of being with nature are deliberately put in conversation with issues of war, border control, anti-trans legislation. Participants will learn different birding skills, followed by a guided reflective session to share observations, feelings, and ways to implement deliberative connections in classrooms.

*B4 “Reclaiming Healing, Heritage, and Wholeness — A Feminist Praxis” in room SB 202*

Workshop

**KaTerri Monet Kelly**, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, Chicago “We Are Reclaiming Healing, Heritage, and Wholeness - a Feminist Praxis of Social Prescribing and Intergenerational Care”

Guided by the harmonies of Sweet Honey in the Rock’s *We Are* and the scholarship of Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and Maya Angelou, this workshop centers the Black woman caregiver as an architect of intergenerational healing. Drawing on research in Adverse Childhood Experiences, Positive Childhood Experiences, and social prescribing, the session explores how community, creativity, and culture function as pathways to restorative care. Participants will examine how Black feminist thought offers both theory and praxis for addressing trauma while cultivating resilience and belonging. Through dialogue, reflection, and collective design, attendees will develop practical strategies to advance relational, community-rooted models of healing and care.

*B5 “Crip Futures in the Digital Borderlands” in room SB 203*

Panel

**Elizabeth Hinsdale**, University of Cincinnati, “Clone Wars, Clankers, and Cyborgs: Conceptualizing Crip Futurities”

The rise of automation, AI technologies, and technocrats in the United States has prompted public discourse. While appropriately critical of evolving technofascist politics, broader conversations amongst the public tend to insist upon a strict divide between humans and technology which perpetuates ableist constructions of ideal bodyminds and the denial of disabled futurities. This paper will use crip-feminist frameworks to analyze the contradictions of the human-technology dichotomy through the Star Wars character Echo. Analysis of this character illuminates the fallacies inherent in the strict differentiations made between humans and technology.

**Leah Bogan**, The George Washington University, “Cyborg Mestiza in the Digital Borderlands: Designing a Public Commons from the Margins”

This project advances a theoretical and methodological framework for a community-owned digital public commons. Drawing on cyborg theory, borderlands epistemology, differential consciousness, and participatory research, it treats infrastructure and governance as relational and politically consequential practices. The cyborg operates as method: an adaptive logic moving across human, technological, and ecological systems. The framework is articulated through three sites of praxis: an off-grid mesh network with migrant communities in Paris, a U.S. library-based resilience model, and a federated commons vision. It argues that marginalized communities possess the institutional knowledge to govern digital systems at scale.

*B6 “The Right to Take Up Space” in room SB 204*

Panel

**Megan A. Morgan**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Neurodivergent, Mentally Ill, Queer & AFAB: Taking up Space as a Feminist Resistance”

Neurodivergent, mentally ill, Queer, AFAB – for marginalized folks, taking up space is a revolutionary act that erodes the power of our oppressors at its foundation and challenges narratives that would push us to shrink or make ourselves more palatable. Our exclusion is by design, and so we must build communities and systems that work for us. They must be anti-racist, anti-capitalist, decolonial, Queer, gender expansive, and proactively accommodating. This talk will use feminist discourse to build understanding of lived experiences with self-advocacy, relationship-building for survival, and how learning to take up space can be a healing experience."

**Susan Garlington**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Weight of the World – Why Do Plus Size Women Feel the Need to Justify Their Right to Take Up Space?”

This qualitative thesis examines how plus-size women experience and navigate systemic stigma that compels them to justify their right to take up space. Drawing on in-depth interviews with twenty

participants, the study explores medical fatphobia, workplace discrimination, and everyday social regulation of fat bodies. Findings reveal how weight bias shapes healthcare access, professional opportunities, and self-perception, producing avoidance, emotional labor, and constrained embodiment. The study contributes to fat studies and feminist sociology by centering lived experience and illuminating the structural consequences of size-based oppression.

### *B7 “Queering AI Systems” in room SB 214*

Panel

**Taylor Maki, Daniela Galeano**, Arizona State University, “The Rapid Growth and Adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Systems across Sectors: Healthcare, Finance, Justice Systems, and Academia”

We seek to explore algorithmic gender biases in AI systems, the social and environmental impacts on marginalized communities, and efforts to resist unregulated AI systems that perpetuate misogyny, racism, and other systems of oppression while creating a feminist how-to activist toolkit to address AI concerns. How do feminist academic researchers and educators navigate education with the growth of AI? How can we resist unregulated AI algorithms that perpetuate systems of oppression? Our goal for the conference is to gather feedback from conference attendees on AI practices in academia and other sectors to create a toolkit incorporating the popular education model

**Ursula Pfeiffer**, “Queering AI”

AI systems don’t just “contain bias”—they automate the Comparative Identification Process (CIP), a framework I developed to explain how worth and deservedness are produced and normalized to justify unequal access to resources and reproduce the hierarchies that sustain it. By following the logic of CIP, AI establishes “what is” through contrasted assessment shaped by dominant notions of the “ideal” and compliant. This “what is” reproduces hegemonic value systems through computational stratification. I propose queering AI by limiting “optimal” outputs and embedding structured multiplicity—shifting from “what is most probable?” to “what are multiple viable possibilities requiring human contextualization?”—making sorting dimensions and stakes explicit and returning responsibility for judgment and decisions to humans.

### *B8 “Empowerment Self-Defense as Liberatory Practice” in room SB 302*

Workshop

**Rachel Piazza**, Feminist Self-Defense, “How to Embody Resistance: Empowerment Self-Defense as Liberatory Practice”

Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) is a feminist, survivor-centered approach to preventing, resisting, and healing from power-based violence. Rooted in somatic practice and evidence-based strategies, ESD helps participants unlearn social conditioning that normalizes harm and reclaim the body as a site of knowledge and resistance. In this experiential workshop, Feminist Self-Defense Founder Rachel Piazza guides participants through embodied exercises that strengthen boundary-setting, verbal and physical agency, and collective empowerment. Participants will gain practical tools to resist oppression and embody change toward a more just, feminist future.

*B9 “Reframing Latin America: Colonial Legacies, Language, and Cripqueer Futures” in room SB 303*

Panel

**Rowan Rondinone**, Bennington College, “Cripqueer en América Latina: A Conversation on Language, Sexuality, and Where to Go Next”

This interactive presentation and discussion will introduce crip and queer activism in Latin America, centered around my translation of “Disability and Sexuality in Latin America: Towards the Construction of Sexual Accompaniment.” Together as co-conspirators, we will cross linguistic and cultural boundaries to create a fuller picture of disabled sexuality, drawing from the work of cripqueer theorists and activists across Latin America. I will begin by situating us in the language(s) of cripqueer identities. Then, we will examine different Latine/x movements surrounding practice and policy on the care, support, and sexuality of disabled people.

**Savannah Nava**, Northern Arizona University, “Thinking Beyond the Stereotypes: A Discussion on how Colonial Legacies Shape our Thoughts on Latin America and People”

This roundtable examines how colonial legacies shape dominant understandings of Latine identities through erasure, homogenization, and stereotypes rooted in racial capitalism. It links migration, criminalization, and media narratives to imperial extraction and surveillance. Moving beyond critique, we model decolonial, feminist pedagogies that center specificity, dignity, and joy, reclaiming Latine identity as complex, agentic, and rooted in collective liberation.

*B10 “Embodied Manifestos: Feminist Art, Voice, and Public Intervention” in Room SB 304*

Presentation takes place in A10 Session

Workshop / Exhibit

**Sonja Czekalski**, Central Connecticut State University, “Vagina Dress”

This participatory workshop and immersive installation explore sex education, bodily autonomy, and radical joy through both studio practice, craftivism, and community installation. Attendees are invited to view and participate in the installation by meditating with their sacral chakra and visiting two art making stations. In one station, participants may draw a reflection of their sacral chakra meditation. A Second station will be dedicated to decorating handmade anatomically informed clitoral sculptures made from handmade toilet-paper clay. Participants are invited to hang their drawings within the installation and add their decorated sculptures to the "Yes, It's a Vagina Dress" collaborative sculpture throughout the duration of the conference.

**Chelsie Wagner, Anne Cyril, Fabiola Elias, Chris Lopez, Myesha Mapp, Jennie McDermott, Megan Morgan, Marquitta Preston, Ansley Reyes, Gianna Rubino, Gabriella Santana, Imani Smith, Rakeria Thompson, Ben Walter**, Southern Connecticut State University, “A Chorus of Refusal: Feminist Manifestos of Care and Resistance”

An art collective featuring the manifestos from the fall 2025 WGS 500 Feminist Theory class.

**Sabine Woman**, The New School, “How To (and Why We Must) Include Sex Workers: ‘butterfly angel club’ is a living installation illustrating the essentialness of sex workers in our mutual solidarity”

When we talk about immigrant justice, disability rights, trans rights, women’s rights, and labor solidarity, sex worker solidarity is essential. ~butterfly angel club~ is a living exhibition of archival and contemporary work made by sex workers. ~butterfly angel club~ puts workers as the narrators of their own story through physical media, photography, zines, magazines, literature and more.

*B11 “Beyond Pathology: Autism, Enlightenment, and Indigenous Knowledge” in Room SB 408*

Panel

**Marie Reyes-Alvarez**, Grinnell College, “Liberations of the Body and Mind: Autistic Unmasking and Buddhist Enlightenment in Conversation”

This project proposes that the paths of autistic unmasking and Tibetan Buddhist practice are parallel processes which, through both a renunciation of fabrication and an embracing of our most easeful ways of being, have the potential to lead to liberation from sufferings of body and mind. This interactive presentation will invite the audience to experience for themselves the conversation between these approaches to liberation in two ways: the recounting of autistic and Buddhist phenomenological testimonies and a guided personal engagement with each of the two practices.

**Skylar Maguire**, York University, Canada, “Reframing Autism Through a Mi’kmaq Lens: Data Sovereignty, Pathology, and Self Determination”

Current autism diagnostic criteria remain grounded in a medical model of disability that often ignores cultural and linguistic differences and overlooks the impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities. As a result, Mi’kmaw perspectives are largely absent from disability research. Drawing on participatory engagement with Mi’kmaw Elders and knowledge keepers, this research explores how autism might be reconceptualized through Mi’kmaw values and social practices, developing a neurodiversity-affirming framework that challenges deficit-based diagnostic criteria and invites Mi’kmaw ways of knowing to diagnostic approaches in Autism care.

## Dinner, Award Ceremony, and Keynote Speech

6 pm to 8 pm, in Adanti Building Ballroom, room ASC 313B

*Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa Service Award*

*Keynote Speaker:*

Dr. Nirmala Erevelles

*Artists:*

Croilot Adames Semexant, Spoken Word Artist

GodIsTymaniRain, Spoken Word Artist

Jennifer Kreisberg (Tuscarora), Vocalist

*Moderator:*

Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, Southern Connecticut State University

## Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Registration Opens, Breakfast 8:30 am to 9:30 am in room SB 102

Community Fair Opens, 8:30 am in room SB 132

Concurrent Session C 9:30 am to 10:45 am

*C1 "Imagination as Praxis" in room SB 105*

Panel

**Yoli Bergstrom-Lynch**, Connecticut State, "Lady Plays the Blues Project: Recovering the Hidden Legacies of Black Women Blues Guitarists through Digital Black Feminist Praxis"

Lady Plays the Blues Project is a digital annotated bibliography and multimedia counter-archive that uses digital Black feminist praxis to recover the hidden legacies of Black women blues guitarists. The project challenges dominant blues narratives through multimedia storytelling and interactive tools that demonstrate how Black women's sound labor profoundly matters. This presentation will briefly highlight the sociocultural and historical factors behind the erasure of blues guitar women from blues history, outline the project's origins and goals, and share the public site I created to showcase these extraordinary guitar women.

**Tina Benigno**, York University, Canada, "Magic and Social Power: Imagining through Media Texts, and Talking with Teens"

This talk will explore how to storytell for social change, by listening and imagining. I will share knowledge from my recently published book, *The Extra-Ordinary Girl: Care, Connection, and Social Power On and*

*Off Screen.* Through girlhood feminist media and childhood studies frameworks, I examine the “extraordinary” girl as she exists under neoliberalism. Through a combination of textual and cultural analyses of figurations of girlhood in popular culture, and qualitative research group interviews with teen girls, I emphasize the importance of listening to real teen girls whose perspectives and values might not match those attributed to dominant cultural models of girlhood.

*C2 “Remaking Power: Religion, Ideology, and Social Change” in room SB 122*

Panel

**Anna Malavisi**, Western Connecticut State University, “The Power of Ideology and How to (Re)make the Power”

In our current social and political context, all are exposed to ideologies that are causing misunderstanding and distortion of concepts such as feminism; often, to such an extent that feminism can now have negative connotations. I argue that the power of ideology is creating a regressive stance on the lives of women and the LGBTQI+ community, such that, the tradwife is being promoted as a positive role model. My analysis will describe how our choices are made within a patriarchal system. To end, I will propose how to move forward in challenging these epistemic oppressions through liberatory practices.

**Kathryn Lofton**, Southern Connecticut State University, “How to Engage Religion for Social Change”

How to Engage Religion for Social Change offers findings from Religious Studies, Ritual Studies, and U.S. Religious History that instruct on how to organize communities on behalf of social change. Scholars of religion study systems of worship enacted by people who venerate certain ideas, practices, and superhuman powers over others. Practices of veneration can instruct activists on how to sustain communities while pushing for their transformation.

*C3 “What Survives: Words, Memory, and Teaching” in room SB 201*

**Natalia S Macias**, York University, Canada, “‘It Comes to Me in the Wind’: Words that Survive Cultural Assimilation as a Site of Resistance”

Settler-colonial systems of knowledge production rely on (re)labelling, assimilation, and normativity as tools of erasure. The processes of internalized oppression, efficient productivity, and the demand for coherence influence how marginalized communities understand language and identity (Chao, 2013). These norms are historically situated within colonial frameworks that continue to structure academic and institutional knowledge (Grech, 2015). This paper examines what survives when the original words for concepts have been erased through settler-colonial tactics. Drawing from lived experience as a brown disabled scholar, I argue that while language may be fragmented, concepts persist through embodied memory, lived reality, and storytelling. Storytelling as an emancipatory research practice contributes to collective memory-making that supports justice and accountability.

**Clara Nabuco da Fonseca Wulff**, University of Connecticut, “To Hope and Create Life, Memories and Teachings of Dona Flor”

"To hope and create life, memories and teachings of Dona Flor, is an ethnographical work on the life stories of Dona Flor, a quilombola leader, midwife, Raizeira, lavradora, teacher, and mother of 28 lives. Her life story and daily practices reveal the ways in which one, by caring and being cared for, knits networks with humans and other than human (De la Cadena, 2015). That become webs of care, that make possible to raise children, nurture community, feed and protect one's environment, while insisting on hope -an active hope-, as suggested by Paulo Freire (1996), that urges for working towards creating a better living (Acosta, 2010). By caring and actively hoping, Dona Flor teaches us ancestral ways of surviving and thriving in this world."

#### *C4 "Reproductive Justice and the Politics of the Body" in room SB 203*

Panel

**Lauren Danielowski**, University of Connecticut, "the Contributions of Reproductive Justice to Teaching Race, Class, and Gender"

The analytic, activist and theoretical contributions of reproductive justice offer a compelling roadmap to organizing and teaching courses about race, class, and gender that speak directly to students' lived experiences and center the goal of transformative justice. Practitioners of this framework have repeatedly shown the relationship between reproductive freedom and race, class, and gender such as economic injustice, structural racism, colonialism, heterosexism, ableism, and misogyny. Drawing on artifacts and anecdotal accounts of teaching as a graduate student instructor, this presentation examines how instructors teaching race, class, and gender can use reproductive justice to promote historically grounded, intersectional, and feminist teaching.

**Abena Yalley**, Universität Konstanz, Germany, "Biopower, Coloniality and Gendered Politics: The Complexities of Obstetric Violence in Nigeria"

Obstetric violence in Nigeria constitutes a significant public health and human rights concern that undermines women's trust in health facilities and contributes to adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes. In this presentation, I employ the feminist phenomenological approach to explore how gender norms and structural inequalities enable and sustain the perpetration of obstetric violence in Nigeria. I argue that obstetric violence is a form of reproductive politics, first in healthcare systems and second as a tool for colonizing women's bodies and reproductive processes. I base my presentation on qualitative fieldwork in Nigeria involving women's accounts, healthcare providers and community leaders.

#### *C5 "Nurturing Hope and Visibility: Indigenous Girls and Two-Spirit Futures" in room SB 204*

Panel

**Katherine Stockton-Juarez**, The George Washington University, "Two-Spirit Decolonial Changemaking on Instagram"

How do Indigenous Two-Spirit activists use digital platforms not designed for them to practice decolonial worldmaking? Centering Indigenous feminist and Two-Spirit epistemologies, this session examines Instagram as a contested yet generative site where Two-Spirit activists enact decolonial practices of

refusal, survival, and resurgence. Using discourse analysis of Instagram posts by Three Two-Spirit Indigenous creators, I trace four interwoven “how-to” practices of decolonial worldmaking. Rather than positioning social media solely as extractive or oppressive, this project foregrounds how marginalized communities repurpose algorithmic spaces to cultivate care, solidarity, and political imagination. Participants are invited into a brief reflective exercise that explores kinship, feeling, and refusal as everyday practices of feminist and decolonial worldmaking.

**Renee R. Coe**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Nurturing Hope for Indigenous Girls”

How can we change the future for Indigenous girls who experienced intergenerational trauma of a missing or murdered mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, or friend? This session will focus on a public health crisis in our country. Eighty-three percent of Indigenous women that disappear from reservations, rural areas and cities are mothers. Their disappearance is often unnoticed and little investigated. Outdated laws on tribal lands, poor federal government record keeping are a continuation of systemic racism. To change the future for Indigenous girls a trauma informed approach needs to consider Indigenous traditions with the goal of prevention, education, awareness, and safety planning.

*C6 “Feminist Theory is for Everyone” in room SB 302*

Panel

**Chris Bobel, Sophia Basilia Aquino, Gillian Authelet, Steph Eppler, Olivia Gerrish, Alanie L S Hassan, Caileigh Sutton, Bryn Tremblay**, University of Massachusetts, “Feminist Theory is for Everyone: A Showcase of Student Creative Projects that Make Theory Come to Life”

This panel highlights innovative undergraduate projects from UMass Boston's "Feminisms, Intersectionality, and Social Justice" course. Students translate complex feminist concepts—gender performativity, intersectionality, neoliberalism, the lesbian continuum—into accessible forms through photography, podcasting, cartooning, doll-making, and children's books. Through five-minute presentations, students demonstrate how creativity transforms specialized theory into public-facing practice. By foregrounding creative inquiry, this panel challenges the divide between rigor and accessibility, modeling how undergraduate scholarship can democratize feminist knowledge while sustaining analytical depth—a compelling vision for engaged, inclusive pedagogy.

*C7 “The Work of Carrying: Calm, Desire, and Witnessing” in room SB 303*

Panel

**Emmaline Monteith**, Australian National University, Australia; Yale University, “How to Carry Stories of Sexual Violence and Still Desire: a Creative Reflection on Intimacy and the Work of Witnessing”

This presentation proposes an embodied methodology for those who work with sexual violence, treating desire and vulnerability not as risks to be managed but as vital forms of knowledge. Drawing on my published testimony in Guardian Australia and on reflections that emerge from engaging with thousands of survivor testimonies in my research, it explores how these stories seep into and shape everyday life. Through a hybrid performance of creative writing and critical commentary, I ask: what does it mean to work with stories of sexual violence while continuing to move through the world as a desiring body?

**Kara Pernicano**, Stony Brook University, “A Monstrous Calm: How to Find Some Calm in the Chaos”

This workshop sparks individual and collective reflection on everyday rituals of care in order to invoke what I have termed a monstrous calm. Inviting a monstrous calm, as a theory and a practice, might offer a release through contending with an aching world. There is often a lot to hold. How do we sustain ourselves in times of chaos, stress, trauma and grief? Rooted in Healing Justice, I take comfort in the belief: “There is no single model of care” (Middleton and Page 126). Please join me in a guided meditation, reflective writing on ritual practices and exchange of care.

*C8 “Embodied Manifestos: Feminist Art, Voice, and Public Intervention” in Room SB 304*

Presentation in A10 Session

Workshop / Exhibit

**Sonja Czekalski**, Central Connecticut State University, “Vagina Dress”

This participatory workshop and immersive installation explore sex education, bodily autonomy, and radical joy through both studio practice, craftivism, and community installation. Attendees are invited to view and participate in the installation by meditating with their sacral chakra and visiting two art making stations. In one station, participants may draw a reflection of their sacral chakra meditation. A Second station will be dedicated to decorating handmade anatomically informed clitoral sculptures made from handmade toilet-paper clay. Participants are invited to hang their drawings within the installation and add their decorated sculptures to the “Yes, It's a Vagina Dress” collaborative sculpture throughout the duration of the conference.

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*C9 “Narrating Palestine Across Memory and Diasporic Experience” in Room SB 214*

Panel

**Amera Abuelhussien**, “Healing Through Her Words: Feminist Storytelling and Decolonial Memory in Gaza”

As a writer from Gaza, my work documents everyday life under war, loss, and displacement. Through poems and personal reflections, I bear witness to stories that are often reduced to numbers in the news. My writing focuses especially on the experiences of women, families, and the fragile acts of care that continue despite destruction. In this presentation, I reflect on writing as a form of testimony and resistance in an attempt to preserve memory, honor those we have lost, and imagine a more just and humane world beyond violence.

**Razan H. Abunar**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Autoethnographic Narrative about Palestinian Diasporic Experience”

This presentation explores what it means to grow up in a Palestinian family shaped by the 1948 Nakba and the lasting feeling of displacement that followed. Drawing from my own family's story, I talk about how they were forced out, the aftermath, and how that trauma shows up in later generations, and how it shaped my identity. I also reflect on my own experience growing up in the United States as a visibly Palestinian, veiled, Muslim woman after 9/11, and what it means to try to belong while carrying that history with you.

*C10 “Black Feminist Temporalities: Afrofuturism, Archive, and Identity Formation” in Room SB 402*

Panel

**Kaijo Caggins**, The George Washington University, “Hacking Linearity: *Emergence* (1986), Afrofuturist Erotics, and Black Feminist Thought”

This presentation is a reading of Pratibha Parmar’s *Emergence* (1986) as a diasporic feminist intervention that mobilizes glitch aesthetics, Black postmodernism, and Afrofuturist erotics to disrupt linear temporality and reclaim embodied autonomy. The film renders time as recursive and unsettled. Breath, gesture, and rhythm operate as somatic theory. Drawing from Regina N. Bradley’s work as well as Kendrick L. Coleman’s, I argue that *Emergence* integrates alienness as a rhythmic method of survival rather than a metaphor of displacement. This paper proposes a praxis in which futurity is rehearsed in the present, in the glitch, in the loop, and in the refusal of chrononormativity. I also present a teach-in on co-regulating Black feminist futures and embodied mapping.

**Freda D. Grant, Jessica Pelletier**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Digging through My Mama’s Crates: A Mult Ethnic, Multi-Generational Analysis of Hip Hop Feminism and Urban Black Women’s Identity Formation”

Hip Hop feminism provides a critical framework for examining how urban Black women develop identity, political consciousness, and cultural belonging through musical and cultural expression. While scholarship highlights Hip Hop’s empowering potential, limited research explores how feminist ideas and cultural knowledge circulate across generations of women. Using Black feminist autoethnography and intergenerational focus groups, this study examines how urban Black women interpret, transmit, and transform Hip Hop’s meanings within families, mentorship networks, and community spaces. Findings suggest Hip Hop functions as a cultural archive through which women negotiate identity, feminist consciousness, and intergenerational empowerment.

## Concurrent Session D 11am to 12:15pm

### *D1 "Everywhen and Everywhere: Claiming Time and Space" in room SB 105*

Panel

**Alexis Bentz**, Emory University, "Everything, Everywhere All at Once: Queer and Crip Temporalities in All of Us Strangers"

All of Us Strangers creates a world filled not only with ghosts and grief, but non-standard temporalities. Following Kara Keeling who asks "when" a queer subject is situated, my paper investigates when the film's protagonist, Adam, is located as a gay, psychiatrically disabled man. I engage with theorizations of queer and crip time, fluid temporalities that reject reproductive milestones and rigid chronologies, arguing that Adam's intersectional identities cause him to exist everywhen. Using Adam as a case study, I suggest that to best support queer and disabled individuals, we must meet each other not just where, but when we are.

**Jennifer Rubino**, Southern Connecticut State University, "Claiming Space: Disability as Political Identity and the Transformative Power of Inclusive Language"

Language is a key component to our individual and collective mindset. In our current political landscape, have we lost the power of language to be inclusive and create community. This talk is a comprehensive workshop about the power of language in political spaces; a space those living with disabilities have to claim for themselves in order to ensure visibility and accessibility. The focus is on how language is a key tool for shifting political narratives, building solidarity and allyship, and getting accountability from political leaders. When disabled people are part of the political spectrum, the fight for equal rights and equity is complete.

### *D2 "Creative Engagement, Collective Resistance" in room SB 122*

Panel

**Chris C. Lopez**, Southern Connecticut State University, "Creative Resistance"

Community creativity is an underutilized form of resistance. As a creative in the world of fashion design, art, and martial arts, I have been cultivating free creative community events aimed at engaging others in the process of creativity, visibility, solidarity, and resistance. Joy is a necessary part of revolution, from fashion shows to self-defense classes, unity follows close behind! In this presentation, I will discuss my experience and perspective throughout this journey. My philosophy in this endeavor has been rooted in feminist pedagogy, social work organizing, and anarchism. Let's have a conversation about creativity, unity, and joy!

**Azure D. Osborne-Lee**, The New School, "Resisting Together: Exploring Economies of Discomfort"

The purpose of this talk is to provide a framework for how to resist social injustice and push back in small but significant ways in an era of rising global authoritarianism. I will use Kimberlé Crenshaw's

intersectionality theory as a jumping off point and will also delve into disability justice theory. Using “economies of discomfort,” a phrase I coined to help me analyze how people share, or do not share, public space, I will explore who is welcome in public spaces. I’ll also use this method to examine divisions of labor. Attendees can expect to gain a deeper understanding of what it takes to become an effective advocate, agitator, and ally.

#### *D3 “Cultivating Belonging in the Classroom” in room SB 201*

Panel

**Joshua Chebowski, Taylor Hurley, Jessica Powell, AJ Wallace**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Cultivating Belonging in the Classroom through Contradictions and Conflict: A Cooperative Inquiry”

Using the methodology of cooperative inquiry, a group of seven public school educators came together over the course of a year and a half to grapple with what belonging means to us and how to cultivate it in our classrooms. In this presentation, we reflect on how cultivating belonging is a practice that invites us to explore the intersections of our own sense of belonging, along with our students’, as we work through contradictions and conflict amidst a shifting political landscape.

#### *D4 “Relational Worlds: Kinship, Care, and Activism” in room SB 203*

Panel

**Souksavanh Keovorabouth and Marcel Herving**, Northern Arizona University, “Black and Indigenous Trans Studies: (Re)Mapping our Kinships”

Throughout our impacts with the United States, Black and Indigenous communities inherently mirror each other, the history of displacement and genocide intertwining with our methods of resistance and existence under settler-colonialism. Looking at Black and Indigenous peoples who are Queer, Trans, and/or Two-Spirit, our history is hard to pinpoint, the mapping and remapping of our ancestry finding to be difficult. We argue, alongside other Black and Indigenous Trans scholars, that these forms of “triads” operate through the enslavement of Black bodies and the genocide of Indigenous bodies for land, free labor, and control. We utilize personal narrative and theory from Black and Indigenous Trans scholars to ground and validate our argument for Black and Indigenous Trans solidarity in (re)mapping our kinships.

**Marlaina Martin**, University of Vermont, “Animating Activism: On Indie Media Production, Healing Justice, and Black Feminist Opacity”

The ‘Strong Black Women’ trope not only shapes media representations of Black womanhood but also fortifies assumptions and justifies attendant neglect of actual Black woman’s testimonies of pain, physical and mental. This presentation examines how Black women media-makers, without reliable recourse to formal mental health services, have used nonrealist aesthetics—animation, especially—to call out a dominant public imaginary and systems complicitly insistent on their invincibility, use leeway of filmic style and techniques to excavate verbally inarticulable struggles, and comment on the misogynoir and absurdly normalized double standards of equity, care, and justice woven into mainstream U.S. mental health discourse

*D5 “Rewriting Gender, Imagining Futures” in room SB 204*

Workshop

**Spencer Evans, Quinn Meehan**, University of Connecticut, “How to Resist the Sociopolitical Climate Through Queer, Trans, Disabled Imaged Futures”

In this workshop, we share artwork representing queer and trans disabled imagined better futures that symbolize a process of imagining better futures alongside images of what better futures could look like with a focus on liberation, communal care, and resistance. Next, we will utilize disability, sexual, and gender justice frameworks rooted in imagination, collective care, and envisioning futures to build a space where participants can engage with how to create and imagine their own better futures. Doing so will bring large-scale resistance to our local community spaces and create collective spaces for dreaming and imagining beyond the now.

**Lindsey Weiss**, Cardozo School of Law, “How to Re-Nonbinary-ify Nonbinary Gender”

Are you tired of the gender trinary? Come on down to "How to Re-Nonbinary-ify Nonbinary Gender!" In this workshop, we'll explore how different queer theorists have approached genderqueerness as a creative, interpretive, pleasurable exercise that defies the rigid categorization of the gender binary—and more recently, what I call the gender trinary. Where the gender trinary codifies nonbinary people into a narrow box of its own, we will recall the category-busting ideas of our queer predecessors through a brief smorgasbord of their words and a collaborative collage art project.

*D6 “Sexual Assault in European Myth and Literature” in room SB 214*

Workshop

**Carrie Kancilia, Maura McGuire-Bruce**, University of Southern Maine, “Sexual Assault in European Myth and Literature”

Our presentation, an extension of an independent study conducted during the Fall 2025 semester, investigates the repeated appearance of sexual assault in ancient and medieval myths and literature, and continuing throughout history. Our presentation asks: How did this profoundly disturbing perspective come to shape this aspect of human affairs? Having traced the history of these repressive systems across multiple cultures and time, and examined the historiography they produced, how can we remember, rebuild, and embody change in the ways sexual assault is approached and represented in literature?

*D7 “Humanizing Pedagogy as a Pathway to Liberation” in room SB 302*

Workshop

**Sarah Benes and Ashlee Mattutini**, Southern Connecticut State University, “Humanizing Pedagogy as a Pathway to Liberation” (2-part workshop)

**Humanizing Pedagogy as a Pathway to Liberation: Part 1**

This interactive presentation explores the principles of humanizing and kind pedagogy and their role in fostering liberation and critical consciousness. Drawing on the foundational work of Freire, Bartolome, Gorny-Wegrzyn & Mahler, and Denial, the session examines how these pedagogical approaches support the "becoming" and self-actualization of both students and educators. Participants will engage with core elements of these practices to understand their potential for personal and societal change, ultimately gaining practical tools for the classroom and other human-centered spaces to support growth and liberation.

## **Humanizing Pedagogy as a Pathway to Liberation: Part 2**

In Part 2, we focus on collaboratively operationalizing humanizing and kind pedagogy within health education and nursing contexts. While existing literature describes principles, practical strategies for implementation are often limited. Presenters will share insights from self-study research projects, detailing personal and student outcomes. Participants will engage in dialogue to build collective wisdom and articulate core pedagogical elements. The goal is to inspire educators to begin or advance their own humanizing journeys with practical tools for growth and liberation."

*D8 "The Meridians Project: Publishing, Pedagogy, and Praxis" in room SB 303*

Panel

**Ginetta E. B. Candelario, Mia Huang, Chiamaka Okorom, Angelie Pereyra, Rinal Dahhan**, Smith College, "The Meridians Project: Publishing, Pedagogy, and Praxis"

For twenty-five years, *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* (Duke University Press) has been a vital platform for transnational feminist scholarship, cultural production, and activism by and about women of color feminists and feminisms. This session explores *Meridians* as a site of pedagogy and praxis for undergraduates who intern with the journal throughout the academic year, and who are required to enroll in a *Meridians* weekly seminar taught by the Editor. Through a moderated discussion, attendees will hear about how editorial labor can serve as a form of teaching that's rooted in feminist principles of care, critical optimism and radical hope. Panelists will explore how mentorship fosters greater accessibility and inclusion.

*D9 "Embodied Manifestos: Feminist Art, Voice, and Public Intervention" in Room SB 304*

Presentation in A10 Session

Workshop / Exhibit

**Sonja Czekalski**, Central Connecticut State University, "Vagina Dress"

This participatory workshop and immersive installation explore sex education, bodily autonomy, and radical joy through both studio practice, craftivism, and community installation. Attendees are invited to view and participate in the installation by meditating with their sacral chakra and visiting two art making stations. In one station, participants may draw a reflection of their sacral chakra meditation. A Second station will be dedicated to decorating handmade anatomically informed clitoral sculptures made from handmade toilet-paper clay. Participants are invited to hang their drawings within the installation and add

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When we talk about immigrant justice, disability rights, trans rights, women's rights, and labor solidarity, sex worker solidarity is essential. ~butterfly angel club~ is a living exhibition of archival and contemporary work made by sex workers. ~butterfly angel club~ puts workers as the narrators of their own story through physical media, photography, zines, magazines, literature and more.

**Lunch Buffet 12:30 pm to 1:45 pm in room SB 102**

**Concurrent Session E 1:45 pm to 3 pm**

*E1 "Black Care as Survival: Pathways Through Structural Violence" in in room SB 122*

Panel

**Freda D. Grant**, Southern Connecticut State University, "We Stayed Enrolled: Reimagining Black-Feminist Pathways for Pregnant and Parenting College Women in the Pre- and Post-Title IX Era"

This paper examines the experiences of pregnant and parenting Black women enrolled in U.S. colleges during the 1990s, offering a Black feminist reimagining of higher education persistence before and after the formal expansion of Title IX protections. Grounded in Black feminist autoethnography, Black feminist theory, reproductive justice, and policy analysis, the study centers the narratives of women who "stayed enrolled" despite institutional neglect, surveillance, and gendered racism. Their stories illuminate how Black women navigated and resisted structural barriers while asserting their right to education, care, and reproductive autonomy.

**Ola Kalu**, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia / University of Pennsylvania, "Black Doula, Structural Violence, and Economies of Care in Philadelphia"

Black birthing people in Philadelphia experience three to four times higher maternal mortality rates than their white counterparts. This is an issue rooted in structural racism and neighborhood disinvestment. Research has shown that doula support and advocacy reduce cesarean rates, preterm birth, and maternal stress, and improve overall birth experiences and postpartum outcomes, which can benefit Black birthing people even more. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the structural conditions that shape doulas' capacity to practice their work. Drawing on a community-engaged

partnership with a Black-led doula collective in Philadelphia, this roundtable centers doulas as knowledge producers and examines the economies of care that sustain who provide care.

### *E2 “Reframing Care: Patient Knowledge and Transnational Perspectives” in room SB 201*

Panel

**Hye Kelly**, The George Washington University, “Epistemic injustices within the Patient-Provider Relationship: Reframing the Role and Positionality of the Patient”

In this paper, I argue that there is a fundamental epistemic injustice that occurs within the patient-healthcare provider relationship. Negative stereotypes on behalf of some healthcare providers regarding race, gender, and disability may exacerbate this injustice. I utilize a case study of Serena Williams’ childbirth complications to illustrate that untrue beliefs surrounding race and gender may result in inaccurate treatment plans and potentially life-threatening conditions. Using Iris Marion Young’s concept of “asymmetrical reciprocity” and José Medina’s concept of “epistemic humility,” I argue that asymmetries within the patient-provider relationship are necessary to create a respectful relationship. Only when we acknowledge this asymmetry and attempt to address the epistemic injustices that occur can we move towards respectful patient-provider relationships.

**Uma Kuwar**, “Analyzing Maternal and Neonatal Healthcare in Uttarakhand, India: A Transitional Feminist Approach”

In the mountainous state of Uttarakhand, maternal and neonatal healthcare is shaped by geographical isolation. This presentation employs a transnational feminist framework to examine how cultural traditions, medical practices, and women’s voices intersect with terrain to affect healthcare access in communities across the state. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach that centers women’s lived experiences, this project proposes community-informed interventions to address disparities. This study contributes to feminist global health discourse by positioning maternal and neonatal health through a transnational feminist lens to address reproductive injustice.

### *E3 “SPAM and Resilience” in room SB 202*

Workshop

**Esther Chiang**, “SPAM & Resilience”

Through SPAM as our main ingredient and cultural artifact, this hands-on workshop will explore the historical and cultural significance of recipes and food that were once for survival and have become cornerstones of culture. Please note that this workshop involves cooking with meat. The presenter will provide non-pork spam as well.

### *E4 “Including Sex Workers, Rethinking Sexual Justice” in room SB 203*

Panel

**Sabine Woman**, The New School, “How To (and Why We Must) Include Sex Workers: ‘butterfly angel club’ is a living installation illustrating the essentialness of sex workers in our mutual solidarity”

When we talk about immigrant justice, disability rights, trans rights, women’s rights, and labor solidarity, sex worker solidarity is essential. Sex workers are often trans, disabled, immigrants, and women living the most precarious realities. Yet they are rarely included in academic feminist dialogue. ~butterfly angel club~ is a living exhibition of archival and contemporary work made by sex workers. ~butterfly angel club~ puts workers as the narrators of their own story through physical media, photography, zines, magazines, literature and more. Excluded from systems, sex workers built their own; in times that encourage isolationism, solidarity lets us learn and survive together.

**Alberto Cifuentes**, Southern Connecticut State University, “In the Name of Sexual Justice: Non-carceral Approaches to Sex Work”

Black, Indigenous, queer, and transgender sex workers face disproportionate criminalization, surveillance, and harm, particularly Black and brown transgender women impacted by carceral feminism. Criminalization restricts access to housing, healthcare, and education. This presentation advances a sexual justice framework that rejects punitive approaches and centers bodily autonomy, decarceration, and transformative care. Sexual justice dismantles heterosexism, racism, and other systems of oppression while promoting safety, rights, and resilience for sex workers. This presentation will illustrate how abolitionist approaches to sexual trauma and violence can mobilize sex workers to organize for liberatory policy change.

*E5 “Black Care as Survival: Pathways Through Structural Violence” in room SB 204*

Panel

**Imani N. Smith** Southern Connecticut State University, “Saving a Seat for You and Me: How Black Women Student Leaders Uphold Community Spaces for Themselves and Others on Campus”

With heightened political conflict right now, college campuses across the nation have become sites of abrupt change, resistance and protest, especially with the revocation of DEI programs, policies, and initiatives that support students and faculty. There is limited research surrounding the role of the students who are organizing these spaces, and the impact the current political climate has on their work. This project explores the role of collegiate Black women who serve as student leaders of multicultural organizations. Building off sociological frameworks like Black Placemaking and transformational leadership, I argue that Black women student leaders are at the forefront of curating these community spaces, though their involvement is not fully acknowledged.

**Estella Jiang**, University of Maryland, “Color of Democracy: Race and Class in the Urban Activism of Free D.C.”

This paper examines the disenfranchisement of D.C. and the mass resistance of student-led activism in the 1960s. As national capital and political center of the U.S., the District of Columbia was built on the dispossessed lands of indigenous people and stolen Black labor. Engaging with critical scholarship of settler colonialism and racial capitalism, I demonstrate how the geopolitical positioning of D.C. has contributed to the freedom struggle of Black Washingtonians. Inheriting the historical legacy of

resistance, the grassroots organizing of the renewed Free DC movement is grounded on livelihood, power, and joy of the vibrant D.C. urban culture.

*E6 “Medical Assisted Suicide: A Threat to the Vulnerable” in room SB 214*

Workshop

**Anita Cameron**, “Medical Assisted Suicides: A Threat to the Vulnerable”

“There is a system of medical apartheid in this country,” states disability justice activist Anita Cameron. Legalization and normalization of medical assisted suicide further endanger those who struggle desperately to survive and access healthcare- especially disabled, elderly, people of color, and poor. This workshop includes a 36-minute film, Thoughts on Medical Assisted Suicide, followed by a presentation and audience discussion with Cameron over Zoom. The film was created by Progressives Against Medical Assisted Suicide (pamasprogressives.org). Cameron is the Director of We Were There Too: Blacks in the Disability Movement (weweretheretoo.org).

*E7 “Gen Z (Re)Imagining Feminist Futures” in room SB 302*

Workshop

**Shoba Rajgopal, et. al.**, Westfield State University, “How do We as Gen Z Students (Re)imagine Feminist Futures? Unlearning Oppressive Theories of Knowledge to Forge Liberatory Practice”

This undergrad student-led panel presents a brief history of feminist grassroots organizing in the U.S and the importance of Women and Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies Programs and Departments at a time of crisis. We examine organizations like the Combahee River Collective, WARN, the Black Panther Party, and the Lavender Menace and connect it to the activism of today. Our primary question is, how do we unlearn oppressive epistemologies and forge liberatory practices? We are an interracial group of students from a PWI and see the reimagining of feminism through Black feminist thought as a model for understanding liberation as inherently intersectional and rooted in collective care, accountability, and structural transformation.

*E8 “Embodied Manifestos: Feminist Art, Voice, and Public Intervention” in Room SB 304*

Presentation in A10 Session

Workshop / Exhibit

**Sonja Czekalski**, Central Connecticut State University, “Vagina Dress”

This participatory workshop and immersive installation explore sex education, bodily autonomy, and radical joy through both studio practice, craftivism, and community installation. Attendees are invited to view and participate in the installation by meditating with their sacral chakra and visiting two art making stations. In one station, participants may draw a reflection of their sacral chakra meditation. A Second station will be dedicated to decorating handmade anatomically informed clitoral sculptures made from handmade toilet-paper clay. Participants are invited to hang their drawings within the installation and add

their decorated sculptures to the "Yes, It's a Vagina Dress" collaborative sculpture throughout the duration of the conference.

**Chelsie Wagner, Anne Cyril, Fabiola Elias, Chris Lopez, Myesha Mapp, Jennie McDermott, Megan Morgan, Marquitta Preston, Ansley Reyes, Gianna Rubino, Gabriella Santana, Imani Smith, Rakeria Thompson, Ben Walter**, Southern Connecticut State University, "A Chorus of Refusal: Feminist Manifestos of Care and Resistance"

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**Sabine Woman**, The New School, "How To (and Why We Must) Include Sex Workers: 'butterfly angel club' is a living installation illustrating the essentialness of sex workers in our mutual solidarity"

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*E9 "Another World Is Possible: Reimagining Relationality and Autonomy" in Room SB 402*

Workshop

**Marcel Xavier Herving**, Northern Arizona University, "Death's Dance: Redefining Life, Death, and Legacy for Black and Brown Trans Queer Peoples"

The deaths of the marginalized are exploited as a vacuum for violence, tabloids and news headlines. The abuse and mistreatment of marginalized bodies after death offers no respect for their personhood, legacies, and the knowledge they hold. In the context of Black and Brown Trans and/or Queer bodies, it causes us to forget ourselves and each other beyond the grave. Black Trans scholar C. Riley Snorton (2017) writes about how Black Trans bodies are policed by the settler colonialist state in life and death. Understanding necro politics and how it is weaponized against Black and Brown Trans and/or Queer people, we can reclaim death as legacy, bodily autonomy, and a beacon of knowledge.

**Priyanka Suresh**, University of Massachusetts Amherst, "Reality is Malleable: Reimagining Economic Systems"

How do we create alternative economies of care, access, justice, and decolonial business? My video essay is my response to the question. I explore first what is meant by an economy. Most of our notions surrounding the production, distribution and trade, pillars of most economies, are rooted in capitalism. I challenge the framework through the idea of manifestation. I present my ideas on systems that can exist without a form of payment and explore a gift economy as it extends beyond a simple eye-for-eye exchange rather a gift holds immeasurable value, as well explore the idea of self-sustaining through creating.

*E10 "The Contradictions of Inclusion: Gender, Extraction, and Power" in Room SB 404*

Panel

**Luciana Tapia Rattaro**, University of San Andrés, Argentina, “Energy Transition: Where are the Women?”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for a profound transformation in the global energy system. This process demands the moving from a fossil-fuel dependent matrix towards renewable and low carbon sources. Yet, where are the women? Grounded in feminist critical extractivism theory, this paper will critically examine how gender policies in the energy transition in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are frequently corporatized and reduced to procedural checklists. The paper calls for rethinking participation in the energy transition as a political process in a way to addresses care, power, and structural inequalities at the core of contemporary energy governance.

**Katelyn Hearfield**, Harvard University, “Kesha Cruises Atopia”

This paper explores the cultural contradictions of music festival cruises, focusing on two cruises affiliated with the pop star Kesha: A Caribbean cruise targeted at queer fans and an Antarctic wellness cruise for \$30,000 per ticket. I question the extent to which privileged as well as marginalized populations are (or should be) held accountable for the betterment of the world at large, given the impact of environmental and noise pollution on marine life, the legal gray area of international waters that allows for the exploitation of vulnerable communities, and connections between climate change and violence against women and children globally.

**Closing Plenary 3:15 pm to 4:30 pm in room SB 201**

*“Feminist, Crip, Decolonial Pedagogies as Liberatory Practices”*

*Speakers:*

Jen Deerinwater (Cherokee), Journalist and Founding Executive Director of [Crushing Colonialism](#)  
JuPong Lin, Story Maker, Earth Justice Activist, and Art Educator

*Moderators:*

Heidi Lockwood, Southern Connecticut State University  
Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, Southern Connecticut State University

**NOTES:**

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Photographed by Yi-Chun Tricia Lin

The Southern Connecticut State University Healing Project #MeToo Quilt, displayed on the third floor of the Adanti Student Center: this project was the result of a nearly two-year-long collaborative Women's & Gender Studies community initiative (2018-2019).