

Boston University Center for the Humanities ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



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Forum 2019 Roundtable panelists David Lyons, William Moore, Adela Pineda, and Carrie Preston

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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 annual forums that promote dialogue between humanities disciplines and public constituencies in ways that are vital to civic life.



Invited speaker Meredith Loken presents as part of the Seeing and Not Seeing seminar

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Letter from the Director



The fourth year (2019-2020) 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.

Our forum this year, "Can We Talk?" Dialogue and Debate in the Contemporary Academy, was the third of our annual forums on major topics of academic and public interest. This year we decided to look inward, to find a focus that would serve the BU community and encourage self-reflection. There seemed to us nothing more compelling and critical to the lives of those who work in all parts of our university than the problem of dialogue and debate, what can be said (and who can say it), and what is rarely discussed out of fear that it will

create conflict. "Can We Talk?" was convened in recognition of how difficult it has become in our academic environment to talk honestly about the ideas and beliefs that mean the most, how difficult it has become to address the issues that affect us deeply in the workplace, and how difficult it has become to acknowledge the serious divisions created by our different institutional positions and perspectives.

Held at WBUR's new CitySpace, "Can We Talk?" was designed to include a wide range of people representing various positions at BU. Thus, on each panel administrators, faculty (of different levels—junior, senior, adjunct, emeritus), staff, and graduate students, came together to confront a key academic or institutional issue.

We had planned to hold three annual forums in a row and then take a break in fall 2020, which turned out (inadvertently) to be prescient with the advent of COVID-19. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the "talk" initiated at Forum 2019 ever more urgent. Since all of our forums have generated important afterlives, the hiatus in fall 2020, in particular, will allow us to develop the undergraduate, graduate, and faculty and staff working groups spawned by Forum 2019, some of which have already convened. These working groups will address the many concerns and issues that arose through the opportunity the forum provided to discuss openly, sometimes in terms emotional and testy, at others humorous and inspired, subjects that are seldom aired so publicly and substantively.

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 publishing internships at Oxford University Press in New York City and regular "HumaniTeas" gatherings. In summer 2020, our undergraduate internship program will move to Boston area sites exclusively. These include: Beacon Press; The Brattle Theatre; and The Boston Globe. The Globe cancelled all of its student internships for summer 2020 due to COVID-19, so that site will be replaced this summer by an undergraduate internship at BU's thriving and innovative School of Public Health.

Our effort to find novel ways of supporting graduate study in the humanities was exemplified by the second year of our highly successful summer internship program for humanities PhD students, collaborating with the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs to create a complement to our Graduate Dissertation Fellowships

that provides professional opportunities outside of the academy. In summer 2020, we will be adding a sixth site to our graduate internships, The Massachusetts Historical Society.

We will continue to encourage undergraduate and graduate student participation in all of our Center programs and events, and to encourage collaboration between undergraduate and graduate humanities students of the kind displayed in our film series about incarceration.

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 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.

Among the fall 2019 seminar participants, graduate student Katheryn Viens (American & New England Studies) illuminated the story of railroad development in Massachusetts during the first half of the nineteenth century. Her archival research revealed the agency of common rural people in shaping the technological transformations that so profoundly affected their lives. Professor Ross Barrett discussed the landscape paintings of the nineteenth-century artist Eastman Johnson, showing how his representations of land, water, and the environment overall, were informed by his engagement with real estate speculation. Combining aesthetic analysis with attention to economic change, Professor Barrett staged the methodologies of a challenging new field of Art and Economics. By close-reading one of Eastman's most renowned paintings, "The Cranberry Pickers," Professor Barrett convinced members of the Seminar that aesthetic appreciation is enhanced by knowledge of economic history. Our final seminar of the semester featured Deeana Klepper's paper on Albert of Diessen's *Mirror of Priests*. Professor Klepper demonstrated how this guide to religion in medieval Germany expands general understanding of ordinary religious actors shaping ritual behavior and spiritual belief. At the same time, it reveals how open and flexible early Christian traditions were about practices such as the education of women and values such as religious tolerance.

The spring 2020 seminar began with a bracing account by Professor David Eckel of his own career path in Buddhist Studies, as he focused on his lifelong research subject, Bhaviveka, and enlightened seminar members about the fundamentals of Buddhist rituals and beliefs. By the middle of the semester, we were on Zoom, with our first remote seminar featuring the work of graduate student Mary Clarke (Archaeology) on limestone monuments among the Ancient Mayans. This didn't prevent fellows from learning more about Limestone than they ever imagined possible. Describing how she located an unmapped limestone quarry in 2016 and then came to recognize how this site could reveal the socio-economic messages embedded in material artifacts, Clarke provided an invaluable perspective on archaeological method.

Before the spring semester went remote, the Center held two major events. On February 4, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of Faculty for the Humanities Karl Kirchwey we hosted the CAS Humanities Book Celebration, the first of what we hope will be annual celebrations of book publications by BU humanities faculty. On February 27, we hosted "UsToo: feminist artists intersect with #MeToo," an intergenerational panel of artists and scholars, featuring Lyndall Gordon, Patricia Herzog, Sophie Seita, and Crystal Williams, with Angela Onwuachi-Willig moderating.

Let me end with two of the Center's achievements of which I am particularly proud, the first issuing from the past, and the second projecting its future.

My edited collection of essays primarily composed of papers delivered at Forum 2017, Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age, was published this spring 2020 by Palgrave Macmillan. The book is dedicated to our previous director, James Winn.

In February 2020, the Center was awarded a \$25,000 Planning Grant by the Teagle Foundation in New York to create a humanities-based summer program, "The One and the Many at Boston University," for low-income high school students from the Boston area. We have already found humanities faculty to teach in the program and partners who will help us to identify our first group of participants. We will spend this summer fine-tuning the curriculum, developing guidelines for undergraduate and graduate mentors, and writing a proposal for a \$300,000 grant to fund the program, which we hope will begin in Summer 2021.

Susan Mizruchi
Director, Center for the Humanities

Thank You to Our Forum 2019 Speakers

Panel 1 | Language Matters: Discussing Difficult Texts

Moderator: **Gregory Williams**, Associate Professor, Department of History of Art & Architecture

Panelists:

Kimberly Arkin, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology
Emily Gowen, PhD Candidate, Department of English
Stephen Prothero, C. Allyn and Elizabeth V. Russell Professor of Religion
Takeo Rivera, Assistant Professor, Department of English
Crystal Williams, Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion

Panel 2 | Corporate University: Acknowledging Student, Faculty, And Administration Fault Lines

Moderator: **Nazli Kibria**, Associate Dean of the Faculty/Social Sciences, Professor, Department of Sociology

Panelists:

Kimber Chewning, PhD Candidate, Department of History of Art & Architecture
Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Peter Schwartz, Associate Professor, Department of World Languages & Literatures
Cady Steinberg, Administrator, Department of History
Jonathan Zatlin, Associate Professor, Department of History

Panel 3 | Shop Talk: Nurturing Honest Dialogue Across Labor Divides

Moderator: **Jeffrey Rubin**, Associate Professor, Department of History

Panelists:

Charles Chang, Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics
Nancy Geourntas, Executive Assistant to the Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
Daniel Kleinman, Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs
Jessica Lambert, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology
Marisa Milanese, Master Lecturer, Writing Program

Roundtable | Further Reflections: Looking Ahead Together

Moderator: **Maurice Lee**, Professor, Department of English

Panelists:

Julie Levy, PhD Candidate, Department of Classical Studies
David Lyons, Professor Emeritus, Department of Philosophy and School of Law
William Moore, Director, American & New England Studies Program
Adela Pineda, Professor of Spanish, Department of Romance Studies
Carrie Preston, Arvind and Nandlal Kilachand Professor and Director, Kilachand Honors College

Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows



Ross Barrett

Associate Professor, History of Art & Architecture

Speculative Landscapes: American Art and Real Estate in the Nineteenth Century



David Eckel

Professor, Religion

Bhaviveka on the Bodhisattva Path



Deanna Klepper

Associate Professor, Religion

Albert of Diessen's *Mirror of Priests*: Defining Religion in Late Medieval Germany



John Paul Riquelme

Professor, English

Modernist Gothic: A Dark Discourse of Modernity from Wilde to Beckett

Junior Faculty Fellow



Ana Villarreal

Assistant Professor, Sociology

The Armored City: Violence and Seclusion in the Mexican Metropolis

Graduate Dissertation Fellows



Andrew Bell

History

Digging Deep: Archaeologists and American Foreign Relations in a World of Empire, 1880-1945

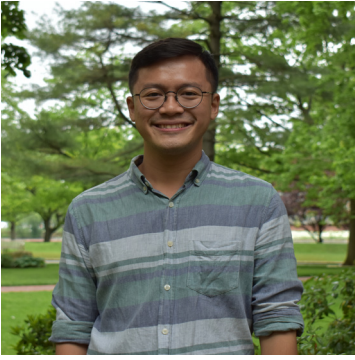


Mary Clarke

Archaeology

Producing Stone and State: The Intersection of Ancient Maya Domestic and Institutional Economies

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.



Dat Manh Nguyen

Anthropology

Searching for Well-Being: Buddhism and Youth Aspirations in Late-Socialist Vietnam



Joseph Saravo

History of Art & Architecture

Re-Covering Gerrit Dou: Making a Case for the Cultural Work of Illusionism in Seventeenth Century Dutch Painting



Katheryn Viens

American & New England Studies

"To try the speed": Adventures in the Development of Massachusetts Railroads, 1826-1850

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

Can We Talk? Dialogue and Debate in the Contemporary Academy

Forum 2019 | October 3



Our annual forums are designed as open-ended intellectual explorations that further the exchange of ideas among scholars in humanities fields and others who stand to benefit from addressing social problems together with humanists. In previous forums, we partnered, in turn, with the Boston Public Library and the Boston Athenæum, and BU's School of Public Health and other medical institutions to examine the subjects of Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age in 2017 and Humanities Approaches to the Opioid Crisis in 2018.

Forum 2019 turned inward to explore one of the biggest challenges facing universities today: the question of how to promote honest intellectual conversation. In seeking a topic that would serve the Boston University community, we concluded that no subject was of greater moment than the challenge of free speech and open debate within our own institutional borders.

Any academic environment depends on the capacity to generate and articulate ideas while protecting the rights of its various members—faculty, students, administrators, staff—to express and defend those ideas. This function and its value have become points of controversy on college campuses and in the wider society. Our purpose in convening this forum was to address this difficult subject in a setting that encouraged complexity and welcomed disagreement. To this end, we brought together people whose different institutional positions typically prevent them from engaging in public debate together.

Held on October 3, 2019 at WBUR's CitySpace, the event took the form of three panels and a roundtable. High audience turnout and participation as well as numerous inquiries about ways to follow up confirmed that the BU community is eager to address controversial topics. Throughout the day, attendees heard

from a range of voices, including a variety of faculty—lecturers, tenured, untenured—and staff, senior administrators, and graduate students. Despite the risks of direct discussion, our panelists and the audience provided a model of how to debate pressing issues that concern everyone at the university.

In the first panel, “Language Matters: Discussing Difficult Texts,” Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Crystal Williams acknowledged the desire among

students to confront controversy and encouraged faculty to engage. “The classroom is not static, just as language is not static, just as our social environment is not static,” said Williams. “Therefore, we should think about our syllabi as not simply reactive, but actually as texts or documents that are proactively anticipating where students are going to want to break open, and where difficult conversations reside in the material or in the ideas.”



The panel also examined how instructors can promote inclusivity. Takeo Rivera, Assistant Professor, Department of English, although acknowledging the “crisis of free speech in the American university,” argued that “the discussion of trigger warnings and safe spaces is an ideological red herring in that



debate. The implementation of trigger warnings and the protection of students from harassment does not curtail free speech,” Rivera said. “It enhances it. Such measures provide the historically marginalized with the validation that their existence, and thus their voices, matter.” Taking the theme of the classroom as a safe and therefore generative space in an affirmative direction, Emily Gowen, PhD Candidate, Department of English, cited examples of the rich discussions that ensue when students confront divergent readings of texts, including those written

by controversial authors. Gowen argued in favor of embracing the friction created by complex ideas.

The second and third panels looked beyond the classroom, addressing structural issues within academia. On the second panel, “Corporate University: Acknowledging Student, Faculty, and Administration Fault Lines,” Kimber Chewning, PhD Candidate, Department of History of Art & Architecture, spoke eloquently about hierarchy in the university, offering a vision for positive change: “We pride ourselves on providing innovative solutions to precarity and being critically engaged with efforts to improve our communication and relationships.” Chewning further observed: “Yet the university is also a place that exploits vulnerability,

fostering relationships founded upon competition rather than collective, social, and civic good. Acknowledging the fault lines between faculty, graduate students, and administration seems like the first step to what, in my eyes, could lead to actual change in the academy: solidarity.”

Sharing an insight that became a leitmotif for the day, Chewning continued, “If change happens it will not be because of the university system, or anything ‘innovative’ that it produces. It will be because of the people and their labor that comprise it.”

During the third panel, “Shop Talk: Nurturing Honest Dialogue Across Labor Divides,” Nancy Geourntas, Executive Assistant to the CAS Dean, remarked that Forum 2019 presented a unique opportunity for those



whose opinions are seldom solicited to add their voices to campus-wide conversations. “Staff are rarely asked to participate in this type of open forum, so I consider it a privilege and quite frankly, a step in the right direction in opening doors for everyone and making a variety of voices heard,” Geourntas said. “I think that in order to nurture honest dialogue across labor divides we need to find more ways to enable members of the university to be heard in decisions that affect them directly and to which they can contribute invaluable. Not

by anonymous surveys, but by bringing people to the table and listening to what they have to say.”

Marisa Milanese, Master Lecturer, Writing Program, brought the matter of labor and the politics of privilege to bear on student circumstances, noting that “we’re part of a system that reinforces the divide between students of different class backgrounds.” Milanese went on to ask: “What message are we sending a student whose admission promises that she belongs here, but an introductory course tells her that she doesn’t? What assumptions are we making when we design our own humanities curricula and courses? And what policies impose extra labor on low income students? Do we assign expensive books? Are we sure that they already know what it means to analyze a text? Are we showing them



how the course material connects to their particular lives and futures? These questions are crucial for every teacher at BU, particularly if we want to help students pursue the fields that match their intellectual

interests and to ensure that the humanities don't privilege the already privileged."

For the last session, four roundtable participants responded to points raised throughout the day, speaking more extemporaneously about how we might move forward as a community. In his opening remarks, moderator Maurice Lee, Professor of English, highlighted the merits of a roundtable format as a means of authentic dialogue and a central method in the humanities. "True dialogue is risky. We risk being wrong, we risk looking stupid, we risk being offended or being offensive. We might suffer retaliation, regret," Lee said. "But as economists and artists will tell you, risk is also good. The kind of open dialogue we've been engaging in today and hopefully we'll continue to engage in opens up possibilities for deeper understanding. It's imperative that we take these risks today in higher education, particularly in the humanities."

Indeed, the participants and the audience expressed strong interest in taking the day's insights forward. Since the Center had already decided that there would not be a fourth consecutive forum in fall 2020, we will focus on establishing working groups to continue these discussions. A group of undergraduates commenced meeting in December 2019 and plans to reconvene during AY 2020-2021. A graduate working group held its inaugural (remote) meeting in April 2020 and will continue to meet in the next academic year. A working group of staff and faculty is slated to start meeting in fall 2020. The crisis of COVID-19 has thrown many of the concerns raised at Forum 2019 into stark relief, increasing their urgency.



Forum 2019 Working Groups

As a follow-up to Forum 2019, we formed a graduate student working group to continue grappling with the issues it raised. The first virtual meeting in April focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the research and methods of humanities and social science doctoral students. The participants posited the working group as an entity that will continue to evolve and where the current conditions and future of the academy can be addressed by graduate students.

Participants agreed on the importance of maintaining the memory of graduate work and experience pre-COVID-19, noting that a useful critique must acknowledge the continuity between the former conditions and those that are unfolding. Issues that arose included: the future of teaching and research; concern for international students; the ability to conduct field and archival research; the form of the dissertation; and the already-bleak academic job market.

Graduate students interested in participating in the BU Center for the Humanities graduate student working group are encouraged to contact us at buch@bu.edu.

PhD + Undergraduate Internships in the Humanities

The Center continued to support funded graduate and undergraduate summer internships, the former in partnership with the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs and the latter with generous support from 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.

In summer 2019, PhD Internships once again placed doctoral students at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Boston Mayor's Office, the Boston Athenæum, the Boston Red Sox, and the Boston Public Library, and expanded to include the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Through these internships, accomplished young scholars develop new skills and explore new ways to apply existing skills outside of academia, thereby broadening their career prospects. Rachel Kirby, a PhD student in the American & New England Studies program (AMNESP) at BU, interned with the Red Sox, working alongside the team's historian Gordon Edes to document and publicize the iconic baseball team's past. "I never imagined that I would have an internship with a professional sports team," Kirby said. "It has expanded what I think of as the possibilities for public humanities work."

At the Boston Athenæum, Arthur Kamya (AMNESP) researched the U.S. women's suffrage movement, selecting materials suited for a K-12 curriculum that draws on primary sources. The project, which demonstrated what scholarship at the university level can offer to primary and secondary education, intersects with Kamya's dissertation research about historically marginalized groups and the American legal system.

At the Boston Public Library, Thomas Sojka (History) was given the opportunity to utilize a range of digital humanities and archival research methods. Sojka curated a digital exhibition and developed a strategy for collecting and producing metadata for an audio/visual collection. Additionally, he researched nightlife and the regulation of social life, topics that dovetail with his own research interests. In the course of his summer research, Sojka made use of the BPL's unique holdings, including the collection of Leslie Jones, a notable Boston photographer working in the first half of the century.

Other PhD interns drew on the methods of their academic fields to further the partner insti-



tutions' missions while expanding their own aptitudes. Lydia Harrington, a PhD student in the History of Art & Architecture (HAA), conducted curatorial research at the Gardner and highlighted the range of work her position entailed. "It was a really good experience for me to hone my skills in photographic history, history of manuscripts, and connect to my own work," she said.

Sasha Goldman (HAA) interned at the Boston Mayor's office, where she worked with the Boston Art Commission to "review existing narratives (the texts that had been written about objects in the City's collection)," revising them to reflect contemporary political, cultural, and historical matters.

For a second year, undergraduate interns worked at Oxford University Press in New York City. These BU humanities students served under OUP editors in a variety of departments, including Psychology and Social Work, Music, Global Trade, and Trade and Academic Marketing. Sabrina Huang described the value of her experience being a part of the publishing process—from the proposal and manuscript stages, to handover, production, and finally, publication. For Catalina Uribe Saravia (Music Editorial), working in publishing "showed how many people are needed and the sheer amount of talent, dedication, and passion that actually goes into the process of creating a book."

Starting this year, the undergraduate internships will be located in Boston at three partner sites: Beacon Press, The Boston Globe, and the Brattle Film Foundation. The Boston Globe Internship was canceled for summer 2020 due to COVID-19, and a BU School of Public Health internship substitutes. A health humanities internship at BU substituting for the Gardner Museum PhD internship. We are grateful to our partners for agreeing to carry out these internships remotely to whatever degree is necessitated by the COVID-19 environment.

HumaniTeas

HumaniTeas gatherings bring undergraduate students with common interests together with distinguished faculty for an informal, afternoon tea. This year, the Center invited three professors to share their personal journeys in the humanities: Professor James Johnson (History), Professor Roberta Micallef (World Languages & Literatures and Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), and Assistant Professor Hannah Čulík-Baird (Classical Studies).

The fall semester HumaniTeas was held in November with James Johnson, discussing his dual identity as both a historian and musician, describing how these two passions have shaped his life. Johnson's somewhat circuitous route to becoming a professor in the humanities included a brief flirtation with law school. More broadly, Johnson and the students discussed the role of religion in academia, reflecting on art as a learned discipline and an expression of emotion. This rare moment of shared personal reflection revealed what humanistic exploration can engender.





Early in the spring semester, Roberta Micallef reflected on the intersections of politics, culture, language, and mobility, all of which inform her academic work. Micallef was intrigued by the study of world languages from a young age, describing her complex pathway in pursuing this interest as a teacher and scholar. Micallef also considered how nontraditional professional choices, such as leaving a tenure track position and moving across the country to teach at BU, allowed her the freedom to pursue the projects that most excite her. Micallef encouraged attendees to

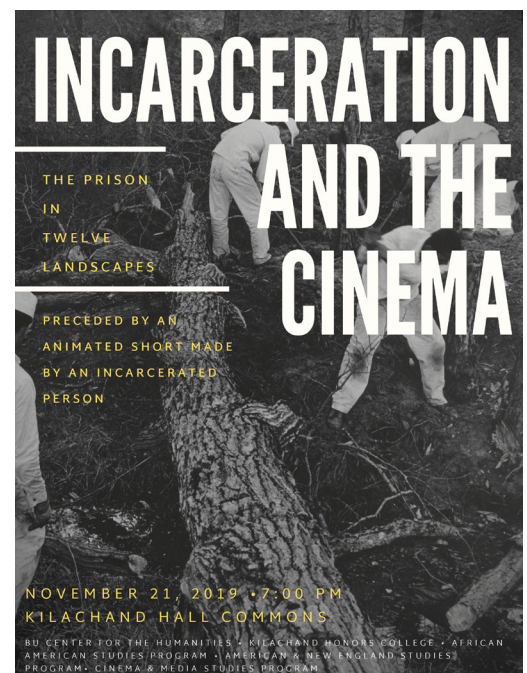
be imaginative as they think about their own futures. Following her presentation, Micallef led a discussion that ranged from literature as a form of resistance to changing attitudes towards immigration.

The Center invited Hannah Čulík-Baird to be a second HumaniTeas speaker later in the spring semester, a presentation that was ultimately postponed because of COVID-19. Čulík-Baird, a member of the Classical Studies department with an interest in Roman intellectual life, firmly believes that academics have a place on the internet. She has detailed how online and academic platforms can intersect in articles such as “Twitter for Classicists” and in a how-to guide for live tweeting academic conferences. We look forward to hosting Čulík-Baird at a later HumaniTeas.

Incarceration Film Screening Series

As part of the Center’s efforts to program events on topics of importance to the BU community, we launched a film series on the subject of incarceration. In November, we hosted our inaugural screening, cosponsored by the Kilachand Honors College, the African American Studies Program, and the American & New England Studies Program.

Hannah Kinney-Kobre, the senior undergraduate staff assistant at the Center, and Christine D’Auria, the Center’s 2019/2020 graduate student intern, conceived the event in a rare collaboration between graduate and undergraduate students that we hope to have more of in the future. D’Auria and Kinney-Kobre decided the best way to allow members of the BU community to critically engage with the experiences of people in prison was to show films made by incarcerated people. The two films screened in November, Brett Story’s *The Prison in Twelve Landscapes* and the animated short film *Freedom/Time*, represent the effects of incarceration on families, friends, and communities, demonstrating how prison





affects relationships and the lives of everyone in society.

Kinney-Kobre introduced the two films at the event, providing background on Story's film: "We see playgrounds, bus stops, parks, radio stations, offices—as well as idyllic Appalachian vistas, skies streaked with smoke and flames from raging forest fires, and softly flickering footage of tanks rolling down the highway. The prison as both an idea and a system is, in Story's view, stitched into our very lives. Though it is often invisible to us, our economy, our sense of safety and community, and our relationships with each other are fundamentally tied up with

incarceration. We see this even in our own community. BU Students Against Mass Incarceration has found that through the use of large investment funds, BU, like many other universities, invests in private prisons. But BU also has a long-standing prison education program, one of the oldest in the country."

After the screening, attendees engaged in informal discussions of the issues raised by the film. Even though the second event in the series had to be cancelled because of COVID-19, the Center plans to continue screening films in AY 20/21 to expand the community's engagement with incarceration, which has become a subject of heightened concern in the COVID-19 era.

Humanities Book Publication Party

The Center and the Office of the Associate Dean of Faculty for the Humanities sponsored a celebration of humanities publications by BU faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences at the first annual Humanities Book Publication Party in early February.

Associate Dean Karl Kirchwey and Center Director Susan Mizruchi gave introductory remarks addressing the astonishing range of publications, which span centuries, regions, languages, genres, and fields. "Nothing stages the vibrancy of the humanities at BU like this output," Mizruchi said. "It's glorious."

Mizruchi also expressed pride in the collaboration and collegiality displayed by some of the publications, which brought together the work of multiple BU faculty members in a single volume.



One such publication, *Illusion and Disillusionment: Travel Writing in the Modern Age* (Harvard University Press), is a collection of essays on travel writing edited by Professor Roberta Micallef (World Languages & Literatures) and features work by CAS faculty James Uden (Classical Studies), Eu-

genio Menegon (History), Elizabeth Goldsmith (Romance Studies), Sunil Sharma (WLL), Margaret Litvin (WLL), Mary Beth Raycraft (Romance Studies), and Sarah Frederick (WLL). The second publication in a series inaugurated by Micallef and Sharma in 2011, this volume emerged from a longstanding travel writing reading group that, as Micallef noted, “is truly a BU project and is great fun.” This group, which includes both current and retired BU faculty, intends to produce another volume, with Uden as editor.



The publication party showcased the vitality of research in the humanities at BU. Faculty members from eight departments spoke about their recent publications, crediting the colleagues with whom they collaborated and from whom they drew inspiration. For example, Professor Sanjay Krishnan (English) acknowledged the intellectual and professional support he received from the Center and his BU colleagues as he wrote *V.S. Naipaul's Journeys: From Periphery to Center* (Columbia University Press), a groundbreaking study of the late, controversial Trinidadian and Tobagonian Nobel Prize

winning author that has been lauded by critics for its nuanced approach.

Demonstrating the ways in which BU faculty engage in transnational scholarship networks, attendees shared moving experiences of working with colleagues from around the world. Some reflections focused on Rudolf Wagner (November 1941 – October 2019), who spoke at the Center's Forum 2017: “Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age,” and was revered as an editor, scholar, and colleague. Cathy Vance Yeh (WLL), along with co-editors Barbara Mittler (Heidelberg), Joachim Gentz (Edinburgh), and Natasha Gentz (Edinburgh), published the last in a four-volume collection of essays titled *China and the World—the World and China: Essays in Honor of Rudolf G. Wagner*. The celebration allowed us to remember a remarkable academic and dear friend.

Other faculty addressed the critical importance of newly available archives to their research. Jennifer Cazenave (Romance Studies), for instance, was able to produce a comprehensive study of Claude Lanzmann's seminal documentary *Shoah* (1985) using vast archives of “cutting room floor” material recently restored and digitized by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



The broader field of humanities scholars will be enriched by these publications, which expand our conceptions of Cold War aesthetics, animals in nineteenth-century U.S. urban environments, ancient magic, cultures of leisure in China, Japan, and Indonesia, the films of John Schlesinger, and many other worlds-within-worlds that open up new ways of seeing and knowing.

The Center looks forward to celebrating humanities faculty publications in future years.

#UsToo: Feminist Artists Intersect with #MeToo

In early February, the Center brought together a multi-generational, diverse group of feminists representing a of disciplines to discuss inclusive feminism today. The panel included biographer Lyndall Gordon, philosopher and librettist Patricia Herzog, BU English professor and performance artist Sophie Seita, and poet and BU Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion Crystal Williams. As Angela Onwuachi-Willig, the panel's moderator and dean of BU's law school, said in her summary response, the participants addressed ways in which feminism and its subjects are visible and invisible.



Lyndall Gordon addressed female intellectuals Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Virginia Woolf and their feminist predecessors. Gordon noted that these accomplished writers were motherless, and therefore lacked women role models. Instead, they “read one another, in a chain of making — a new genus of womanhood across generations.” Gordon observed that because women are excluded from male intellectual communities, they seize the opportunity to reject the violent norms of patriarchal society in pursuit of their own moral values.

Where Gordon's talk showed how women's exclusion from patriarchy afforded opportunities for social and intellectual innovation, Patricia Herzog's presentation investigated how women are portrayed in



an operatic canon marked by misogyny and violence. Herzog began her talk with a nod to the Freudian concept of culture as “the work of reclaiming.” For Herzog, retelling canonical stories is a way of recuperating suppressed elements in the classics. In her artistic work, Herzog recasts well-known operas such as Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* and *Tosca*, or rewrites literary works such as *The Scarlet Letter* as opera to re-present women characters as agents. In a striking, even paradoxical acknowledgment of tradition, Herzog

noted that “certainly I am no Puccini, but I do hear voices. And the gloriously sung voices of Puccini’s heroines are what inspired me to take up this project.”

Sophie Seita offered an overview of her work as a feminist performance artist and scholar. Seita’s interest in experimental poetry and performance unifies her academic and artistic work. She notes that much of her scholarship explores the intellectual and cultural legacy of the Enlightenment—a period dominated by white male thinkers. For her project “My Little Enlightenment Plays,” Seita engages with Enlightenment writers, scientists, and artists from an explicitly queer feminist perspective, inviting queer and feminist artists to collaborate with her. Her goal is to stage a “creative form of reading that thinks through and alongside my source materials” in order to “create a more diverse and inclusive republic of letters.”

The last speaker, Crystal Williams, chose to feature black feminist poets whose work she turned to when asked to think about what it means to be a feminist artist in the age of #MeToo. She noted that the poems she selected had been “instructive to [her] as a developing artist and developing thinker.” Williams read “A Poem About My Rights” by June Jordan and also Lucille Clifton’s “won’t you celebrate with me.” June Jordan’s poem portrays the intertwining of sexual violence with colonial, economic, and racial violence, as confirmed by her eloquent declaration:

I am the history of rape
I am the history of the terrorized incarceration of
myself
I am the history of battery assault and limitless
armies against whatever I want to do with my
mind
and my body and my soul . . .

At the conclusion of these diverse presentations, moderator Angela Onwuachi-Willig deftly identified their continuities. Onwuachi-Willig showed how each speaker carefully negotiated the relationship between silence and being compelled to speak. Each addressed how women find their voices as artists while contending with historical pressures that keep women silent.



In December, the Boston Conservatory at Berklee workshopped four scenes from the forthcoming opera *The Resurrection of Lucretia*, with music and libretto by Patricia Herzog, one of the panelists on the Center’s #UsToo: feminist artists intersect with #MeToo event. In Herzog’s opera and libretto, Lucretia feigns her death, hides in the countryside, and returns to avert the suicide of a friend who has been assaulted. In this way, Herzog resurrects the classical version of her story, whose reinterpretation by male artists in different mediums has been problematic. Herzog’s reinterpretation of well-known operas to challenge long-established archetypes opens up new creative possibilities for these young performers. The Berklee workshop provided a live introduction to the themes Herzog explored further at the Center’s February event.

Seeing and Not Seeing Seminar



In keeping with the Center's exploration of the intersection between disciplines and fields, Jeffrey Rubin (History) hosted "Seeing and Not Seeing," a series of post-disciplinary seminars and lectures funded by the Center and a wide range of programs and departments from across the University. The project, which grew out of Rubin's tenure as a Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellow at the Center, traverses not only disciplines but also time periods, mediums, and place.

As one example, in her March 2020 lecture, "Women in Terrorism: Visibility, Legitimacy, and

Responsibility in Modern War," Meredith Loken (Political Science, UMass Amherst) discussed women's participation in terrorist organizations, challenging perceptions that their positions are marginal. Analyzing how terrorist organizations exploit stereotypes of women's resistance to violence to gain access to civilian spaces, she showed how propaganda surrounding motherhood is deployed to affirm group principles and goals. Loken also critiqued official accounts characterizing women who join terrorist groups as brainwashed or otherwise lacking in political and social agency.

Other presentations this year included:

October 29, 2019: "Listening and Not Listening: Jazz and Sociality in South Africa," by Brett Pyper (School of Arts, Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg).

December 2, 2019: "Seeing Like a Rover: How Robots, Teams, and Images Craft Knowledge of Mars," by Janet Vertesi (Sociology, Princeton).

Isabella Alexander's (Anthropology, Small World Films) film screen and presentation, "The Burning: The Untold Story of Europe's Migrant Crisis," was postponed due to COVID-19.

What unites speakers and participants in the seminar is their commitment to "meta-level" analysis, or what Fredric Jameson calls, "Thought to the Second Power." By assuming different vantage points while examining those distinct perspectives and entities concurrently, new knowledge emerges.

Academic work has always emphasized the value of specific methodologies. In recent decades the focus on professional training whose goal is to sharpen the intellect to a narrow disciplinary point, has only grown. This enables insight, but it can also prevent us from seeing what is or might be. Rubin's project is directed at this problem of Seeing and Not Seeing.





David Carballo, Archaeology
Distinguished Lecture in Archaeology

William C. Carroll, English
*Willing Suspension Productions**

Robert A. Chodat, English
BU Workshop on Literature, Philosophy and Aesthetics

Louis Chude-Sokei, African American Studies
*Writing Black Lives**

Yuri Corrigan, WLL
Seventeenth Symposium of the International Dostoevsky Society

Adriana Craciun, English
Arctic Worlds: A Symposium in Environment and Humanities

Daniel Dahlstrom, Philosophy
*The Public Impact of Denying Expertise**

Daniel Dahlstrom, Philosophy
*Boston Phenomenology Circle (BPC) Symposium**

Sean Desilets, Writing Program
Takeo Rivera, English
*Faculty Gender & Sexuality Studies Group: Trans/gression / Sedgwick Memorial Lecture**



David Eckel, Religion
Institute for Philosophy & Religion Lecture Series

Anna Elliott, WLL
Reading and Conversation with Hiroko Oyamada and David Boyd

Walter Hopp, Philosophy
*Workshop in Phenomenological Philosophy**

James Johnson, History
*Conversations in the Arts & Ideas**



Paul Katsafanas, Philosophy
*Workshop on Late Modern Philosophy**

Leah Kronenberg, Classical Studies
Classical Studies Graduate Student Conference

Margaret Litvin, WLL
Kate Snodgrass, Boston Playwrights' Theatre
Corinne Jaber's "Oh My Sweet Land"

Hiromi Miyagi-Lusthaus, WLL
Lecture Event with Sushi Reception

Robert Murowchick, Anthropology and Archaeology
*Asian Cultural Heritage Forum**

Shilpa Parnami, WLL
*World Languages & Literatures: Annual Pedagogy Symposia**



Anita Patterson, English
Rodrigo Lopes de Barros, Romance Studies
Petrus Liu, WLL
*Lectures in Criticism**

Adela Pineda, Center for the Study of Latin America
Latin American Studies Through the Lens of Literature: Cristina Rivera Garza

Adela Pineda, Center for the Study of Latin America
*Mexican Cinema in the Neoliberal Era: Alonso Ruizpalacios at Boston University**

Carrie Preston, Kilachand Honors College
The Role of the University in the Crisis of Forced Displacement: Ethics, Innovation, and Immersive Learning

Jeffrey Rubin, History
*Seeing and Not Seeing**

Sophie Seita, English
*Desire Lines & Beethoven Was a Lesbian**

Joyce Scott, African American Studies
Restorative Justice and Societal Repair: Global Racism and Reparations





Stephen Scully, Classical Studies
Martha Graham's Dance Interpretation of Greek Heroines

Stephen Scully, Classical Studies
*Myth & Religion Study Group**

Stephen Scully, Classical Studies
*Boston Area Roman Studies Conference**

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

James Siemon, English
Folger Institute Membership Renewal

Kate Snodgrass, Boston Playwrights' Theatre
*Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project**

Kate Snodgrass, Boston Playwrights' Theatre
*Boston Theater Marathon**

Daniel Star, Philosophy
*Boston University Ethics Seminar 2019-2020**



Hongyun Sun, WLL
The 8th New England Chinese Language Teacher Annual Conference

Tertulia, Junior Faculty Colloquium
*Junior Faculty Seminar**

Meg Tyler, College of General Studies, Humanities
*Lecture Series: the Institute for the Study of Irish Culture (ISIC)**

Meg Tyler, College of General Studies, Humanities
*Poetry Reading Series**

J. Keith Vincent, WLL
Fitzgerald Translation Prize



William C. Waters, WLL
Contemporary Translation in Transition: Forms of Interaction Among English, German and Russian Poetry

Gregory Williams, History of Art & Architecture
*Graduate Student Symposium in the History of Art & Architecture**

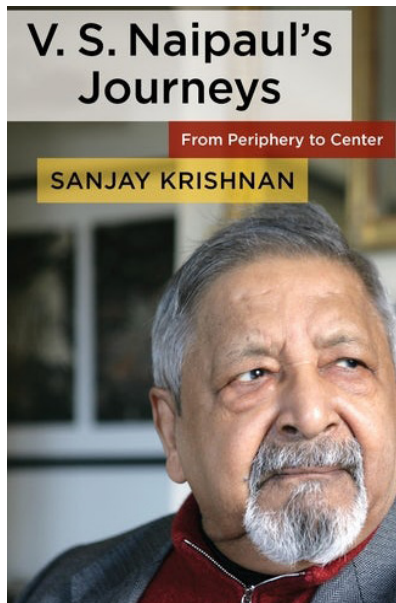
Catherine Vance Yeh, WLL
Chinese Translation Prize

Jeremy Yudkin, Music and Musicology
An International Beethoven Conference in 2020 -- planning award

Jeremy Yudkin, Music and Musicology
*Center for Beethoven Research: Conferences and Symposia**

*Postponed partially or in full, or cancelled, due to COVID-19.





Publication Production Awards

Charles Chang, Linguistics

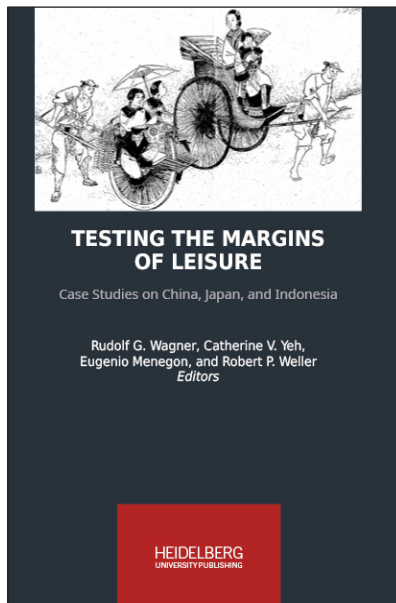
Perceptions of Nonnative Tonal Contrasts by Mandarin-English and English-Mandarin Sequential Bilinguals

April Hughes, Religion

Wordly Saviors and Imperial Authority in Medieval Chinese Buddhism

Deborah Kahn, History of Art & Architecture

Politics and Sanctity: The Scripture of Selles-sur-Cher



Sophie Klein, Core Curriculum

Plautus: Menaechmi

Diana Lobel, Religion

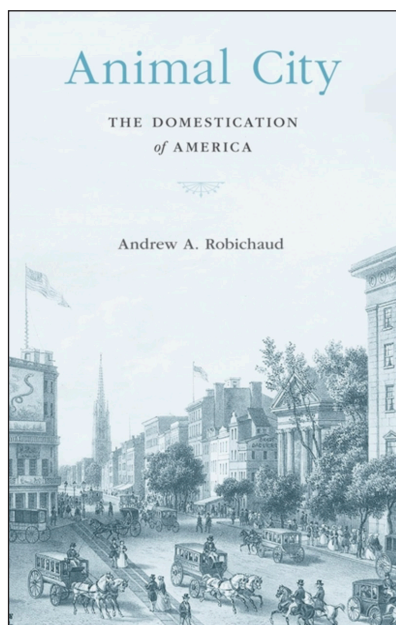
Moses and Abraham Maimonides on the Divine Encounter

Michele Martinez, Writing Program

Browning's #MeToo Critique in "Beatrice Signorini"

John Matthews, English

Hidden in Plain Sight: Slave Capitalism in Poe, Hawthorne, and Joel Chandler Harris



Andrew Robichaud, History

Animal City: The Domestication of America

Catherine Vance Yeh, World Languages & Literature

Testing the Margins of Leisure: Case Studies on China, Japan, and Indonesia

Michael Zell, History of Art & Architecture

Rembrandt, Vermeer, and the Gift in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art



Professors Jeffrey Rubin and Charles Chang taking part in our 2019 Forum

Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows

Adriana Craciun	English
Jodi Cranston	History of Art & Architecture
Juliet Floyd	Philosophy
Sarah Frederick	World Languages & Literatures
Margarita Guillory	Religion
Lida Maxwell	Political Science
Catherine Vance Yeh	World Languages & Literatures

Junior Faculty Fellows

Hannah Čulík-Baird	Classical Studies
Michaela McSweeney	Philosophy
Merav Shohet	Anthropology

Graduate Dissertation Fellows

Mariah Gruner	American & New England Studies
Lydia Harrington	History of Art & Architecture
Rachel Ravina	English
Jennifer Tafe	History of Art & Architecture



Awardees, friends, family, and members of the BU Community at the 17/18 Student Awards Ceremony

Undergraduate Student Awards

The Dean Elsbeth Melville Latin Prize
Joseph Henry Droegemueller, Classical Studies

The John Oddy Memorial Award
Margaret Evans, Classical Studies
Elisabeth Kotsalidis, Classical Studies
Rebecca Martin, Classical Studies
Mari Rooney, Classical Studies
Christina Marie Tavella, Classical Studies

The Alice M. Brennan Humanities Award
Margaret Eileen Bywater, English
Lutece Dekker, Linguistics
Catherine Devlin, History
Sydney Hartman, Philosophy
Ethan Hobson, History of Art & Architecture

Regina Maria Isidro Campos, Archaeology
Tomris Kaumenova, Linguistics
Priya M. Patel, Archaeology
Jiaxin Peng, World Languages & Literatures
Vishal Ramola, Philosophy
Karolena Salmon, Anthropology
Anna Schoff, Linguistics
Kira Naomi Solovay, Classical Studies
Anastasia Tatlubaeva, Linguistics
Roy Wang, English

The Robert. E Yellin Award
Jack Christopher Beck, English
Audrey Marie Kurtz, Anthropology
Elizabeth McGrath, English
Lolo Serrano, History
Yarden Tsfoni, Archaeology



Student staff member Hannah Kinney-Kobre and graduate student Elizabeth Karnaukh at the 2019 Graduate School Workshop

The Edwin S. and Ruth M. White Prize

Abisola Oghenefejiro Akinsete, Linguistics

Anne Sedona Jones, English

Gianni Vaughan, Classical Studies

Sylvie Viden Gallagher, World Languages & Literatures

Sarah Zureiqat, History of Art & Architecture

*The Edwin S. and Ruth M. White Prize**

Guzin Eren, Archaeology

Kathleen Forste, Anthropology

Jeanna Kinnebrew, History

Defne Kirmizi, History of Art & Architecture

Megan LeBarron, American & New England Studies

**All winners also receive The Angela J. and James J. Rallis Memorial Award.*

Graduate Student Awards

*The Clarimond Mansfield Award**

Christopher Stokum, American & New England Studies

Constance Vottero, Romance Studies

*The Helen G. Allen Humanities Award**

Kiernan Acquisto, History of Art & Architecture

Kaitlyn Marie Fox, Religious Studies



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