



Date: Tuesday, April 9
Time: Noon–1:00 p.m.
Location: 124 Sparks Building
Lunch will be provided.

Graduate Student Resident Talks

“Rioting as Writing, Writing as Rioting: Locating a South African Black Feminist Thought in the Autobiographies of Blackwomen Anti-Apartheid Freedom Fighters.”

Zinhle Ka’Nobuhlaluse Department of Philosophy,
Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

It is generally known that Apartheid in South Africa was an oppressive system. However, the intelligibility of the system and our philosophical approaches to Apartheid as a system with multiple and intersecting forms of oppression remain undertheorized, and the system's complexities remain unknown. My project argues that prioritizing the lived experience of marginalized persons with intersecting identities makes the system intelligible. My presentation focuses on the dissertation's final chapter, which draws on the dialogical relationship between rioting women, the anti-Apartheid activists Caesarina Kona Makhoere and Mamphela Ramphele, and their writing in the form of an autobiography. I argue that the dialogical relation is embedded in a dialectical method that registers a South African Black Feminist thought. This is to say, it is only by rioting against Apartheid that they are able to write about it, as a system. Their writing is also an act of rioting against the system insofar as it was illegal for Black people to engage in this type of writing. This project is a timely intervention into global circuits of knowledge that undermine (South African) Blackwomen’s knowledge.



“Imagining Elsewheres: Speculating the Asian Diaspora in North America, Australia, and Aotearoa New Zealand.”

Su Young Lee Department of English,
Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

This talk explores seldom-discussed yet pervasive incidents of extraterritorial violence during the Xinhai Revolution of 1911. State-centric narratives tend to portray the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty as a relatively bloodless coup led by traveling nation-builders like Sun Yat-sen. This misguided assumption obscures the turbulent nature of partisan violence in favor of linear storytelling and the elevation of national heroes. In actuality, a clandestine network of Chinese émigrés enabled acts of extraterritorial violence across the wider Pacific region. By using popular violence as a framework, my research seeks to recontextualize the revolutionary role of the migrant working class, nonstate actors, and illicit organizations in the anti-monarchical revolution.



“From Quadramé to Maïssa: Searching for the Signares in Early Modern Archives.”

Brooke Tybush Department of French and Francophone Studies,
Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

In this brief discussion, I will discuss how eighteenth-century travel narratives that depicted the signares of early modern Senegal often misrepresented or outright ignored the economic and social influence of this powerful group of women of color. I will discuss how these flawed representations led to later fictional narratives about signares that painted them as tragic mulatta figures, a depiction that masks their highly influential social and economic positions. Importantly, this talk highlights how representations of the signares in eighteenth-century travel narratives and nineteenth-century fiction relied heavily on sexist and racist stereotypes, ultimately leading to their obscurity in historical and literary archives. Throughout this talk, I will break down these stereotypes and provide an example of how, even in their prejudices, European-authored texts did, sometimes, correctly capture some small–yet important–aspects of signare culture and traditions, even if unbeknownst to the authors themselves.

