



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Communication



CONFERENCE PROGRAM
APRIL 4-6, 2025

BLACK QUEER STUDIES CONFERENCE

BQSC25 celebrates the 25th anniversary of Black Queer Studies at the Millennium by convening an intergenerational group of artists, activists, and scholars at UNC-Chapel Hill, the site of the original conference in 2000.

The original Black Queer Studies conference was co-organized by Dr. E. Patrick Johnson and Dr. Mae G. Henderson in 2000 at UNC. BQSC25 will feature a series on intergenerational conversations between some of the original participants and an emerging generation of scholars, artists, and activists whose work focuses on the intersections of Blackness and queerness.



E. Patrick Johnson is Dean of the School of Communication and Annenberg University Professor at Northwestern University. He is a 2020 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Johnson is a prolific performer/scholar, and an inspiring teacher, whose research and artistry has greatly impacted African American studies, Performance Studies, Gender and Sexuality studies.

He is the author of *Appropriating Blackness: Performance and the Politics of Authenticity* (2003); *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South—An Oral History* (2008); *Black. Queer. Southern. Women.— An Oral History* (2018);

and *Honeypot: Black Southern Women Who Love Women* (2019), in addition to several edited and co-edited collections, essays, and plays.

Johnson's written and performance work dovetail intimately. His staged reading, "Pouring Tea: Black Gay Men of the South Tell Their Tales," has toured to over 100 college campuses since 2006. The full-length stage play, *Sweet Tea—The Play*, premiered in Chicago, toured across 8 other cities, and to the National Black Theater Festival.

Johnson is also among the subjects and co-executive producer of the film, *Making Sweet Tea*, which has received several awards, including Best LGBTQ Film at the San Diego Film Festival, Best Documentary Audience at the Out on Film Festival, and the Silver Image Award from the Association of American Retired Persons (AARP) for Positive Representation of LGBTQ People over Fifty at the Chicago Reeling LGBTQ Film Festival.

BLACK QUEER STUDIES CONFERENCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE	3 - 6
MEET THE PANELISTS	7 - 30
KEYNOTE CONVERSATION	31
PERFORMANCES	32
EXHIBITION	33
COMMUNITY PICNIC	34
CAMPUS MAP	35
ADVISORY BOARD	36
SPONSORS	37
NOTES	38-41

DAY 1 - HYDE HALL

Friday, April 04, 8am-6pm

8AM | REGISTRATION OPENS

9AM | WELCOME BY JENNIFER NASH

9:30AM - 11AM | REPRESENTING THE RACE: QUEER IMAGES OF BLACKNESS

Panelists: Charles Nero (Moderator), Amber Musser, Ashon Crawley, La Marr Jurelle Bruce

This panel focuses on the ways in which the black (homo)sexual body is represented through the mediums of film, theater, and/or live performance, engaging the politics and possibilities of these representations.

11AM - 11:30AM | BREAK

11:30AM - 1PM | DISCIPLINARY TENSIONS: BLACK STUDIES AND QUEER STUDIES

Panelists: Dwight McBride (Moderator), Sharon Holland, Jeffrey McCune, Roderick Ferguson, Michelle Wright, Olivia Polk

This panel revisits the ways in which Black Studies has historically elided issues of (homo)sexuality and/or how Queer Studies has elided issues of racism and race and explores the trajectories of “black queer studies” or “black gay studies” as a critical intervention of both disciplines. The panelists examine if such interventions have signaled the inclusiveness they have purported and offer future articulations of “black queer studies” within the context of our contemporary moment.

1PM - 2:30PM | LUNCH BREAK

DAY 1 CONT'D - HYDE HALL*Friday, April 04, 8AM-6PM***2:30PM - 4PM | HOW TO TEACH THE UNSPEAKABLE: RACE, QUEER STUDIES & PEDAGOGY**

Panelists: Bryant Keith Alexander (Moderator), Reginald Blockett, Shoniqua Roach, Keith Clark, Beverly Guy-Sheftall

This panel asks what is at stake when black queer pedagogy is institutionalized in the academy, especially at a time when the state has questioned the legitimacy of teaching sexuality as a category of intellectual inquiry. How do teachers and students navigate issues of power inside and outside the black queer studies classroom?

4PM - 4:30PM | BREAK**4:30PM - 6PM | KEYNOTE CONVERSATION BETWEEN EVELYNN HAMMONDS & E. PATRICK JOHNSON****DAY 2 - HYDE HALL***Saturday, April 05, 8AM-9PM***8AM | REGISTRATION OPENS****9:30AM - 11AM | POLICING BLACK BODIES: QUEER STUDIES, PUBLIC POLICY, AND THE LAW**

Panelists: Cathy Cohen (Moderator), Charlene Carruthers, Shannon Malone Gonzalez, Mel Michelle Lewis, Ash Williams

This panel examines the intersections between queer studies and public policy/ law, with a focus on policies that directly impact gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people of color. The panelists will address queer political organizing and reflect on how issues of poverty, discrimination, homelessness, and access to healthcare affect black LGBTQ communities.

DAY 2 CONT'D - HYDE HALL*Saturday, April 05, 8AM-9PM***11AM - 11:30AM | BREAK****11:30AM - 1PM | BLACK QUEER DIGITALITY**

Panelists: Shaka McGlotten (Moderator), AJ Christian, Moya Bailey, Brian A. Horton, Legacy Russell, Quortne R. Hutchins

The digital is often perceived as both a space for Black queer community building, bypassing the gatekeeping mechanisms that have limited Black queer expression, but also as a site where Black queer communities can be targeted, exploited and even replaced by AI and avatars. This panel addresses Black queer investment in digital and virtual spaces, the potentials of those spaces to create new modes of connection, collaboration, and cultural citizenship, but also the anxieties and risks posed by these same participatory opportunities.

1PM - 2:30PM | LUNCH BREAK**2:30PM - 4PM | BLACK QUEER SOUTH: REGIONALISM & TRANSNATIONAL FLOWS**

Panelists: Jafari Allen (Moderator), Nikki Lane, Tanya Saunders, Lyndon Gill, Darius Scott, Rico Self, LaToya Eaves

This panel takes the fact that this symposium/conference is situated in the American South as a starting point for thinking black queer studies through the regional and the transnational. Using the South as a reference point for both the American South and the Global South, panelists explore how regional and transnational differences, linkages, and contexts shape (and are shaped by) black queer cultures, representation, and praxis.

4PM - 7PM | BREAK**7:30PM | "STRANGE FRUIT: SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE, RESISTANCE, AND PERSONAL POWER"**

Doors open at 7PM, Location: CURRENT ArtSpace + Studio

DAY 3 - SWAIN HALL*Sunday, April 06, 8AM-4:30PM***8AM | REGISTRATION OPENS****9:30AM - 11AM | BLACK QUEER WRITING: WHO'S READING US?**

Panelists: Alexis Pauline Gumbs (Moderator), Daniel Black, Briona Simone Jones, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Destiny Hemphill, Zelda Lockhart

The writers in the Black queer literary tradition are creators of queer worlds and audacious possibilities that black queer scholars, activists and community builders hold close. These panelists demonstrate how Black queer writing has transformed the thinkable moving Black Queer Studies beyond critique into a generative imaginative collective imperative.

11AM - 11:30AM | BREAK**11:30AM - 1PM | BLACK QUEER IDENTITIES: SEX & THE FUTURE OF QUEERNESS**

Panelists: Jennifer DeVere Brody (Moderator), Marlon M. Bailey, L.H. Stallings, Julian Glover, C. Riley Snorton, Ianna Hawkins Owen

Panelists will look to practices, performances, sociality, and desires to consider what Black queer sex and Black queer identity looks like in the 21st century. Who has been left out of Black queer studies and how should we think about Black queerness today?

1:30PM - 4:30PM | COMMUNITY PICNIC**POSITION PARAGRAPHS**

In the spirit of open dialogue, participants were asked to submit Position Paragraphs. These position paragraphs engage the core themes in the panel descriptions and prompted moderators and panelists to put forth their thoughts and provocations as the basis for the panel discussions. You can access these position paragraphs via the QR code:



REPRESENTING THE RACE: QUEER IMAGES OF BLACKNESS

This panel focuses on the ways in which the black (homo)sexual body is represented through the mediums of film, theater, and/or live performance, engaging the politics and possibilities of these representations.

**CHARLES I. NERO, MODERATOR**

Charles I. Nero is an American interdisciplinary scholar. His work sits at the intersection of communication studies, film and literary criticism, African American studies, and cultural studies. Nero is a pioneer in the area of black queer studies. His work deeply engages the place of sexuality in African American studies and African American culture. His scholarly work has appeared in major academic journals and anthologies. Most recently he co-edited and contributed to a volume on Adaptations for the Screen of Richard Wright's literary works for *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black Diaspora*. Nero is the Benjamin E. Mays Distinguished Professor of Rhetoric, Film and Screen Studies at Bates College and Chair of the Africana Program.

**AMBER JAMILLA MUSSER**

Amber Jamilla Musser is a professor of English and Africana studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. She writes and researches at the intersections of race, sexuality, and aesthetics. She has published widely in queer studies, black feminism, psychoanalysis, and critical theory. She is the author of *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power, and Masochism* (NYU Press, 2014), *Sensual Excess: Queer Femininity and Brown Jouissance* (NYU Press, 2018), and *Between Shadows and Noise: Sensation, Situatedness, and the Undisciplined* (Duke University Press, 2024). Her collaborative projects include co-editing *Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies* (NYU Press, 2021) and co-hosting its accompanying podcast *Feminist Keywords*; and the series *Elements in Feminism and Critical Theory* for Cambridge University Press. She is also co-Editor of *Social Text*.

REPRESENTING THE RACE: QUEER IMAGES OF BLACKNESS CONT'D**ASHON CRAWLEY**

Ashon Crawley is Professor of Religious Studies and African American and African Studies at the University of Virginia. He is author of *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility* (Fordham University Press), an investigation of aesthetics and performance as modes of collective, social imagination and *The Lonely Letters*, an exploration of the interrelation of blackness, mysticism, quantum mechanics and love, to be published with Duke University Press in 2020. He is currently working on a third book, tentatively titled "Made Instrument," about the role of the Hammond Organ in the institutional and historic Black Church, in Black sacred practice and in Black social life more broadly. All his work is about otherwise possibility.

**LA MARR JURELLE BRUCE**

La Marr Jurelle Bruce (B.A. Columbia, Ph.D. Yale) is a philosopher, fever dreamer, interdisciplinary humanities scholar, literary and cultural critic, first-generation college graduate, and Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. His scholarship centers B/black expressive cultures—spanning literature, film, music, theatre, and the art and aesthetics of quotidian black life. A Ford Foundation Fellow and Mellon-Mays Fellow, he also studies and teaches popular culture, performance theory, queer theory, disability studies, and psychoanalysis.

Winner of the Joe Weixlmann Essay Prize from *African American Review*, Dr. Bruce's writing is also featured or forthcoming in *American Quarterly*, *The Black Scholar*, *GLQ*, *Social Text*, *TDR*, and several anthologies. Dr. Bruce's research has been supported by fellowships from the Beinecke Library at Yale University, the Carter G. Woodson Institute at the University of Virginia, the Ford Foundation, the Fund for Lesbian and Gay Studies at Yale University, the Mellon Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and the Stanford University Humanities Center.

DISCIPLINARY TENSIONS: BLACK STUDIES AND QUEER STUDIES

This panel revisits the ways in which Black Studies has historically elided issues of (homo)sexuality and/or how Queer Studies has elided issues of racism and race and explores the trajectories of “black queer studies” or “black gay studies” as a critical intervention of both disciplines. The panelists examine if such interventions have signaled the inclusiveness they have purported and offer future articulations of “black queer studies” within the context of our contemporary moment.

**DWIGHT MCBRIDE, MODERATOR**

Dwight A. McBride is a leading scholar of race and literary studies. McBride earned a bachelor's degree in English, with a concentration in African American studies, from Princeton University, and a master's degree and PhD in English from the University of California, Los Angeles. McBride currently serves as the Gerald Early Distinguished Professor of African and African American Studies & Senior Advisor to the Chancellor at Washington University in St. Louis.

McBride is widely known for his academic achievements and his innovative, interdisciplinary approach to university leadership. Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2022, McBride has written numerous books and edited volumes exploring race, Black studies, sexuality and identity politics including *James Baldwin Now*, *Impossible Witnesses: Truth Abolitionism*, and *Slave Testimony*, *Black Like Us: A Century of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual African American Fiction*, and *Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality*. He is a two-time Lambda Literary Award winner and in 2003, was awarded the Monette/Horowitz Trust Achievement Award for research combating homophobia.

**MICHELLE M. WRIGHT**

Michelle M. Wright is the College of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Professor of English at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where she teaches classes in African American, Black and African Diaspora, and Black European theory, culture and literature. She is the author of *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora* (Duke UP, 2004) and *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology* (UMN Press, 2015). She is currently at work on her third monograph, *Great, Wide Beautiful Worlds: Freedom, Refuge and Agency in the 21st Century*.

DISCIPLINARY TENSIONS: BLACK STUDIES AND QUEER STUDIES CONT'D



SHARON HOLLAND

Sharon P. Holland (she/her) is the Immediate Past President of the American Studies Association (2022-2025). She is also the Townsend Ludington Distinguished Professor in American Studies at the University of North Carolina @ Chapel Hill. She served as Chair of the Department from July 2020-July 2022. She is a graduate of Princeton University (1986) and holds a PhD in English Language & Literature and African American Studies from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1992). Professor Holland is the author of three monographs and one co-authored book. Her third monograph, *an other: a black feminist consideration of animal life* (Duke University Press, 2023), is an investigation of the hum/animal distinction, hum:animal relation, and the place of discourse on blackness within those theoretical discussions. It was awarded an honorable mention from the John Hope Franklin Prize in American Studies in 2024. You can see her work on food, writing and so much more on her blog, <https://theprofessorstable.org/>. Professor Holland's next book project, *Those Who Eat* comes out of her decades-long work in Food Studies and is a meditation on the work of famed food writer, MFK Fisher (1908-1992). To keep up with her recent projects, request a CV and more, see <https://www.sharonpholland.com>.



JEFFREY Q. MCCUNE, JR.

Jeffrey Q. McCune, Jr. is the lead architect and Founding Chair of the Department of Black Studies. He is the Frederick Douglass Professor of African American Literature and Culture at the University of Rochester. He is the former Director of the Frederick Douglass Institute and is the author of the award-winning book *Sexual Discretion: Black Masculinity and the Politics of Passing*. He is presently completing two projects, *Disobedient Reading: An Experiment in Seeing Black* (to be published with the University of California Press) and *Pillar Talk*, a collection of poems chronicling black queer worlds of Chicago. He has written several articles and book chapters, alongside his critical public intellectual work. Dr. McCune has been featured on *Left of Black*, Sirius XM's Joe Madison Show, HuffPost Live, Pitchfork, USA TODAY, TIME, and a guest expert on Bill Nye Saves the World.

DISCIPLINARY TENSIONS: BLACK STUDIES AND QUEER STUDIES CONT'D



RODERICK A. FERGUSON

Roderick A. Ferguson is professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. He is the author of *One-Dimensional Queer* (Polity, 2019), *We Demand: The University and Student Protests* (University of California, 2017), *The Reorder of Things: The University and Its Pedagogies of Minority Difference* (University of Minnesota, 2012), and *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (University of Minnesota, 2004). He is the co-editor with Grace Hong of the anthology *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization* (Duke University, 2011). He is also co-editor with Erica Edwards and Jeffrey Ogbar of *Keywords of African American Studies* (NYU, 2018). He is currently working on two monographs—*The Arts of Black Studies* and *The Bookshop of Black Queer Diaspora*. Ferguson's teaching interests include the politics of culture, women of color feminism, the study of race, critical university studies, queer social movements, and social theory.



OLIVIA R. POLK

Olivia R. Polk is a Black dyke and a double Cancer living on territories of the Eno, Occaneechi Band of Saponi, Shakori and Tuscarora peoples (Durham, NC). She is about to complete a PhD in American Studies and African American Studies at Yale University, and is incoming Assistant Professor of African American and African Studies at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Their work theorizes Black lesbianism as an ethical way of life, borne of cultural and political experimentalism. That research has received support from the Carter G. Woodson Institute at UVA, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Visual AIDS, and the Ford Foundation, in addition to the Center for the Study of Race Indigeneity and Transnational Migration and Fund for Lesbian and Gay Studies at Yale. Her writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *Signs*, *Feminist Theory* (UK), *The Black Scholar*, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, and *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. Their public-facing work has appeared on the Visual AIDS blog. In addition to their scholarship, Olivia is a member of the What Would an HIV Doula Do? Collective. (WC 188)

HOW TO TEACH THE UNSPEAKABLE: RACE, QUEER STUDIES & PEDAGOGY

This panel asks what is at stake when black queer pedagogy is institutionalized in the academy, especially at a time when the state has questioned the legitimacy of teaching sexuality as a category of intellectual inquiry. How do teachers and students navigate issues of power inside and outside the black queer studies classroom?

**BRYANT KEITH ALEXANDER, MODERATOR**

Bryant Keith Alexander, Ph.D. is Professor and Dean, College of Communication and Fine Arts, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. He serves as Affiliate Faculty of Educational Leadership for Social Justice, Doctoral Program at LMU's School of Education, and Affiliate/Adjunct Faculty in the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music and Performance, Monash University, Melbourne Australia. He is author of over 200 articles and chapters; and author, co-author, or co-editor of 9 books, including (co-editor) Routledge Handbook of Communication and Gender; (co-author) Still Hanging: Using Performance Texts to Deconstruct Racism (Brill|Sense); (co-author) Collaborative Spirit-Writing and Performance in Everyday Black Lives (Routledge); (co-author) Performative Intergenerational Dialogues of a Black Quartet: Qualitative Inquiries on Race, Gender, Sexualities and Culture (Routledge); (co-author) Epistolary Autoethnographies on Loss, Memory and Resolution: Reflections on Black Motherhood (Routledge); and (co-author) Black Poetic Inquiry: A Daily Writing Project on Race, Culture, and Life. (Routledge).

**REGINALD BLOCKETT**

Dr. Blockett is Assistant Professor of Higher Education Administration at Auburn University. He advises masters and doctoral students research, and teaches courses on college student development, higher education history, and intersectionality. His research centers on Black sexual cultures and queer of color worldmaking in postsecondary contexts. His scholarship has been published in Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, Western Journal of Black Studies, and Urban Education. Reginald is a proud native of Detroit, where he first learned the value of family, community, education, and social justice.

HOW TO TEACH THE UNSPEAKABLE: RACE, QUEER STUDIES & PEDAGOGY CONT'D**SHONIQUEA ROACH**

Dr. Shoniqua Roach is a queer black feminist writer and Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Brandeis University. Her peer-reviewed work appears in *American Quarterly*, *boundary 2*, *differences*, *Feminist Theory*, *Signs*, and *The Black Scholar*, among other venues. Her editorial work appears in *differences*, *Signs*, and *The Black Scholar*. Roach's forthcoming book manuscript, *Black Dwelling: Home-Making and Erotic Freedom*, offers an intellectual and cultural history of black domestic spaces as tragic sites of imperial state invasion and black feminist enactments of erotic freedom. Roach has been awarded a number of awards, fellowships, and grants, including those from the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Studies Association, and the Ford Foundation.

**KEITH CLARK**

Keith Clark is Distinguished University Professor and a member of the English department and affiliate faculty in the African and African American Studies program at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. He is the author of *Black Manhood in James Baldwin, Ernest J. Gaines and August Wilson* (Illinois, 2002), *The Radical Fiction of Ann Petry* (Louisiana State, 2013), and editor of *Contemporary Black Men's Fiction and Drama* (Illinois, 2001). His last book, *Navigating the Fiction of Ernest J. Gaines: A Roadmap for Readers*, was published by Louisiana State and was runner-up for the 2021 C. Hugh Holman Award for the best book in southern studies. His essays and reviews have appeared in such publications as *African American Review*, *Callaloo*, *Gay and Lesbian Quarterly*, and *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*. His most recent essay, "Rootlessness: Afro-Pessimism as Foundation in Paradise," was published in *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Toni Morrison* (2023). His teaching interests include Black Literary Masculinity Studies, African American Drama, and African American LGBTQ Literature.

HOW TO TEACH THE UNSPEAKABLE: RACE, QUEER STUDIES & PEDAGOGY CONT'D**BEVERLY GUY-SHEFTALL**

Beverly Guy-Sheftall is the founding director of the Women's Research and Resource Center (1981) and Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women's Studies at Spelman College. For many years she was a visiting professor at Emory University's Institute for Women's Studies where she taught graduate courses in Women's Studies. At the age of sixteen, she entered Spelman College where she majored in English and minored in secondary education. After graduating with honors, she attended Wellesley College for a fifth year of study in English. In 1968, she entered Atlanta University to pursue a master's degree in English; her thesis was entitled, "Faulkner's Treatment of Women in His Major Novels." A year later she began her first teaching job in the Department of English at Alabama State University in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1971 she returned to her alma mater Spelman College and joined the English Department. Beverly Guy-Sheftall has a Ph.D. in American Studies from Emory University.

POLICING BLACK BODIES: QUEER STUDIES, PUBLIC POLICY, AND THE LAW

This panel examines the intersections between queer studies and public policy/ law, with a focus on policies that directly impact gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people of color. The panelists will address queer political organizing and reflect on how issues of poverty, discrimination, homelessness, and access to healthcare affect black LGBTQ communities.

**CATHY J. COHEN, MODERATOR**

Cathy J. Cohen is the D. Gale Johnson Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago and the inaugural chair of the new Department of Race, Diaspora, and Indigeneity. She is the author of two award-winning books, *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics* (University of Chicago Press) and *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics* (Oxford University Press). She is co-editor of the anthology *Women Transforming Politics: An Alternative Reader* (NYU Press) with Kathleen Jones and Joan Tronto and author of the article *Punks, Bulldaggers and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer?*. In addition to her academic work, Cohen was a founding board member and co-chair of the board of the Audre Lorde Project (NY). She also served on the boards of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS), the Arcus Foundation. Cohen was a core organizer for two international conferences “Black Nations / Queer Nations?” and “Race, Sex, Power.” Cohen currently sits on the board of the Field Foundation, the Russell Sage Foundation and is a founding member of and on the executive committee of the group Scholars for Social Justice

**SHANNON MALONE GONZALEZ**

Shannon Malone Gonzalez is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and a Faculty Researcher at the Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life (CITAP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research draws from black feminism and critical criminology to examine the relationship between marginality and policing—in particular how black women and girls experience, understand, and resist police surveillance and violence. She is especially interested in institutional and communal knowledge production processes used to conceptualize and address police violence and other types of violence on the margins. Shannon is from Jackson, MS where she earned her B.A. from Tougaloo College. She received her M.S. from the University of Pennsylvania and her Ph.D. in Sociology from The University of Texas at Austin where she also completed doctoral portfolios in Applied Statistical Modeling and Women’s and Gender Studies. In addition to research, Shannon engages in photography, creative writing, southern food and music, and beloved black, queer, and feminist communities.

POLICING BLACK BODIES: QUEER STUDIES, PUBLIC POLICY, AND THE LAW CONT'D**CHARLENE A. CARRUTHERS**

Charlene A. Carruthers is a writer, filmmaker, community organizer, and Black Studies PhD Candidate at Northwestern University. Her work spans more than 20 years of community organizing across racial, gender and economic justice movements. A practitioner of telling more complete stories, her work as an artist is to honor ancestors across the diaspora and interrogate ongoing work towards collective liberation. She is the founding National Director of BYP100, a national organization of young Black organizers working through a Black queer feminist lens. Charlene wrote and directed *The Funnel*, a short film, which received the Queer Black Voices Award at the 35th Annual aGLIFF Prism Film Festival. Charlene also directed *La Salida*, a short film co-written by Deivid Rojas and produced by Full Spectrum Features. She is an inaugural Marguerite Casey Presidential Freedom Scholar, 2024 Northwestern University Presidential Fellow, and 2024 Center for Racial Justice Fellow at the University of Michigan. In addition to being a highly sought-after speaker, educator, and facilitator, Charlene is author of the bestselling book, *Unapologetic: A Black, Queer and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements* (Beacon Press). She is an enthusiastic global traveler and believes that food is the best way to learn about people and culture.

**ASH WILLIAMS**

Ash Williams (he/him) is a Black trans abortion doula, community organizer, and death worker from Fayetteville, North Carolina. He organizes from the deep intersections of gender justice, racial justice, reproductive justice, and anti-carcerality to build alternatives to police and policing. This work has included co-leading a successful statewide campaign (#EndShacklingNC) to end the practice of shackling pregnant incarcerated people in North Carolina, as well as co-organizing a successful campaign (#TransferKanauticaNow) to transfer Kanautica Zayre-Brown, a Black Transwoman, from a correctional facility designated for men to a women's facility. Ash is a We Testify Abortion Storyteller. He holds a Master's degree in Ethics and Applied Philosophy, a Bachelor's in Philosophy and a Minor in Dance from UNC-Charlotte. He served as an adjunct professor in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at UNC-Charlotte prior to the start of the pandemic, having taught classes such as Black Queer/ Trans Studies and Black Abolitionist Dreaming. For the last 6 years, Ash has been vigorously fighting to expand abortion access by funding abortions and training other people to become abortion doulas. Finally, Ash is a disabled dancer, choreographer, and dance teacher having performed with Triptych Collective in Charlotte from 2012-2015, and having taught dance to youth and adults through the YMCA Dance Program.

POLICING BLACK BODIES: QUEER STUDIES, PUBLIC POLICY, AND THE LAW CONT'D**MEL MICHELLE LEWIS**

Dr. Mel is Lead Coach & Consultant with The Art of Change Agency, cultivating critical voices and creative visions for sustainable practice, structural change, environmental justice, and social transformation. Previously, they provided strategic guidance on social and environmental justice initiatives and creative visioning for the future of clean water for people and nature as Vice President for People, Justice, and Cultural Affairs at American Rivers. Rooted in the Gulf South's folklore, dialect, foodways, music, art, and landscapes, Dr. Mel's creative work explores nature writing themes in rural coastal settings through the lens of Black, Creole, and AfroIndigenous knowledges. Their book *Biomythography Bayou* is available via The Griot Project Book Series at Bucknell University Press. Dr. Mel served as an Affiliated Researcher with the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania, Associate Professor and Chair of Studio and Humanistic Studies (Maryland Institute College of Art), Director of the Center for Geographies of Justice, the Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Department, and Africana Studies Department (Goucher College), and Chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies (Saint Mary's College of California).

BLACK QUEER DIGITALITY

The digital is often perceived as both a space for Black queer community building, bypassing the gatekeeping mechanisms that have limited Black queer expression, but also as a site where Black queer communities can be targeted, exploited and even replaced by AI and avatars. This panel addresses Black queer investment in digital and virtual spaces, the potentials of those spaces to create new modes of connection, collaboration, and cultural citizenship, but also the anxieties and risks posed by these same participatory opportunities.

**SHAKA MCGLOTTEN, MODERATOR**

Shaka McGlotten is Professor of Media Studies at Purchase College-SUNY, where they also serve as Chair of the Gender Studies and Media Studies departments. An anthropologist and artist, their work stages encounters between black study, queer theory, media, and art. They have written and lectured widely on networked intimacies and messy computational entanglements as they interface with queer of color lifeworlds.

They are the author of *Dragging: Or, in the Drag of a Queer Life* (Routledge, 2021), *Virtual Intimacies: Media, Affect, and Queer Sociality* (SUNY, 2013), and dozens of chapters and articles. They are also the co-editor of two edited collections, *Black Genders and Sexualities* (with Dana-ain Davis, Palgrave, 2012) and *Zombies and Sexuality* (with Steve Jones, McFarland, 2014). Their work has been supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Akademie Schloss Solitude, the Andy Warhol Foundation, and Data & Society.

**AYMAR JEAN "AJ" CHRISTIAN**

Aymar Jean "AJ" Christian is the Margaret Walker Alexander Professor of Communication Studies at Northwestern University and 2024-25 Visiting Scholar at Harvard University's Berkman Klein Center. His research focuses on the political economy of legacy and new media, cultural studies and community-based research. He published his first book, *Open TV: Innovation Beyond Hollywood and the Rise of Web Television* (NYU Press, 2018), and is currently writing his second book, *Reparative Media: Cultivating Stories and Platforms to Heal our Culture* (MIT Press, 2025), which explores how to repair systemic harm and discrimination in media, technology and research. His research & development has been supported by the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, MacArthur Foundation, and Wallace Foundation, among others.

BLACK QUEER DIGITALITY CONT'D



MOYA BAILEY

Moya Bailey is a professor at Northwestern University, the founder of the Digital Apothecary, and co-founder of the Black Feminist Health Science Studies Collective. Her work focuses on marginalized groups' use of digital media to promote social justice, and she is interested in how race, gender, and sexuality are represented in media and medicine. She is the digital alchemist for the Octavia E. Butler Legacy Network and the Board President of Allied Media Projects, a Detroit-based movement media organization that supports an ever-growing network of activists and organizers. She is a co-author of *#HashtagActivism: Networks of Race and Gender Justice* (MIT Press, 2020) and is the author of *Misogynoir Transformed: Black Women's Digital Resistance* (New York University Press, 2021). She is the director and producer for the forthcoming documentary, *Misogynoir in Medicine*.



BRIAN A. HORTON

Brian A. Horton (He/Him) is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Brandeis University. His interests are at the intersections of multiple fields, such as queer of color critique, critical theory, race and media, and South Asian studies. His book manuscript in progress *Shimmers of the Fabulous: Touching Queer and Trans Bombay* explores queer sexpublics, or semi-public sites for the flourishing of love, sex, and intimacy among LGBTQ+ residents of Bombay. He is beginning research for a new book titled *Capturing Race: Screening (Anti)Blackness in India* that explores how different screens (the phone, the camera, the computer, cinema) aid in separating but also filtering engagements between African Immigrants and Indians in New Delhi, Bombay, and Bangalore. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, Fulbright, Social Science Research Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Council of Learned Societies.

BLACK QUEER DIGITALITY CONT'D**LEGACY RUSSELL**

Legacy Russell is a curator and writer. Born and raised in New York City, she is the Executive Director & Chief Curator of [The Kitchen](#).

Her academic, curatorial, and creative work focuses on gender, performance, digital selfdom, internet idolatry, and new media ritual. She is the recipient of the Thoma Foundation 2019 Arts Writing Award in Digital Art, a 2020 Rauschenberg Residency Fellow, a recipient of the 2021 Creative Capital Award, a 2022 Pompeii Commitment Digital Fellow, a 2023 Center for Curatorial Leadership Fellow, and a 2024-25 Lunder Institute for American Art Fellow. Her first book is *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto* (2020). Her second book is *BLACK MEME* (2024). Russell's first chapbook of poems *GAY POMPEII* is forthcoming from GenderFail in 2025.

**QUORTNE R. HUTCHINGS**

Quortne R. Hutchings (they/them) is a first-generation college graduate, proud Ronald E. McNair scholar alum, and assistant professor in higher education at Northern Illinois University. Their research primarily focuses on Black gay, bisexual, queer, and non-binary undergraduate and graduate students' academic and social experiences in higher education, student affairs professionals' experiences in student and academic affairs, undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff experiences with substance use and recovery, and utilizing critical qualitative methodologies. Their research has been published in the *Journal of College Student Development*, *International Journal of STEM Education*, *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research*, *Journal of Higher Education*, and *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*.

BLACK QUEER SOUTH: REGIONALISM & TRANSNATIONAL FLOWS

This panel takes the fact that this symposium/conference is situated in the American South as a starting point for thinking black queer studies through the regional and the transnational. Using the South as a reference point for both the American South and the Global South, panelists explore how regional and transnational differences, linkages, and contexts shape (and are shaped by) black queer cultures, representation, and praxis.

**JAFARI ALLEN, MODERATOR**

Jafari Sinclair Allen is Professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies, in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies (AAADS) at Columbia University, where he is the Director of the Institute for Research in African American Studies (IRAAS), and Editor-in-Chief of *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Society, and Culture*.

**NIKKI LANE**

Dr. Nikki Lane is an interdisciplinary scholar trained as a Cultural and Linguistic Anthropologist. Her work explores issues related to American Popular Culture, African American language practices, and sexual cultures throughout the African Diaspora. She is an Assistant Professor in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies at Duke University.

In her writing, research, classrooms, and public lectures, she explores the connections between popular culture and critical theories of race, gender, class, and sexuality. Working often along the edges of academia, she makes contemporary critical theory accessible to broad audiences priding herself on putting complex ideas into everyday language anyone can understand. She specializes in using popular culture as an entry point for discussing complex social theory.

BLACK QUEER SOUTH: REGIONALISM & TRANSNATIONAL FLOWS CONT'D**TANYA SAUNDERS**

Dr. Tanya L. Saunders is a sociologist and cultural studies scholar who is interested in the ways in which the African Diaspora throughout the Americas uses the arts as a tool for social change, specifically through decolonizing systems of thinking and knowing in the Americas. Dr. Saunders was a Mark Claster Mamolen Fellow (2022) at Harvard University's Hutchins Center for African & American Research, where they began working on their book tentatively entitled *Estéticas do Bapho: Queering Black Brazilian Activism and Politics of Liberation*.

**LYNDON K. GILL**

LYNDON K. GILL is an Associate Professor in the Department of African & African Diaspora Studies, the Department of Anthropology, and Department of Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his Ph.D. in African American Studies and Anthropology from Harvard University. And he has received postdoctoral fellowships from Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Ford Foundation. His first book *Erotic Islands: Art and Activism in the Queer Caribbean* was published by Duke University Press in 2018. He is also a poet and installation artist.

**DARIUS SCOTT**

Darius Scott, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Geography at McGill University. His research studies the precarity of emplacement and belonging across diverse social and political landscapes. His current projects explore how and to what extent intersectional stigma features in Black LGBTQ+ accounts of living in Montreal and how transcendence and critical politics function as domains for well-being in both Montreal and the rural U.S. South. His work engages personal narratives through archival research, oral history, and traditional interviewing. He earned his PhD in Geography from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and grew up in North Carolina. His scholarship has appeared in *Social Science & Medicine*, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, and *GeoHumanities*, among other venues.

BLACK QUEER SOUTH: REGIONALISM & TRANSNATIONAL FLOWS CONT'D**RICO SELF**

A native of the Mississippi Delta, Rico Self is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication and a Teagle Faculty Fellow in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at North Carolina State University. He earned a Ph.D. in communication studies and minors in African and African American Studies and women's, gender, and sexuality studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. His research chiefly examines discourses animating issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality in historic and contemporary American culture. His published work can be found in several leading journals and edited volumes, and his most recent essay, "'A pillar of all HBCUs': Deion Sanders, Aspirational Prophecy, and the Divine Promise of Jackson State University Football" is forthcoming in *Communication & Sport*. In his spare time, Dr. Self enjoys reading, writing, traveling, and spending time with loved ones.

**LATOYA E. EAVES**

LaToya E. Eaves is a proud North Carolinian. Her Southern upbringing informs her research, which centers questions of power and place, asking where, how, and why social and political processes impact communities and individuals unequally and to understand how geographic tools might be employed as strategies for understanding inequalities better. Her work is rooted in Black, queer, and feminist geographies. Eaves is an Associate Professor of Geography and Sustainability at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Eaves has published extensively, including in *Southeastern Geographer*, *Geoforum*, *Southern Cultures* and *Gender, Place, and Culture*, and is a co-editor of several volumes including *Spatial Futures: Difference and the Post Anthropocene* and *Activist Feminist Geographies*. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Ronald F. Abler Distinguished Service Honors from the American Association of Geographers (AAG), and was named to the 2023 Class of AAG Fellows.

BLACK QUEER WRITING: WHO'S READING US?

The writers in the Black queer literary tradition are creators of queer worlds and audacious possibilities that black queer scholars, activists and community builders hold close. These panelists demonstrate how Black queer writing has transformed the thinkable moving Black Queer Studies beyond critique into a generative imaginative collective imperative.

**ALEXIS PAULINE GUMBS, MODERATOR**

Dr. Alexis Pauline Gumbs, author of *Survival is a Promise: The Eternal Life of Audre Lorde* is a queer Black feminist love evangelist and an aspirational cousin to all life. *Publisher's Weekly* calls her writing "groundbreaking." She is also the author of four earlier books aka portable textual ceremonies, including *Undrowned* which won the 2022 Whiting Award in Non-Fiction. A recipient of the Windham-Campbell Prize in Poetry, the National Endowment of the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship and a National Humanities Center Fellowship, Dr. Gumbs lives and loves in Durham, North Carolina.

**BRIONA SIMONE JONES**

Briona Simone Jones is Assistant Professor of English and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Connecticut. She is the editor of the multi-award-winning book, *Mouths of Rain: An Anthology of Black Lesbian Thought* (The New Press, 2021), the most comprehensive anthology centering Black Lesbian Thought to date. Jones was a Scholar-in-Residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (2023-2024), working on her second book, *Black Lesbian Aesthetics*, and curated the exhibition, *The Pleasure of Rebellion*, which attended to the personal and political contours of Cheryl Clarke and Alexis De Veaux's work. Jones is currently the Visiting Audre Lorde Professor of Queer Studies at Spelman College.

**DESTINY HEMPHILL**

Destiny Hemphill (she/her) is a ritual worker and poet based in Durham, NC. A recipient of fellowships from Naropa University's Summer Writing Program, Callaloo, Tin House, and Kenyon's Writers Workshop, she is the author of the poetry chapbook *Oracle: a Cosmology* (Honeysuckle Press, 2018).

BLACK QUEER WRITING: WHO'S READING US? CONT'D



MECCA JAMILAH SULLIVAN

Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Ph.D., is the author of three books: *Big Girl*, a New York Times Editors' Choice and winner of the Balcones Fiction Prize and the Next Generation Indie Book Award for First Novel; *The Poetics of Difference: Queer Feminist Forms in the African Diaspora*, winner of the William Sanders Scarborough Prize from the Modern Language Association; and the short story collection, *Blue Talk and Love*, winner of the Judith Markowitz Award from Lambda Literary. A BBC Radio Book Club pick, a Phenomenal Media Book Club pick, and a New York Times Paperback Row selection, Sullivan's novel *Big Girl* was named a best books feature by TIME, Essence, People, Vulture, Ms, Goodreads, Booklist, She Reads, The Root, Library Reads, Glamour UK, Vogue France, and other outlets. Sullivan is author of the introduction to *Sister Love: The Letters of Audre Lorde and Pat Parker 1974-1989*, (ed. Julie R. Enszer), and several other collected and anthologized works. She has earned honors from Bread Loaf, the Institute for Citizens and Scholars, the Mellon Foundation, the Center for Fiction, the American Association of University Women, the NEA and others. Originally from Harlem, NY, she is Professor of English at Georgetown University in Washington DC.



ZELDA LOCKHART

Dr. ZELDA LOCKHART is a current Fulbright Specialist engaging in cross-cultural story projects for generational healing in the U.S. and abroad. She holds a PhD in Expressive Art Therapies, an MA in Literature, and a certificate in writing, directing and editing from the NY Film Academy. Her writing, keynote addresses and expressive arts facilitation focus on the power of story and nature to connect us across barriers, create stronger communities and to heal our generations. She is winner of the Lambda Literary Foundation 2024 Jim Duggins Outstanding Mid-career Novelist Prize. Her books include HarperCollins 2023 release *Trinity* (a novel) translated and released by HarperCollins France 2024 as *Entends ma voix*, *Fifth Born* a Barnes & Noble Discovery selection and a Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Award finalist, *Cold Running Creek* a Black Caucus of the American Library Association Honor Fiction award winner, and *Fifth Born II: The Hundredth Turtle* a 2011 Lambda Literary Award finalist. Her methods and philosophies are contained in her book *The Soul of the Full-Length Manuscript: Turning Life's Wounds into the Gift of Literary Fiction, Memoir, or Poetry*.

BLACK QUEER IDENTITIES: SEX & THE FUTURE OF QUEERNESS

Panelists will look to practices, performances, sociality, and desires to consider what Black queer sex and Black queer identity looks like in the 21st century. Who has been left out of Black queer studies and how should we think about Black queerness today?

**TANYA SHIELDS, MODERATOR**

Tanya Shields is an associate professor, associate chair and director of graduate studies for Women's and Gender Studies, and director of Carolina Seminars, which supports faculty and staff intellectual pursuits.

Her research focuses on Caribbean studies and plantation logics. Her book, Bodies and Bones: Feminist Rehearsal and Imagining Caribbean Belonging, 2014, uses feminist rehearsal as a methodology to examine how rehearsing historical events and archetypal characters shapes belonging to the region. She is the editor of The Legacy of Eric Williams: Into the Postcolonial Moment, 2015, which examines the contributions of Eric Williams, the first prime minister of independent Trinidad and Tobago. Her current book project, "Gendering the Manager: Metaphor and Memory on Plantations Owned by Women." This work uses the plantation as a metaphor to analyze representations of workplace relationships between female management and labor on plantations in the US South and the Caribbean.

**MARLON M. BAILEY**

Marlon M. Bailey is a Black queer theorist and critical/performance ethnographer who studies Black LGBTQ cultural formations, sexual health, and HIV/AIDS prevention. He has served as the Benedict Distinguished Visiting Professor in Africana Studies at Carleton College; the Distinguished Weinberg Fellow in the Department of African American Studies at Northwestern University, and a Visiting Professor at the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS) in the Department of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco.

Marlon is a member of the committee that co-authored the award-winning report, Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQ+ Populations, published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). This report won the 2021 Achievement Award from The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA).

BLACK QUEER IDENTITIES: SEX & THE FUTURE OF QUEERNESS

Panelists will look to practices, performances, sociality, and desires to consider what Black queer sex and Black queer identity looks like in the 21st century. Who has been left out of Black queer studies and how should we think about Black queerness today?



L.H. STALLINGS

L.H. Stallings is Professor and Chair of the Department of Black Studies at Georgetown University. She received her Ph.D. in English from Michigan State University, MA in English from Appalachian State University, and her BA in English from UNC-Greensboro. Her research and teaching interests include Black film, literature, culture, and gender and sexuality studies.

She is the author of *The Afterlives of Kathleen Collins: A Black Woman Filmmaker's Search for New Life* (Indiana UP); *A Dirty South Manifesto: Sexual Resistance and Imagination in the New South* (University of California Press); *Funk the Erotic: Transaesthetics and Black Sexual Cultures* (Univ. of Illinois Press); *Mutha' is Half a Word!: Intersections of Folklore, Vernacular, Myth, and Queerness in Black Female Culture* (Ohio State Univ. Press). **Image Credit: Alma Sterling**



IANNA HAWKINS OWEN

Ianna Hawkins Owen (he/none) is an advanced assistant professor of Gender and Women's Studies at UC Berkeley; areas of interest include African diaspora theory, asexuality, failure, and critical eating studies. Owen's first monograph, *Ordinary Failure: Diaspora's Limits and Longings*, is under contract with Duke University Press; additional work appears in *Social Text*, *Qui Parle*, *Feminist Review*, *Asexualities: Feminist and Queer Perspectives* (vols. 1 and 2), *Post45* *Contemporaries*, and more. His second manuscript-in-progress, *This Time Without Feeling: Reading Black Asexual Affects*, is supported by a Mellon Emerging Faculty Leaders Award. Concurrent projects include *Communion: Queer and Trans Memorial and Mourning* (a seasonal storytelling gathering) and *Write Back Soon* (a free interactive fiction in collaboration with Ananth Shastri and Art Twink). **Portrait by J. Marshall Smith (2022)**

BLACK QUEER IDENTITIES: SEX & THE FUTURE OF QUEERNESS CONT'D**JULIAN K. GLOVER**

Julian Kevon Kamilah Glover (she/they) is a scholar and artist who graduated with honors from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, holds an MPA from Indiana University and earned a PhD in Black Studies from Northwestern University. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Genders, Sexuality and Women's Studies and the Department of Dance & Choreography at Virginia Commonwealth University where their research focuses on Black/brown queer cultural formations, performance, ethnography, embodied knowledge, performance theory and Black futurity. They were awarded a Franke Fellowship at Northwestern's Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, a Humanities Research Center fellowship (VCU) and their work appears in journals including *American Quarterly*, *Feminist Formations*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Souls*, *GLQ* and *Text & Performance Quarterly*. Among their numerous awards, she was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society at Yale University and is a longtime member of the ballroom scene. They have also worked with the Grammy award winning Swedish singer Robyn and appeared in the music video for the title track of her 2018 album *Honey*. A classically trained cellist, their creative work is multidisciplinary and engages sonic, visual, affective, written and kinesthetic registers with the aim of bringing viewers into critical dialogue with themselves towards psychic, spiritual and interpersonal transformation.

KEYNOTE CONVERSATION

FRIDAY, APRIL 5TH | 4:30-6:00PM | HYDE HALL

This keynote conversation between Dr.'s Hammond and Johnson will focus on how the failure of queer studies in the late 1980s/early 1990s to consider race prompted a generation of scholars, artists, and activists to address the absence.



EVELYNN HAMMONDS

Professor Hammonds is the Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz Professor of the History of Science and Professor of African and African American Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University.

Areas of Research: African & African-American Studies, History of Medicine, Science & Race, Science & Technology Studies, Women & Gender Studies



E. PATRICK JOHNSON

E. Patrick Johnson is Dean of the School of Communication and Annenberg University Professor at Northwestern University. A member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Johnson's work has greatly impacted African American Studies, Performance Studies, and Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Areas of Research: Black Gender and Sexuality Studies, Performance studies, Ethnography, Oral Histories, Spirituality

STRANGE FRUIT

**SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE,
RESISTANCE, AND PERSONAL POWER**

FOUR PERFORMANCES EXPLORING BLACK QUEER IDENTITY



"STRANGE FRUIT"
WRITTEN BY E. PATRICK JOHNSON
PERFORMED BY JAMAR JONES



"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A PROBLEM"
WRITTEN AND PERFORMED
BY DANIEL COLEMAN



"EARTH WIND AND CAR FIRE"
WRITTEN AND PERFORMED
BY JANORA MCDUFFIE



**"WILDSEED: GENDER, MUTABILITY, AND POWER: A
PERFORMATIVE PROVOCATION"**
WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY COMM 661

APRIL 05, 2025 | 7:30PM | CURRENT ARTSPACE + STUDIO



About the Curator:

Simiyha N. J. Garrison is a North Carolina native and a doctoral candidate in American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research explores food, race, and culture within the African Diaspora, with a focus on Winston-Salem's Happy Hill community. She holds two master's degrees: one in American Studies (2024) and another in Heritage Studies and Public History from the University of Minnesota (2020). In 2018, she earned a double bachelor's in Africana Studies and History from Winston-Salem State University. Passionate about community-based projects, Simiyha works closely with students and prioritizes marginalized narratives through oral history and archival research.

Scan this QR code to find out more and connect with Simiyha directly:



COMMUNITY PICNIC

GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY THE CAROLINA PRIDE ALUMNI NETWORK

**APRIL 06, 2025 | 1:30PM - 4:30PM | LOVE HOUSE
410 EAST FRANKLIN STREET, CHAPEL HILL**

**JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY PICNIC. FREE
FOOD FROM MARGUERITE'S CATERING,
MUSIC BY DJ GEMYNII AND LOCAL
COMMUNITY VENDORS AND
ORGANIZATIONS**

**PARTICIPATING PARTNERS INCLUDE:
LGBTQ CENTER OF DURHAM | DUKE CENTER
FOR SEXUAL & GENDER DIVERSITY | AAAC
LIBRARY AT NC STATE | DUKE GENDER
SEXUALITY & FEMINIST STUDIES | LGBT
RESOURCE CENTER NCCU | EPILOGUE | UNC
SAGA | NC STATE AND MORE**



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL



J3

Love House and Hutchins Forum



F5

Hyde Hall



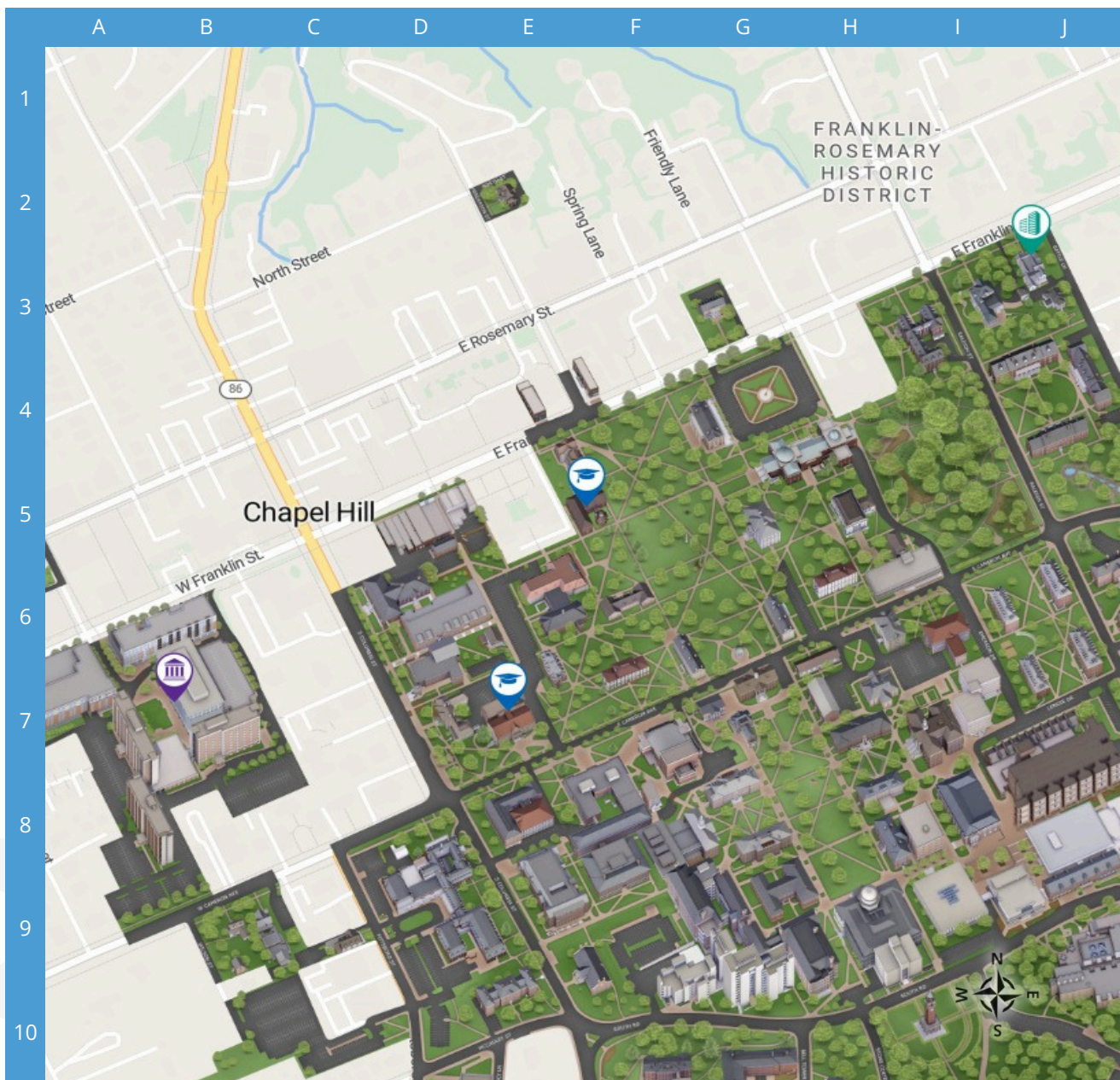
E7

Swain Hall



B7

CURRENT ArtSpace + Studio



ADVISORY BOARD



RENÉE ALEXANDER CRAFT

*Professor/Director of Outreach
and Public Engagement*



E. PATRICK JOHNSON

*Dean, School of Communication;
Annenberg University Professor*



ALEXIS PAULINE GUMBS

*Award Winning Poet, Queer Black
Troublemaker and Black Feminist
Love Evangelist*



LISA CALVENTE

Assistant Professor, UNC



JOSEPH MEGEL

Teaching Professor, UNC



JENNIFER NASH

*Jean Fox O'Barr Women's Studies
Distinguished Professor, Duke University*



ANTONIA RANDOLPH

*Jonathan M. Hess Term Professor,
Assistant Professor, UNC*



AVI SANTO

*Professor and Chair of the Department
of Communication, UNC*



TANYA L. SHIELDS

*Associate Chair,
Associate Professor, UNC*



KUMI SILVA

Associate Professor, UNC



E. CHEBROLU

Associate Professor, UNC



SANGODARE

*Filmmaker, multimedia
collaborator/consultant/strategist, musician,
composer, theologian and facilitator*



KAYLA CORBIN

Conference Organizer



SHERIFF DRAMMEH

*Senior Program Manager
for the Stone Center, UNC*



ARIANA E. VIGIL

*Druscilla French Distinguished Professor
and Chair Professor, UNC*

Special thank you to the following individuals: Dan Avant Blachman, Shelby Cates, Emma Culley, Caelius Galbraith Pfau DeConto, Ayse Erginer, Jasmyn Fritz, Megan Foster, Trevor Hall, Paige Hartenburg, Brittany Monique Hutchinson, Terri Lorant, Phillip Macdonald, Sean McEwan, Kolby Oglesby, Cass Ostrander, Amelia Parker, Chaitra Powell, Joshua Rains, Bryce Ross, Ellie Rudd, Miquell Shaw, Ning Sun, Emily Wallace, Diana Wawrzonkiewicz, Bryttani Wooten and Violet Worzella.

BQSC25 would not be possible without the tremendous support of our co-sponsors, who are listed below. We'd like to extend a special acknowledgement of the Lambert Family Conference Gift, funded by the generous donation of Bill and Sheila Lambert. BQSC25 is organized by the Department of Communication at UNC with support from:



The Program in Sexuality and Queer Studies
Housed in the Women's and Gender Studies Department



SLATE
(Institute of African American Research's Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity)



Sponsored by the Lambert Family Conference Gift, funded by the generous donation of Bill and Sheila Lambert.



Lined area for notes.



[illegible]

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

**BLACK QUEER STUDIES
CONFERENCE**
