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From the Director



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the start of a new year! It is hard to believe that it has been nine years since JWJI reopened. In that time, we have made tremendous strides in helping to make Emory a destination hub for the study of race and difference. And in the process, we have created an intellectual family. To our returning supporters, we are glad to count you as family. And to those of you who may be discovering JWJI for the first time (or the first time in a long time), we are eager to welcome you into our community.

We have just welcomed a new cohort of visiting and undergraduate fellows to our program. We cannot wait to introduce them to you in person at our first colloquium on September 9. These scholars continue JWJI's legacy of supporting top-notch, cutting-edge research on a wide range of topics related to the study of race and civil rights. As you read their bios, I hope you become as excited for their work as we are.

We thrive because of your active support! We're excited to see you at our upcoming colloquium events starting September 9th and look forward to announcing our Public Dialogue series, which is currently in the works. We're especially grateful to those of you who offer financial support. Thank you, as always, for the many ways you demonstrate the value of JWJI in our community.

In solidarity,
Andra Gillespie

RACE & DIFFERENCE COLLOQUIUM SERIES FALL 2024

9/9 DEBORAH PAREDEZ

Columbia University

Divas in America: Race, Sexuality, and Performance

9/16 JUDY WU

University of California, Irvine

Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress

9/23 LESLIE ALEXANDER

Rutgers University

The Cradle of Hope: How Haitian Independence Inspired the Birth of Black Internationalism in the United States

9/30 JAFARI ALLEN

Columbia University

Lessons from the Long Black Gay 80s: Atlanta 1986-1995

10/7 SHANNA GREENE BENJAMIN

Wake Forest University

Absent Presence: Nellie Y. McKay, the WNBA, and Foundational Sacrifice

10/21 ANNEMARIE MINGO

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The Good Religion of Black Churchwomen: Faith, Courage, and Moral Imagination in Freedom Struggles.

10/28 JAMES JONES

Rutgers University

The Last Plantation: Racism and Resistance in the Halls of Congress

11/4 FREDERICK KNIGHT

Howard University

Black Elders: The Meaning of Age in American Slavery and Freedom

11/11 EMMITT RILEY

The University of the South

Racial Attitudes in America Today: One Nation, Still Divided

11/18 JEMAR TISBY

Simmons College of Kentucky

The Spirit of Justice and the Black Christian Political Witness

11/25 JOHN (JAY) ARENA

CUNY's College of Staten Island

Expelling Public Schools in Newark: Lessons for Building Another City, Country and World

12/2 TAMARA WALKER

Barnard College

Philippa Schuyler's Adventures in Black and White



MONDAYS AT 12PM | Jones Room, Woodruff Library

LUNCH PROVIDED | RVSP REQUESTED

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Please join us!

[Click Here to Register or Scan the QR Code](#)



WELCOME NEW FELLOWS!

JWJI welcomed the 2024-2025 cohort of fellows to Emory in August 2024. This outstanding cohort of fellows represents a wide range of disciplines and research topics. Please learn about each fellow and their research project below:

MELLON POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



Rosa O'Connor Acevedo received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Oregon in July 2024. Prior to her Ph.D., Rosa earned a BA in Political Science and an MA in Philosophy from the University of Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras). From 2016 to 2018 she worked as a Teaching Assistant for the Center for Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at Williams College. Her primary research interests include Afro-Caribbean philosophy, Critical Philosophy of Race, Iberian Racism, Racial Capitalism, the Caribbean Black Radical Tradition, and Decolonial Feminisms.

Her current work focuses on developing a racial *longue durée* of anti-Blackness that goes from early modern Iberia to the Spanish Caribbean plantation system, with a particular focus on 19th century Puerto Rico. She examines how religious ideas like blood purity (*limpieza de sangre*), the Portuguese initiation of the African slave trade, and the emergence of a racial caste system in the Viceroyalty of New Spain shaped racial and gender formation in the Spanish speaking Caribbean. She is currently working on a second project that includes archival research regarding the writing and representation of enslaved women in 19th century colonial documents in Puerto Rico. This project explores the role of enslaved and maroon women in challenging and resisting the plantation system and captivity by running away and fostering social relations among the enslaved community.



Vicente Carrillo is an artist, scholar, and political education facilitator. He received his Ph.D. in Chicana/o & Central American Studies, with an emphasis in Gender Studies, from the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Carrillo's research traces the politics of queer placemaking within barrio urban landscapes. He is particularly interested in the contestations that arise from gentrification and the queer racialized bodies at the core of these debates. His work provides a critical textual analysis of contemporary queer Latinx cultural works – bars, performance art, mainstream television, and muralism – to capture the complex ways queerness is mobilized as a place-making strategy. Using an interdisciplinary approach, Dr. Carrillo works at the intersection of queer of color performance studies, gentrification studies, and Chicana/Latinx Studies. Outside of academia, Carrillo is a practicing painter.

Before arriving to Emory, Dr. Carrillo completed a postdoc at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign (2022) and taught at Smith College (2023). His courses, like Mapping Latinx Inequalities, invites students into the nexus of race, space, gentrification and placemaking. Drawing from his interdisciplinary background, he also teaches courses on queer Latinx performance studies that grapple with questions around aesthetics, race, and the politics of pleasure.

Carrillo's research has been funded and supported by the Inter-University Program for Latino Research Mellon Fellowship, the UCLA Gold Shield Alumni Fellowship, the UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship, and the Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship. You can find Carrillo's recent publication, "[Pride Arrives to the Barrio: An Ethnographic Reflection of Boyle Height's Orgullo Fest](#)," with Latinx Talk.

MELLON DISSERTATION FELLOWS



Danielle Davis is a dedicated producer-musicologist pursuing her Ph.D. in Musicology at Florida State University. Her research focuses on Southern Hip-hop, particularly the influential artists from the Tidewater region in Virginia, also known as Hampton Roads or the 757. Her dissertation, The Tidewater Trio Project, is an immersive digital experience honoring the cultural impact of Shay Haley, Chad Hugo, and Pharrell Williams—producers who have shaped Southern Hip-hop through their work as N.E.R.D., The Neptunes, and in Pharrell's solo career. As executive producer of The Tidewater Trio Project's album and archive, Davis offers listeners a nuanced exploration of the Trio's Southern Hip-hop from both Black American and Filipino perspectives. Although not originally from the Tidewater region, Danielle's academic path as a violist led her to Hampton University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music (2016) and a Master of Teaching with a specialization in instrumental education (2017).

Her work has been recognized with fellowships such as the Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship (2023-2024) and the Cleveland Institute of Music's Future of Music Faculty Fellowship. She is committed to preserving, teaching, and celebrating the legacies of Southern musicians as accessible and engaging media rich experiences. Through the art of production, Davis aims to ensure that the musical and historical contributions of the Tidewater region continue to inspire and inform from within and beyond the academy.



Whitney Fields is a Ph.D. Candidate in History at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. She received a B.A. in History and American Studies from the College of William and Mary in 2015.

Her work combines carceral studies, urban history, and slavery and emancipation studies to chronicle the long history of American incarceration. Whitney's current project, "Captive in Promised Land: Black Lives, Confinement, and Incarceration in Nineteenth-Century Urban America," is a history of the incarceration and labors of Black people in the early nineteenth-century urban North. This work foregrounds Black Americans as subjects within the nation's first prisons and penitentiaries and examines how they figured into and challenged nineteenth-century discourse on abolition, prison reform, and criminalization. The study reanimates the early history of the United States through their narratives of captivity and confinement and attends to the battles they waged when contesting the demands of legislators, prison administrators, and reformers.

This research has been supported by fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies.

JAMES T. LANEY DISSERTATION FELLOW



Ariel Lawrence is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department at Emory University. Her dissertation project focuses on black women's lifewriting—encompassing memoir, autobiography, poetry, and theory—and seeks to develop ethical reading practices that prioritize the quiet intimacies of black interiority beyond the constraints of the white gaze. The project has two primary objectives: first, to acknowledge, interrogate, and challenge the ways in which the humanist imagination continues to center whiteness within black narratives; and second, to demonstrate that an ethical approach to reading black lifewriting must accommodate the full range of emotion, expression, and empathy inherent in black life as it is represented on the page.

JWJI VISTING FELLOW



Jacinta Saffold is an Assistant Professor of African American Literature and Culture at the University of Delaware and the former endowed chair of Africana Studies at the University of New Orleans. As a digital archivist, she researches and teaches courses on 20th and 21st century African American literature, Hip Hop Studies, and the Digital Humanities. Currently, she is working on a first monograph, "Books & Beats: The Cultural Kinship of Street Lit and Hip Hop," and the Essence Book Project, a computational collection of popular African American Literature. Her work has been published in the *Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the U.S. Journal*, *Black Perspectives*, *Cultural Front*, and Bloomsbury's *#MeToo and Literary Studies Reading, Writing, and Teaching about Sexual Violence and Rape Culture*.

UNCF-MELLON FELLOW



Fernando Esquivel-Suárez is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. He received an M.A. in Latin American Studies and a Ph.D. in Hispanic Studies both from Emory University. His background includes cultural studies and philosophy training at Universidad Javeriana, in his hometown Bogota Colombia. He is a former fellow at the National Humanities Center. His main research interests focus on African-American/Latinx relations, overlapping oppression, and solidarity in the context of the War on Drugs in Colombia, Mexico, and the United States. He is currently working on his book titled *The Pablo Escobar Mixtape*. This project analyzes the War on Drugs and the iconization of Pablo Escobar in African American popular culture. He is also a member of the Board of Advisors for Freedom University. This organization offers college-level classes and mentoring to undocumented students whom the State of Georgia has denied this right.

UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS

In August, we welcomed our sixth cohort of undergraduate fellows to JWJI. This exceptional group of scholars will complete their honors theses with support from the institute. We are grateful for the support of the **Emory Black Alumni Impact Circle**, which is funding the Undergraduate Fellows Program for a second year. We are also thankful to the members of the selection committee, Professors Keila Crabtree and Carl Suddler, for their work in helping to select the fellows.



Adelaide Rosene
History Major



Ilo Elder
Dance and Movement Major



Soju Hokari
History Major



Zinnia Robinson
Anthropology and Human
Biology Major

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