



CUNY FACULTY DIVERSITY INITIATIVE | MELLON FOUNDATION

With the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the *CUNY Mellon Faculty Diversity Career Enhancement Initiative* (CFDI) works with **early career tenure-track faculty** in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at Queens College, Hunter College, Brooklyn College and City College of New York. Under the direction of a Faculty Mentor, the 18-month program entails research/ writing seminars and professional development workshops.

This year we are pleased to welcome the incoming cohort of 2018 Mellon Faculty Fellows and Mentors.

BROOKLYN COLLEGE

ROSAMOND KING, CFDI FACULTY MENTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENGLISH

Britt Kelly

Community Archaeology as a Mode of Political Resistance: The Intersection of Gentrification, Identity, and Material Culture in an Urban Context

This project is a community archaeological project concentrating on a 19th century house in a gentrifying neighborhood in Brooklyn. The owner is the United Order of Tents (UOT), an organization founded by two former enslaved women, which served first as a stop on the Underground Railroad and later as a charity that provided food and care to those in need. While abandoned for decades, the material remains of the house serve as an object of historic community identity. Research will explore the intersection of material culture, gentrification and activism and ways archaeology and preservation can be a tool of resistance.

Malcolm Merriweather

Now I Walk in Beauty

The manuscript is a study of the life and compositions of Gregg Smith (1931-2016), American composer, arranger, and conductor. The first two chapters document his childhood and formative years. The third chapter outlines his early activities as a conductor, arranger, the formation of the Gregg Smith Singers, and his association with Igor Stravinsky. The remaining chapters focus on major compositions, performances, collaborations, and relevant personal developments over a professional career that spanned fifty years. The appendices include a description of Gregg Smith's compositional idiom and a list of awards and press quotations. The Complete Works Catalog is arranged alphabetically divided by ten genres. The catalog was conceived as a resource for choral musicians and includes information about instrumental requirements, text source material, publisher information, commissioning data, a difficulty rating, and a brief annotation about the piece of music. The goal of the project is to transform the manuscript into a publishable document that will be a reference for the music world at large.

VANESSA VALDÉS, CFDI FACULTY MENTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Tashuna Albritton

Addressing HIV and Sexually Transmitted Disease Disparity among African American Youth

In 2015, U.S. adolescents made up 22% of new HIV diagnoses, and African American youth aged 13-19 years represented 64% of these new cases. These disparities have consistently plagued low-income African American adolescents for decades. My research focuses on the psychosocial factors that influence HIV rates among this population. My project consists of manuscripts and a research proposal that focus on HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) risk behaviors and intervention research among African American adolescents and adolescent couples. I will use primary data collected from my previous studies to develop manuscripts and inform research proposals.

Norma Fuentes-Mayorga

When Women Come First: Immigration, Gender, Race, and Boundary Crossing

My book manuscript When Latina Women Come First.... offers new insights on the gendered immigration, work incorporation and racial formation experiences of Dominican and Mexican groups in New York City. It highlights the increasing female-led immigration from Latin America (especially the Dominican Republic) to New York. It also illustrates the contributions these women make as household heads, via remittances, especially to daughters in their communities of origin. Unlike earlier manufacturing or agricultural sectors, I explore the ecology and stratification of workers in low-wage service sectors and how gender, race and immigrant status affect the sorting of workers. As service sector jobs involve greater interactions between workers, employers and clientele, I find that some of these jobs required that workers manage their emotions and their ethno-racial identities. My book documents how urban service jobs create new forms of racial formation processes and enhance social mobility despite the growing racialization and exclusion of some immigrants at the expense of others.

Trevar Riley-Reid

We Don't Need the Library: We Have Google: A Possible Future for the Academic Library

The prevalence of Google, and the internet as a whole has allowed information to flow freely with a combination of a mouse click and a few keystrokes. This well of information has changed the role of the librarian, especially in the academy since now we are no longer the exclusive gatekeepers of information as we once were. This article will explore the ways libraries might need to adapt in order to stay relevant. This would mean becoming diverse in a myriad of ways: through service changes for users, by hiring a more diverse workforce and by engaging more outreach with the campus community.

Nilda Sanchez-Rodriguez

In Pursuit of Diversity in the Library Profession: An Effective Approach to Leadership in Academia

Libraries are an integral part of education. It is through education and exposure to different cultures that people are more willing to recognize and accept the contributions of a culturally diverse society. Embracing diversity enriches society by providing people the opportunity to learn from other cultures. New York City symbolizes everything I embrace and cherish as an individual. I appreciate its cultural diversity, which is demonstrated in the scores of communities representing practically every nation across the globe, while maintaining its cultural identity. New York City signifies multiculturalism, and for this reason the library profession has an obligation to strengthen cultural diversity for underrepresented communities. Additionally, library personnel i.e. librarians and support-staff, as well as resources, programming, services, and collections must be as diverse as the community we serve. This study focuses on the barriers of recruiting and retaining underrepresented groups and the challenges faced in the profession.

Andrea Felber Seligman

Gender Diversities in Early Africa

This book project will trace a long-term history of how particular Africans understood gender pre-1800. What were their concepts of gender, its pluralities (gender categories beyond western ‘male’ or female’) and its fluidities? How did gender diversities become tied to power and how did these diversities matter to more ‘average’ historic Africans? Historical linguistics analysis and critical readings of other available sources (colonial-era ethnographies, folktales, and artwork) will offer opportunities to reconstruct this history. The final book will enrich comparative gender history and complicate conventional treatments of politics, religion, and society in Africa that often assumed a two-gender fixed binary.

Laurie Woodard

A Real Negro Girl: Fredi Washington and the Politics of Performance during the New Negro Renaissance

This project is an interdisciplinary exploration of the life and career of performing artist and civil rights activist Fredi Washington during the early twentieth century. It will illuminate the influence of the performing arts and artists on the New Negro Renaissance, African-American social, labor, and political activism, and the larger African American quest for the full rights of United States citizenship. I synthesize approaches to biography, cultural and political history, and performance studies to recover Washington’s role as a politically astute, central actor of the New Negro Renaissance. Washington fused artistry with activism, demanded recognition of her talent and humanity, and challenged the racial and gender hierarchies that denied the vast scope of African American women’s identity and genius.

HUNTER COLLEGE

ERICA CHITO CHILDS, CFDI FACULTY MENTOR, PROFESSOR, SOCIOLOGY

Alexis Jemal

Intersections of Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism: Perpetuating Violence against Black Women and Non-Gender Conforming People

The H.O.W. study is a participatory action research study that investigates how the intersection of racism, sexism, and heterosexism perpetuates violence against black women and non-gender conforming people as well as violence between black men. The study will use in-depth interviews and photovoice to explore themes of structural inequity and impact on self, others and community. Most importantly, the study will explore problem formulation and solution-building informed by the study participants.

Jill Rosenthal

From "Migrants" to "Refugees": Humanitarian Aid, Development, and Nationalism in Ngara District, Tanzania (1940-2000)

This project analyzes the history of how the “nation” came to be actualized in the popular imaginations of people living on the border of the Tanzanian nation-state. Situated on the border of Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi, Ngara district has been a site of Wanyaruanda migration, later termed “Rwandan refugee” movement, for centuries. As such, Ngara’s past and present are inextricably entwined with global and regional forces of trade and culture, as well as transnational constructions of “refugees” and “nation-states.” I argue that transnational aid to Rwandan refugees in Ngara district unfolded as part of a broader project of nation-state formation and regulation—one which deeply impacted local narratives of community and belonging.

Calvin Smiley

Confined Freedom: Race, Reentry and Citizenship

Prisoner reentry — the transition from prison to community — preserves not terminates the carceral continuum in the United States. *Confined Freedom* focuses on the intricacies and complications of prisoner reentry for low-income urban inhabitants. More specifically, this book investigates how men and women navigate and negotiate reentry spaces with diminished legal rights and amplified social stigmas. This work is critical of the contradiction of how citizenship is simultaneously given and taken away from persons with a felony. In other words, the state creates a unique type of “purgatory” citizenry for those who have been incarcerated, producing complexities and ambiguities in one’s legal status.

Kathryn Struthers Ahmed

Asymmetrical Development of Perspectives and Practice: Learning to Teach Literacy to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

This qualitative case study explored the development of preservice teachers' (PSTs') perspectives on literacy teaching and literacy instructional practice in a teacher education program that prepares teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Across coursework and student teaching placements, findings indicate PSTs' literacy perspectives moved toward coherence with the program's culturally responsive approach. However, PSTs' literacy lessons suggested PSTs had not taken up the pedagogical practices promoted by the program. Implications include providing PSTs with varied clinical experiences, coupled with intentional teacher educator mediation, thereby facilitating PSTs' enactment of effective literacy instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

QUEENS COLLEGE

JAMES MOORE, CFDI FACULTY MENTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ANTHROPOLOGY

Natalie Bump Vena

The Politics of Nature in the Cook County Forest Preserves

Through the initiative, I plan to compose a chapter for my manuscript, *Chicago's Frontier: The Politics of Nature in the Cook County Forest Preserves*. With jurisdiction encompassing Chicago, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County just celebrated its centennial and today manages 69,000 acres of land. Expanding on my dissertation's account of the relationship between bureaucracy and land management, I will write a new chapter addressing the politics of the district's public engagement. Specifically, the chapter will concern the district's ongoing campaign to make Cook County residents into upstanding citizens and conscientious stewards through exposure to the forest preserves.

Andrew DeRosa

Contemporary Hybrid Practices and Creative Process in Design

In response to increased complexity related to advances in digital technology and a changing world, design practice has become more collaborative and hybridized while also demanding increased specialization from practitioners. This project researches the creative processes of prominent and emerging designers in the United States who have developed hybrid practices between disciplines that have emerged as a result of the changing state of the field. Through interviews and case studies, these novel ways of working will be documented. Points of convergence and divergence between approaches and processes to hybrid practice will be illuminated.

Michael Lacy

American Carnage: Donald Trump's Birtherism

This chapter, "American Carnage," seeks to explain why in spite of media claims that America is now experiencing a postracial era, marked by the first black man, Barack Obama, elected U.S. president in 2008, Birthers (led by Donald Trump) claimed that that Barack Obama was not born in the U.S. and therefore ineligible to be president. While birther narratives are erroneous and even considered racist and paranoid by mainstream reporters, liberal politicians, and nonwhite voters (especially blacks), beginning in 2011, Trump's birtherism propelled him to the lead of the Republican Party primaries, culminating in his presidential victory in 2016. Based on a preliminary analysis, I contend that Donald Trump's Birther narrative and subsequent reversal reflects asymmetrical expressions of antiblack racism in the postracial narrative, which resonates strongly among white conservative audiences, but perhaps more broadly by resonating nationalistic anxieties of loss.

Mary Anne Madeira

Power Hierarchies and the Development of Latin American Regionalism

How has the distribution of power within and outside of Latin America affected the region's political and economic integration processes? This book chapter, an invited contribution to a book on power and regionalism, draws upon theories of international politics and regional integration developed in the context of other regions, and assesses their utility in understanding the power dynamics of regional integration in Latin America. I consider the role of the global hegemon, the United States, as well as the role of the aspiring regional hegemon, Brazil. I also analyze the ways that secondary powers in Latin America both contest and legitimate Brazilian leadership in MERCOSUR and other regional organizations.

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For more information, visit: <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/cfdi/>.



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