

# SOCIETY OF FELLOWS

## 2020-2021 CROSS-DISCIPLINARY DIGITAL DIALOGUES

### **DIALOGUE ONE | September 23, 2020, from 4:30-6 p.m. on Zoom** ***Human Rights Pasts and Futures: Pandemics, Racism and Colonialism***

In her essay “The Pandemic is a Portal,” novelist Arundhati Roy writes, the pandemic “unfolding before our eyes ... isn’t new. It is the wreckage of a train that has been careening down the track for years.” She continues, “Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.” In this first and framing dialogue, the Global Arts + Humanities Society of Fellows will bring scholars, activists and artists together to consider the potential and limitations of human rights to move through the wreckage of anti-Blackness, settler colonialism, ableism and heteropatriarchy to create more livable and equitable futures.

**Presenters:** lyko Day (Associate Professor, English and Critical Social Thought, Mount Holyoke College)  
Tiffany Lethabo King (Assistant Professor, African-American Studies, Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Georgia State University)  
Shui-yin Sharon Yam (Associate Professor, Writing, Rhetoric and Digital Studies, University of Kentucky)

**Moderator:** Treva Lindsey (Associate Professor, Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Ohio State)

---

### **DIALOGUE TWO | October 21, 2020, from 4:30-6 p.m. on Zoom** ***Disability, Sexuality and Human Rights***

Dialogue two brings scholars and activists together to consider the potential of human rights frames, cultural representations and institutions to address violence against people with disabilities and LGBTQIA populations. Panelists will consider the political utility of identity-based rights for addressing different forms of oppression and provide alternative visions of justice that are not bound to liberal philosophies of recognition and/or the state. Panelists will also address how governments weaponize language and culture to incite violence against non-dominant populations and the important role that the arts and humanities play in documenting rights violations and advancing social justice.

**Presenters:** Amrita Dhar (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Ohio State-Newark)  
Sona Hill Kazemi (Research Justice at the Intersections Fellow, Mills College)  
Eunjung Kim (Associate Professor, Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, Syracuse University)  
Rachel Lewis (Associate Professor, Women and Gender Studies Program, George Mason University)  
Ila Nagar (Associate Professor, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Ohio State)

**Moderator:** Amy Shuman (Professor, Department of English/Center for Folklore Studies, Ohio State)

---

### **DIALOGUE THREE | November 18, 2020, from 4:30-6 p.m. on Zoom** ***Migrant Rights Within Empire, Art Activism and Democracy***

In a recent *USA Today* opinion piece entitled “Trump’s Coronavirus Order Scapegoats Immigrants and Doesn’t Make Us Safer,” the authors decry the President’s order as nativist political theater rather than a good faith measure to reduce contagion. As south-to-north migrants disproportionately work in the industries that feed the country, this panel considers how the pandemic has engendered new conversations about “essential” workers and rights violations. More broadly, panelists will consider how scholars, activists and artists employ or challenge human rights frameworks in countering cultures of empire, authoritarianism and neoliberal structures of oppression in the advancement of democracy and social justice.

**Presenters:** Víctor M. Espinosa (Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Ohio State-Newark)  
Paloma Martinez-Cruz (Associate Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Ohio State)  
Cristian Pineda (Multidisciplinary Visual Artist, Mérida, Yucatán)  
Inés Valdez (Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Ohio State)

**Moderator:** Guisela Latorre (Professor, Department of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Ohio State)

**DIALOGUE FOUR | February 1, 2021, from 3:30-5 p.m. on Zoom**  
***Post/Human Rights, Indigeneity and Environmental Justice***

Dialogue four considers the challenges that the Anthropocene epoch poses to human and non-human life and the potential of cultural practices and newly imagined ethical concepts for addressing these challenges. Panelists discuss how aesthetic and cultural practices generate attachments to the places we inhabit, and how posthuman renderings, such as augmented reality applications, encourage embodied experiences that connect humans empathetically with the biodiversity of seen and unseen worlds. Additionally, the panel will address questions of cultural inheritance, environmental justice, and the dangers of living under colonial rule.

**Presenters:** Tommy Davis (Associate Professor Department of English, Ohio State)  
Tristram McPherson (Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Ohio State)  
Elissa Washuta (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Ohio State)  
Amy Youngs (Associate Professor, Department of Art, Ohio State)

**Moderator:** Michael Mercil (Professor, Department of Art, Ohio State)

---

**DIALOGUE FIVE | March 8, 2021, from 3:30-5 p.m. on Zoom**  
***Cultural Heritage, Colonialism and Human Rights***

Dialogue five considers the impact of colonialism on human rights in the context of indigenous jurisprudence, cultural heritage and representation. Panelists will examine the relationship between the rule of law and structures of racial difference, the right to possess other people's cultural property, and the politics of repatriation. Additionally, they will assess the tensions between rights-based discourses and issues of cultural conservation and the scholarly impact of the decolonial turn across disciplines.

**Presenters:** Mary Hufford (GAHDT Visiting Senior Scholar, Center for Folklore Studies, Ohio State)  
Sarah Van Beurden (Associate Professor, Departments of History/African and African American Studies, Ohio State)  
Joel Wainwright (Professor, Department of Geography, Ohio State)  
Michelle Wibblesman (Associate Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Ohio State)

**Moderator:** Dorothy Noyes (Professor, Departments of English and Comparative Studies, Ohio State)

---

**DIALOGUE SIX | April 5, 2021, from 3:30-5 p.m on Zoom**  
***Human Rights Beyond Carceral Systems***

In our final dialogue, panelists consider the political utility of human rights frameworks for addressing questions related to carceral systems, including the policing of space, citizenship, identities and difference. Panelists will address the explosion of the prison population in the United States and its link to the technologies of enslavement and also reflect upon the limits of carceral feminism and its turn to policing to resolve gender-based violence. Finally, panelists will consider the role of the arts and humanities in abolitionism and in imagining alternatives to carceral systems.

**Presenters:** Angela Bryant (Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Ohio State-Newark)  
Dionne Custer Edwards (Director of Learning and Public Practice, Wexner Center for the Arts)  
Annie Isabel Fukushima, (Assistant Professor, Division of Ethnic Studies, University of Utah)  
Tiyi Morris (Associate Professor, Department of African and African American Studies, Ohio State-Newark)  
Elaine Richardson (Professor, Department of Teaching and Learning, Ohio State)  
Mary Thomas (Associate Professor, Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Ohio State)

**Moderator:** Jennifer Suchland (Associate Professor, Departments of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures, Ohio State)