



A giant condom reading “A CONDOM TO STOP UNSAFE POLITICS. HELMS IS DEADLIER THAN A VIRUS,” covers the home of Senator Jesse Helms in Arlington, VA on September 5, 1991. A group of ACT UP activists installed the giant condom over Helms’ home in response to his opposition to spending federal funds on AIDS research and treatment. Photo by ACT UP New York.

A Note from the Faculty Director

This quarter I’d like to take the opportunity to introduce to the CSGS community a new faculty member appointed in English and an affiliate of the Center, **Jonathan Flatley**. I sat down with Jonathan recently to learn more about him and his work.

Daisy Delogu (*Faculty Director, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality and Howard L. Willett Professor of French Literature, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures*): So Jonathan, maybe we could begin by you just introducing yourself in whatever terms seem relevant to you?

Jonathan Flatley (*Professor, English Language and Literature*): I’m coming from Wayne State where I taught for about 20 years. Wayne is a large public university serving mostly working-class students, and I taught queer theory there, cultural studies, and modern (mostly American and African American) literature. Last year I taught a class on AIDS activism and AIDS

aesthetics; the activism material in particular seemed very relevant to the current moment. Wayne has a large Arab-American student population, and several of my students were involved in activism around the war in Gaza. It was interesting for me to teach ACT UP and AIDS activism and to reflect on the differences between this moment and the moment in the 90s, when I was in a small chapter of ACT UP while in grad school at Duke.

When I started grad school the AIDS crisis was well underway, but there were not yet drugs for effective treatment, so many gay men were dying, and at the same time it felt like the world was completely homophobic. In North Carolina Jesse Helms, who was against all forms of AIDS education or research, was senator. He was up for reelection in 1990 and his democratic opponent, Harvey Gantt, was ahead in the polls until Helms ran an aggressive ad campaign with footage from Pride marches saying “this is what Harvey Gantt is for.” Helms won by over

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FEATURED EVENTS

Tue Jan 21 at 5:30pm

Undergraduate Summer Internship Info Session

Wed Feb 5 at 4:30pm

Peter Allen on “A Boy Falling out of the Sky” with **Daisy Delogu**

Mon Feb 10 at 4:30pm

2025 Distinguished Faculty Lecture: **Larissa Brewer-García**. “Gendered Exemplarity and Upward Mobility in the African Diaspora in Seventeenth-Century Peru”

Thu Feb 13 at 5:30pm

“*Hear Me Out*” Galentine’s/Valentine’s/Palentine’s Study Break

Fri Feb 21 & Sat Feb 22

Gender and Sexuality in/and the Romance Languages Conference

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5 points. So there's that context. But at the same time, I worked with Eve Sedgwick and Michael Moon during the emergence of queer theory. A group of students who had formed around Eve and Michael founded Triangle ACT UP. It was nothing like the chapters in San Francisco or New York or Chicago, we were small and our scope of action was limited. One thing we were active about was HIV testing, because North Carolina wanted to make it impossible to get an anonymous test. Everybody knew the danger of leaving a record of testing, especially if your result was positive. Activism changed the way one thought about one's academic community; being arrested, or risking arrest, with this group you're also in seminars with changes the whole vibe, as it were. So despite the hostile forces arrayed around us, there was incredible intellectual and political excitement around the emergence of queer theory as a field. I've been trying to recreate that sense of a collective intellectual and political project ever since!

Daisy: And where did you go after your Duke years?

Jonathan: My first job was at UVA where I also was teaching queer theory. I was very young and had great students; they taught me so much. Then I went to Wayne, and living in Detroit I eventually reassembled an activist community, in part outside the university.

Daisy: Could you tell me more about your work?

Jonathan: I trained as a comparatist, and I also spent a lot of time in Russia, especially Moscow, in the 90s and early 2000s, which shaped my thinking about most everything. The history of sexuality played out quite differently in the Soviet Union. One of the first things Lenin did was to decriminalize sodomy; the Soviet Union was one of the first states to do that. Maybe more important than the opposition between homo- or heterosexuality was the one between bourgeois and proletariat sexuality. There were different anxieties, kinds of expression, practices, policing. It's always instructive to see that how things played out in the place you happen to be is not the only possibility; things could have been different.

My most recent book makes a queer case for Andy Warhol's commitment to liking things, and to likeness or similarity, as a queer practice, one that does not necessarily focus on the couple, but on a broader field of attachments. I tried to take seriously Warhol's dictum "I think everybody should like everybody" and his observation that "everybody looks alike and acts alike", as a way to imagine a queer sexual and emotional life world, and also as a response to a homophobic environment. *Liking*, as an affirmative response to something, relies on the ability to perceive similarity, as something distinct from being the same. (Felix Bernstein talked to me about the book in an interview you can read here: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/liking-andy-warhol-an-interview-with-jonathan-flatley/>) In a way, this book was a continuation of work I had done in graduate school when a group of us organized a conference focused on Warhol; we had been astounded at the way that Warhol was constantly "de-gayed" in the existing scholarship, and it was exciting to try to change the scholarly approach to Warhol. Those presentations turned into an edited volume in 1996 (*Pop Out: Queer Warhol*, Duke

University Press). So *Like Andy Warhol* was a way to return to the excitement of that collective project.

Daisy: What are you teaching this year at Chicago?

Jonathan: My spring course is about queer theory, with an emphasis on its emergence during the AIDS crisis. What did people think they were trying to do? What avenues did queer theory open or foreclose? What did it enable us to see as scholars? I've been energized by Sarah Schulman's outstanding book on New York ACT UP. It's a detailed oral history that reads like a 19th-century realist novel, with key figures weaving in and out, moments of action, of transition. As a book it's also committed to thinking concretely about how we could be effective activists in the current moment around a whole range of issues, including transphobia.

Daisy: Speaking of reading, what other reading material is on your nightstand right now?

Jonathan: I'm reading Emily Wilson's translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, those are both pretty great. I listen to a lot of audio books while doing dishes or whatever. I'm about to read *Tender is the Night* by Fitzgerald, for a reading group. I like to read things with friends when I can. I'm part of a lot of reading groups that convene on Zoom, projects that started during COVID. I'm in a Proust reading group too and am kind of obsessed with Proust. I recently read the new Sally Rooney, *Intermezzo* – I'm a fan, though I know not everybody is, and that book by Simone de Beauvoir about her early childhood friendship, *Inseparable* – both fantastic.

Daisy: Well, it's terrific to have you here, and I hope people will be inspired to reach out to you!

Programming Highlights

Please join us on [Monday, February 10 at 4:30pm](#) for the annual *Iris Marion Young Distinguished Faculty Lecture*. Larissa Brewer-García (Romance Languages and Literatures) will deliver the talk, "Gendered Exemplarity and Upward Mobility in the African Diaspora in Seventeenth-Century Peru."

On [Wednesday, February 5 at 4:30pm](#), the Center will host a visit from Peter Allen to discuss "A Boy Falling out of the Sky," from his forthcoming book, *Finding Love: Hacking through a Very Complicated Life to Find Love, Marriage, and a Family I Never Knew*. Allen is a writer, executive coach, professor, and HR leader. He holds a master's and a doctorate in comparative literature from the University of Chicago and is a member of the University of Chicago's Humanities Advisory Council.

On [February 21-22](#), the Center will host the conference, *Gender and Sexuality in/and the Romance Languages*. This interdisciplinary conference will explore the specificities of gender and sexuality as articulated in cultural and critical works produced in or engaging with Romance languages and in all the places and contexts where these are spoken and will bring together scholars, artists, and educators to discuss innovative approaches to inclusive language, translation practices, and performance in relation to gender and sexuality.

Student News

Winter Courses

We are very excited about [the courses](#) we are offering our undergraduates this quarter. As in previous years, our enrollment in Gender and Sexuality in World Civ continues to grow. There will be approximately 220 students continuing in the twelve sections of GNSE Civ. We have revised the curriculum this year and are looking forward to the new syllabus in Winter Quarter. The sequence will be chaired by our Faculty Director, **Daisy Delogu** who will also teach one section. Other sections will be taught by Professors **Heather Keenleyside** (English), **Kaneesha Parsard** (English - 2 sections), **Sarah Pierce Taylor** (Divinity), and **SJ Zhang** (English - 2 sections), Instructional Professor **Red Tremmel** (Gender and Sexuality Studies), Teaching Fellows **Olivia Bustion** (Divinity) and **Gabi Ojeda-Sague** (English) and Lecturer **Rhiannon Auriemma** (Political Science, Northwestern - 2 sections). In addition to these courses, we are very excited to have one of the winners of last year's course design prize, Political Science PhD Candidate **Omar Safadi**, offer his course "The Queer Enemy and the Politics of Homophobia." We have two offerings from Teaching Fellows: **Beatrice Fazio** (Romance Languages) will be teaching "Geographies of Race and Gender in Medieval and Early Modern Italy" and **Evelyn Kessler** (History) will be teaching "Consent in American Life." Finally, **Linda Zerilli** will teach two sections of a mixed undergrad/grad course, "Advanced Theories of Gender and Sexuality." Beyond our own offerings, we are crosslisting 47 undergraduate and 24 graduate courses. Included in those crosslists is the other winner of last year's Course Design Prize, Romance Languages and Literatures graduate student **Andrea Reed-Leal**, teaching "Indigenous Feminisms of Latin America."

Winter Quarter Programming

This Winter, in conjunction with the popular course "Treating Trans-: Practices of Medicine, Practices of Theory" (taught by former CSGS Fellow **Paula Martin**) and Gender Civ, we will host a panel discussion on the recent Supreme Court case, *United States v. Skremetti*. This case challenges a Tennessee ban on gender-affirming care for minors in that state. Date and time to be announced. We'll also continue our *Galentine's/Valentine's/Palentine's Day Study Break* tradition, hosting a "Hear Me Out" themed event. Come tell us who your fictional BFF would be on [Thursday, February 13 at 5:30pm!](#)

Undergraduate Summer Internships for 2025

Once again, the Center will offer funding for up to six summer internships at gender- and LGBTQ-related service, educational, or activist organizations in the U.S. Those who receive funding will need to secure their own (unpaid) internships but don't need to have it already set before they apply. The CSGS staff is happy to help applicants think through potential internship sites in the city and beyond. Interested students are encouraged to attend our **Gender/Sexuality Summer Internship Funding Info Session** on [Tuesday, January 21 at 5:30pm](#) where last year's recipients will be speaking about their experiences. The deadline to [apply](#) for funding is March 1 at 11:59pm.

The UChicago LGBTQ+ Community Engagement Award

The LGBTQ+ Community Engagement Award is a student prize sponsored by UChicago Alumni Pride and the Center. The annual award honors exceptional contributions that advance and support the interests of the LGBTQ+ community and is open to current UChicago undergraduate or graduate students in good academic standing. The awardee will receive a prize of \$500 and be honored with the opportunity to speak publicly about the significance of their work and introduce the invited distinguished speaker at the coming year's *OUTstanding Speaker Series* lecture. Undergraduate winners will be listed on the College Honors and Awards page. [Nominations](#) (including self-nominations) are due March 1. Eligible nominees will be notified in early March with a request to submit materials by April 1.

Undergraduate Major/Minor

Undergraduate students interested in the topics of gender and/or sexuality are welcome at the Center and have the option to major or minor in Gender and Sexuality Studies. Students can take GNSE coursework as an independent major, or as a double major where their gender coursework can provide a lens through which they study another discipline. A minor is also available for students who may not be able to complete all the major requirements while also studying another discipline. Currently, we have students who are also majoring in Linguistics, Biology, English, Sociology, Cinema and Media Studies, and many other areas. If you have questions about the major or minor and want to talk about how they might fit in with your general academic goals, please email Bonnie Kanter (bonniek@uchicago.edu).

Graduate Student News

After a successful inaugural competition, we are pleased to announce that we will again offer the [CSGS Course Design Prize for Graduate Instructors](#) (deadline February 28). We will award \$1000 to two PhD students--one in Humanities and one in Social Sciences--who have designed an undergraduate course for which they will serve as instructors of record in the context of their PTP/MTE in AY2025-26. The course should demonstrate a robust and sustained engagement with questions of gender and sexuality. Priority will be given to students with classroom experience as a Teaching Assistant or other role.

Applications are also currently open for [Dissertation and Residential Fellowships](#) (deadline March 15) for current PhD students who are working on issues of gender and/or sexuality within their academic discipline. In addition to the CSGS fellowships, we will have joint fellowship opportunities with the **Center of the Study of Race, Politics and Culture** for graduate students whose work crosses over both research areas. More information on all our graduate prizes and fellowships is available on our graduate funding page.

If you have questions or would like to discuss any of the above offerings, please contact Bonnie Kanter, CSGS Assistant Director for Student Affairs and Curriculum, at bonniek@uchicago.edu.

Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop & Working Group

Workshop

We are excited to announce the Winter 2025 schedule for the [Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop](#)! Sessions will be held on alternate Tuesdays from 5:00 to 6:20pm Central Time (unless otherwise noted). Workshop sessions will be held in-person at the CSGS, 5733 S University Ave, in room 103.

January 14: *Kat Myers* (Divinity School), “Hope in the Shadow of Climate Displacement: Schopenhauer’s Compassionate Consolations”; respondent: *Colin Marshall* (University of Washington)

January 28: *Michael Stablein, Jr.* (English Language and Literature/Theater and Performance Studies), “Proud (of your) Boys: Men without Mothers and the Masculine Womb”; respondent: *Casey Ryan Kelly* (University of Nebraska–Lincoln)

February 11: *Omar Safadi* (Political Science), “Queer Education, Anti-Colonial Resistance, and the Threat of Generational Transformation in Contemporary Lebanon”; respondent: TBD

February 25: *Soo Young Lee* (Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice), title TBD; respondent: Rupaleem Bhuyan (University of Toronto)

Papers will be made available in advance via our email list. If you are interested in joining the email list, go to <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/info/sexuality-gender-wkshp>

If you have any questions or accommodation requests, please don’t hesitate to contact the workshop co-coordinators, Fara Taddei and Lizette Arellano at gssworkshop@gmail.com.



CSGS STAFF

Tate Brazas, *Assistant Director for Programming and Operations*

Sonia Chang, *Event and Media Intern*

Daisy Delogu, *Faculty Director*

Bonnie Kanter, *Assistant Director for Student Affairs and Curriculum*

Gina Olson, *Executive Director*

Working Group

The working group will meet every other Tuesday from 5:00-6:00pm Central Time at the CSGS, 5733 S University Ave, in room 103. Food and beverages will be provided for in-person meetings. Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

January 7: *Nathan Travis* (MDiv, Divinity), “British Methodism’s ‘Progressive’ Traditionalists: Same-Sex Marriage, Gay Clergy, and No Schism”

February 4: *Nahomi Esquivel* (PhD Candidate, History) “Bootlegged Bracers:” The Making of a Green Card Guestworker Program”

February 18: *Hannah Park* (PhD Candidate, History), “The Struggles of a 20th -Century Communist ‘K-Eldest Daughter’: Gender, Generation, and the Politics of Everyday Life in Alice Hyun’s Letters, 1936-1941”

March 4: *Jingchen Xiao* (MAPPS, Anthropology): “Queering Contact Improvisation: Chinese CI Dancers, Decolonialization, and Social Alliance”

The Gender and Sexuality Studies Working Group welcomes students and papers from any field, discipline, or methodological tradition, as long as the research is relevant to gender and sexuality studies, broadly defined. Submitted work may be partial or rough, including rough drafts of papers or dissertation chapters, work nearing completion, survey designs, literature reviews, or methodological sections. Meeting time consists largely of discussion of the submitted research or work following brief comments from the presenter. We ask that only students, graduate or undergraduate, attend.

If you have any questions or would like to be added to the Working Group e-mail list, please contact the Working Group Co-Coordinators Malavika Parthasarathy (Law) and Lou Gargouri (Romance Languages) at gssworkinggroup@gmail.com.

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