ANNUAL REPORT
2016-2017

CLAGS
CENTER FOR LGB & STUDIES
MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for LGBTQ Studies provides a platform for intellectual leadership in addressing issues that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer individuals, and other sexual and gender minorities. As the first university-based LGBTQ research center in the United States, CLAGS nurtures cutting-edge scholarship, organizes events for examining and affirming LGBTQ lives, and fosters network-building among academics, artists, activists, policy makers, and community members. CLAGS stands committed to maintaining a broad program of public events, online projects, and fellowships that promote reflection on queer pasts, presents, and futures.
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List of contributors: Yana Calou, Sarah Chinn, Marta Esquilin, Angelina Godderz, Stephanie Hsu, Nancy Larcher, Summer Medina, Kevin Nadal, Noam Parness, David Rivera, Maria R. Scharron-del Rio, Jasmina Sinanovic, Shawn(ta) Smith, and Michael Yarborough.
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Dear CLAGS Family,

It has been my honor to serve as the Executive Director of CLAGS for the past three years. As many of you may know, the ED position is a three-year appointment held by a CUNY professor from any CUNY campus. Three years appears to be enough time to conceptualize and follow through on one’s vision of the organization. It also seems to be enough time for an ED to create programs and traditions that will hopefully stand the test of time, while building meaningful relationships along the way.

Over the past three years, I’ve continued the many wonderful traditions that CLAGS already had in place, including our weekly events; numerous fellowships and scholarships like the Giard and Duberman fellowships; our annual Kessler Award; Rainbow Book Fair; our Scholar-in-Residence program; and our Ph.D. concentration in Lesbian, Gay, & Queer Studies at the Graduate Center. We hosted seven conferences in the past 3 years, including Queers & Comics (2015), the LGBT Health Conference (2015), Gay American History @ 40 (2016), and the After Marriage Conference (2016).

I was honored to be of service during CLAGS’ 25th anniversary at the Graduate Center in 2016. We celebrated by having a 25th Anniversary Conference in March, bringing in a crowd of former EDs and board members, including our founder Martin Duberman, as well as current CUNY faculty, staff, and students. We also held a 25th Anniversary reception at the LGBT Center, and a special issue was dedicated to CLAGS in Women’s Studies Quarterly in December 2016.

As CLAGS’ first ED of color, I was very excited to start the LGBTQ Scholars of Color Network - a national network of professors, researchers, activists, community leaders, and students who identify as both LGBTQ and as people of color. What started as an idea with Dr. Debra Joy Perez (now of the Moore Foundation) led to 2 national conferences and a network of hundreds. Our last conference, which was held in April 2017, was a huge success with 250 participants from all over the US. We also announced that our 2019 conference would be held in San Francisco, with Dr. Charlotte Tate of San Francisco State University taking the lead.

This past year, we partnered with the GC Public Programs on several wonderful events. On February 23, 2017, we co-sponsored Activists of the Past: What Have We Learned? Larry Kramer in Conversation with Charles Blow – an event held in a packed Proshansky Auditorium. Renowned writer and activist Larry Kramer shared historical and personal insights about how we can resist to overcome a tyrannical presidential administration, while
Charles Blow used his journalistic prowess to engage audience members to stay aware of current issues and to ensure that accurate and truthful news always prevails. On June 12, 2017, we co-sponsored *One Year Since the Orlando Pulse Shooting* – a panel in commemoration of the anniversary of the heinous massacre at Pulse nightclub. Mathew Rodriguez of Mic.com facilitated a honest and raw dialogue with Carmelyn P. Malalis (Chair of the NYC Commission on Human Rights), Cecilia Gentili (Director of Policy at GMHC and Community Organizer for Translatina Network), Eman Abdelhadi (Queer Muslim Activist & NYU doctoral student), and me. The panel reminded us to always be critical of our intersectionalities in our quest for social justice, while honoring those who we lost on that tragic day.

One tradition that I hope will continue is the José Muñoz Award, our annual Pride Event held in June. The award is named after José Esteban Muñoz, a former CLAGS board member and prolific Queer Studies professor, who was taken from us too soon. The award is given to an individual who promotes Queer and Trans Studies outside of academia. Past winners include Janet Mock and Jose Antonio Vargas. This year, our award winners were Wilson Cruz, Frenchie Davis, and Nathan Lee Graham – all activists (i.e., artist/activists) who have positively portrayed LGBTQ people of color on stage and screen. While Wilson was unable to accept the award in person, I was able to facilitate a vibrant conversation with Frenchie and Nathan – both who shared such inspirational words to the audience.

Besides our programming and events, CLAGS has been involved in many successful internal and external advocacy efforts. First, upon my arrival in 2014, it was important for us to revisit the name of our organization. While the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (or CLAGS) may have made sense in 1991, it was important for our name to reflect the diverse sexual orientations and gender identities today. Thus, with the blessing of our founder, the board voted to change our name to CLAGS: The Center for LGBTQ Studies.

On the college and university levels, CLAGS has been instrumental for advocating for inclusion for those of diverse gender identities. In 2015, the Graduate Center installed its first gender neutral restroom on campus. When New York City passed legislation for gender neutral facilities in all public buildings, the GC installed signage to allow people to use any restroom that matches their gender identity or expression. Under the leadership of former GC Provost Louise Lennihan, the GC encouraged all faculty and staff to honor students’ gender pronouns and honorifics. Finally, as a member of the CUNY University Advisory Committee, I have met with leadership at CUNY Central to discuss ways to be more supportive of LGBTQ students, staff, and faculty at CUNY. This has included everything from ensuring that each campus is compliant with gender neutral restroom requirements to revisiting ways that CUNY students can change their gender markers in their student files.

In this role, I’ve done what I can to advocate for Queer Studies outside of the university. I’ve met with New York City Council members, the Manhattan Borough President, and the New York Governor’s Office to discuss possibilities for funding and programming that align with CLAGS’ mission and goals. I have worked with the New York City Commissioner on Human Rights to help disseminate information on new programs to combat hate violence and increase social justice and diversity. I also served on the committee that advocated for the passing of a New York City bill that requires the collecting and disseminating of disaggregated citywide data. This means that all statistical information would have to include categories for sexual orientation and gender identity. As a result, all city agencies (e.g., CUNY, public schools, public hospitals, correctional facilities, etc.) now have to collect data on LGBTQ people. With this information, we will now know exact numbers for LGBTQ people (e.g., in CUNY, in prison systems, etc.) and how we access services (e.g., file police reports, go to emergency rooms). We have never had this exact data before, and very few jurisdictions collect this data either.

To end this note, I am pleased to announce that the board appointed Dr. Justin Brown as the new Executive Director of CLAGS. Justin is a graduate of the Critical Social Personality Psychology Program at the Graduate Center and Assistant Professor at La Guardia Community College. As one of CUNY’s own, I am so confident that Justin will continue to advocate for our LGBTQ community within CUNY and in our greater society. Justin brings an amazing energy, excitement, and fresh perspective, and I know that CLAGS is in good hands.

Finally, I would first like to personally thank everyone who has put in their blood, sweat, and tears to make CLAGS what it is today. I especially want to thank the staff that I’ve worked with – Jasmina Sinanovic, Yana Calou, Isaiha DuPree, Noam Parness, Kalle Westerling, and Ben Gillespie, who have demonstrated an extraordinary amount of commitment to the organization. I want to thank the board, under the leadership of Andy Spieldenner, Marta Esquín, and David Rivera, who have taken CLAGS to critical and meaningful levels. Thank you to all of you for your unwavering support of CLAGS – which will always have a special place in my heart, and that I presume has a special place in all of your hearts too. Finally, I thank my husband for being the self-identified “First Lady of CLAGS” – for literally always being by my side and making sure that the organization was grounded in our principles of social justice and equity.

In many Pilipino languages, when we leave each other, we say “Sige na lang” which literally translates to “See you later!” So, this is not a good-bye to CLAGS; this is a “See you later!” and I can’t wait to see what the future lies for you.

In solidarity,
Kevin Nadal, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology - City University of New York
Executive Director of CLAGS, 2014–2017
Dear CLAGS Community,

Thank you for another amazing year of CLAGS events and programs. In our second year as board co-chairs, we have been honored to witness and participate in events, programs, and conferences that spanned a wide spectrum of gender identity and sexual orientation issues and that highlighted the intersections of numerous identities and experiences. As queer people of color, it has been exciting to support the increasing diversification of our board, and as a result, programming which reflected this diversity.

Both of our work focuses on supporting LGBTQ people at the intersections. Marta’s work is about ensuring safe and affirming educational environments where LGBTQ people of all identities can thrive and succeed. David’s work seeks to increase individual and organizational cultural competency with a focus on gender identity, sexual orientation, and other marginalized communities. We took on this role because we believe deeply in the work that CLAGS does to support LGBTQ scholars whose work breaks down barriers, increases visibility, and gives voice to LGBTQ issues and identities that are often ignored in the academy and in our society. Given the current sociopolitical climate and the attacks on our communities, elevating the work of CLAGS continues to be essential.

CLAGS is, in no uncertain terms, life saving work. The events and programs that we host support and give voice to scholarship that spans boundaries and generations. Queer scholarship acts as a life-line through time and space communicating to queer people across the globe that they are not alone, that our lives matter, and that we can thrive. It also provides the foundation for advocacy around issues impacting our lives in spaces that would choose to ignore us. It demands that others listen and realize that we will not be silenced and that our collective resolve is a force to be reckoned with. As Audre Lorde so powerfully stated, “our silence will not protect us”. We will not let fear or hatred deter us and we will continue to support the work of LGBTQ scholars and activists.

To this end, we have made decisions to center the lives of those at the margins and to highlight the work of those scholar-activists who heroically bring those stories to the forefront. This was actualized with an amazing Kessler award given to Dean Spade whose life’s work centers the marginalized, with a focus on transgender and gender nonconforming people from low-income backgrounds and communities of color. Dean Spade was selected for his dedication to those most vulnerable in our communities and for being a true scholar-activist throughout his life and by founding the Silvia Rivera Law Project. We continued...
with the Jose Esteban Munoz awardees, Frenchie Davis, Nathan Graham Lee, and Wilson Cruz whose work in the arts provide us with symbols of hope in the face of adversity and who are examples of social justice in action. These artists have been vocal advocates for LGBTQ communities and have shared many narratives of LGBTQ people of color through their various art forms.

Many of the advances to make the mission, spirit, and actions of CLAGS more inclusive are attributed directly to the leadership of Dr. Kevin Nadal who ended his 3-year term as Executive Director in June of 2017. Dr. Nadal was instrumental in ensuring that CLAGS is responsive to sociopolitical and cultural shifts in relation to LGBTQ issues and queer studies. The particular role of CLAGS and the issues that we address have shifted as our world, and our LGBTQ community has shifted. From Stonewall, to lesbian feminism, to the AIDS crisis, to the movement for same-sex marriage, to the fight for Trans liberation, to Black Lives Matter, and most recently, the Orlando massacre, the largest of its kind in our nation’s history targeting our LGBTQ LatinX community. These are the realities of our vastly diverse communities and Dr. Nadal was essential in providing leadership and direction for CLAGS to become more inclusive in our mission to educate and advocate for all LGBTQ communities. On behalf of the CLAGS Board and Staff, we recognize that Dr. Nadal leaves this indelible legacy behind for CLAGS and we are extremely grateful to have had him as our leader for the past 3 years.

The current sociopolitical atmosphere has already presented our communities with many threats to our survival. As we’ve already witnessed, our communities continue to resist these threats and regularly exercise our persistence in addressing these issues head on. This next year calls for increased activism and scholarship to make more visible those identities and experiences not always present in our discourse. The CLAGS leadership team will be essential in these endeavors and we are fortunate to have Dr. Justin Brown of LaGuardia Community College as our new Executive Director, and Dr. Diana Cage of the Pratt Institute and Dr. Debanuj Dasgupta of the University of Connecticut as our new co-chairs.

It has been an absolute honor to serve as co-chairs of the CLAGS board for the past two years. We look forward to continuing our support and involvement in CLAGS and hope to see you in the year to come at one or more of the many dynamic programs sponsored by CLAGS!
On October 1-2, 2016, CLAGS hosted the conference “After Marriage: The Future of LGBTQ Politics and Scholarship” at CUNY’s John Jay College of Criminal Justice. In the wake of the June 2015 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court guaranteeing marriage rights to same-sex couples nationwide, this conference convened 450 scholars, activists, artists, service providers, students, and community members to reflect on the lessons of the marriage debate, and to discuss the path forward for LGBTQ research and activism in this changed legal, political, and cultural landscape. In recent years marriage has dominated mainstream LGBTQ activism in the United States and elsewhere. Many have criticized marriage equality campaigns for limiting LGBTQ political mobilization within a narrow “homonormative” framework, making invisible the many issues beyond marriage that impact diverse LGBTQ-identified individuals, including employment, policing, immigration, and trans justice. Since the Supreme Court ruling, donations to some LGBTQ organizations have declined, and longstanding organizations such as New York’s own statewide LGBTQ group have shut down. What will achieving the mainstream movement’s marquee goal mean for LGBTQ activism more broadly?

Intertwined with these concerns has been a debate that marriage might narrow rather than expand the range of family models available to LGBTQ people. Critics charged that married couples were crowding out the diverse constellations of caring created by queer communities in the past, including in response to HIV/AIDS. Others responded that same-sex couples inherently disrupted the conventional gender roles of heterosexual marriage. As legal marriage rights spread for same-sex couples, how are queer families—both married and not—changing?

The After Marriage conference convened two plenary sessions of activists and scholars including Urvashi Vaid, Paulina Helm-Hernández, Steven Thrasher, Lisa Duggan, Mignon Moore, David Eng, Karma Chávez, and more to discuss these issues. Smaller academic panels, workshops, round tables, performances, and other breakout sessions featured a total of 175 speakers. The program emphasized critical and intersectional perspectives, and frequently paired activists and scholars together in direct conversation. Special sessions reflected on the 10th anniversary of the infamous “Beyond Marriage” statement calling for an expanded queer politics of family in 2006, and convened a community discussion about the June 2016 shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando. Publishers, artists, and small organizations shared their work in the Exhibit Hall. The conversations generated significant enthusiasm, and the #AfterMarriage hashtag became a top-ten nationwide trending topic on Twitter.

To carry the conference forward in time, selected proceedings will be published in a three-volume series forthcoming from Routledge in spring 2018. Titled the “After Marriage Equality” series, it will include one volume on queer families and relationships after marriage, one on changing queer activism, and one on “the unfinished queer agenda” of issues besides marriage facing LGBTQ people. Including academic papers, edited transcripts of conference panels, and interviews with activist speakers at the conference, these three volumes will bring last October’s conversation to a wider audience and memorialize CLAGS’s role in staging this historic event.

Michael W. Yarbrough is an interdisciplinary social scientist working at the intersection of law, culture, and family. He is an Assistant Professor of Law & Society in the Political Science Department of John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), and served on the CLAGS Board of Directors from 2014 to 2017.
CLAGS: The Center for LGBTQ Studies successfully hosted the second annual LGBTQ Scholars of Color Conference on April 14 and 15, 2017. The conference brought together a total of 240 participants from all over the U.S. – representing 26 out of 50 states (including California, Nevada, Washington, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Arizona, and others). The conference featured three keynote speakers – Dr. Debra Joy Perez of the Moore Foundation, Harlan Pruden (Native American two-spirit activist), and Reina Gossett (Black transwoman filmmaker). There were two plenary panels, which consisted of CUNY Professors Drs. Juan Battle, Maria Torre, Margaret Rosario, and David Rivera, as well as Dr. Charlotte Tate, Melanie Lewis, Andrew Spieldenner, and Erwin de Leon. There were ten breakout sessions, a film festival, a speed mentoring session, and a poster session (with 10 poster presentations). We screened Free CeCe! and were even joined by CeCe McDonald herself via skype.

On Saturday, August 26, 2017, we held our first LGBTQSOC boat cruise aboard the Hornblower Infinity – where we had a great time networking and dancing. We ended our time together with an amazing karaoke afterparty at the historic Stonewall.

Reports from the conference evaluation forms reveal that majority of participants found the conference to be effective and worthwhile. Participants expressed interest in building the network, with ideas including regional chapters, interest groups by discipline, and mini-conferences on alternate years. Our next LGBTQSOC will be held in San Francisco in the Spring 2019 – with Dr. Charlotte Tate serving as the lead coordinator.

We thank our various sponsors including CLAGS, the Graduate Center, the CUNY Diversity Project Development Fund, and Annie E. Casey Foundation.
Rainbow Book Fair

On April 29th, now in its ninth year, the Rainbow Book Fair returned to John Jay College. Along with the usual array of exhibitors, readings, panels, and the ever-popular poetry salon, the Fair featured a new attraction: an event designed for children. The fabulous Cholula Lemon brought Drag Queen Story Hour to the RBF, charming children of all ages with stories of acceptance and love. We hope this is the beginning of a long relationship between the Fair and DQSH, bringing queer love and storytelling to the RBF.

We’re looking forward with excitement to our 10th anniversary. Planning has already started to make this the biggest Fair ever, and we look forward to welcoming CLAGS members to join us.

Sarah E. Chinn is Chair of the English Department at Hunter College, CUNY, former Executive Director of CLAGS (2007–2011), and longtime member of the Rainbow Book Fair organizing committee.
The full lecture was live streamed and posted online: "Dean Spade at the Kessler Awards."

Shereen Inayatulla (pronouns: they/her) is an Associate Professor of English and the Writing Program Director at York College, CUNY in Jamaica, Queens. Her areas of research include Literacy Studies, Autoethnography, and Gender and Queer Theory.
José Esteban Muñoz Award

On June 20th, 2017, CLAGS hosted the third annual Jose Muñoz Award, which was given to Broadway actor-singer-activists Frenchie Davis and Nathan Lee Graham for their work as LGBTQ advocates in the performing arts. Davis and Graham spoke with Dr. Kevin Nadal, for his last event as Executive Director of CLAGS, at the award that Nadal founded three years prior.

Davis and Graham spoke about their experience performing on the Off-Broadway musical The View Upstairs. The musical was inspired by an actual tragedy that occurred on June 24th, 1973 in New Orleans, LA, in which a gay bar frequented by folks of color, called the Upstairs Lounge, was set on fire — killing 32 individuals. This act of racism and homophobia was brought to life on Broadway by LGBTQ artists to share some of the stories of those who lost their lives that night.

Davis and Graham spoke about how gratifying it was to document and bring to life the characters on The View Upstairs as LGBTQ identified artists, highlighting the lack of LGBTQ representation in the acting industry, especially of LGBTQ artists of color. Davis and Graham both stressed that it is imperative for LGBTQ actors to play roles in mainstream shows or in movies that match their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in order to bring a full view of LGBTQ culture. Graham decried the fact that gay actors playing straight characters on the stage, in movies or on television do not often get the center of the stage in productions that lack LGBTQ characters, also saying, “Do straight actors go around complaining about playing straight roles? No. So, why do gay actors feel as though they are not legitimate unless they play a straight role?” Graham used the term “double acting” to connote the idea that gay actors playing straight characters are “often expected to play straight actors playing straight characters.” “I don’t double act,” he said. Graham demanded gay roles to be written specifically for LGBTQ actors in a non-stereotypical manner, as opposed to gay roles being played by non-LGBTQ identified people.

As the conversation progressed, Davis highlighted the value of self-acceptance rather than competing with others, especially those that deal with the same issues of racism, sexism, and homophobia. “Self-acceptance is so important. I think that is the other lesson of what happened at Pulse and what happened at the Upstairs Lounge because both of the killers were people who frequented these bars; people who were struggling with their own sexuality.” Davis communicated this notion of how dangerous it is to not have self-acceptance of one’s sexuality or other individual identities that form our lives.

Nadal asked Davis and Graham what it means to them to be an activist as a LGBTQ person of color. Davis responded that every underrepresented social group must practice social justice and uplift each other as marginalized and disadvantaged communities in the fight for equality. According to Davis, “There are times when the Black community could do better to address the homophobia, but conversely, there are numerous times when the LGBTQ community could do better to be aware of the role race places in our struggle.” Additionally, Nadal and Davis expressed the importance of implementing the Brown and Black colors into the LGBTQ flag to be more inclusive of the struggles QTPOC experience, alluding to the double consciousness required of us so often. Graham stated he expresses his activism through his art, that he chooses his roles carefully with the purpose of inspiring others as an artist and activist on the stage, in movies or on television. Nadal ended the conversation with the importance of mentorship and seeing people that represent our communities through arts, on the stage, in movies or on television.
The presidential election in the fall of 2016 and the inauguration in early spring of 2017 meant drastic changes, and both anticipated and realized assaults on queer, trans, of color, and immigrant lives. While our programming is always scheduled in advance, this year’s speakers, performers, and attendees used every opportunity to think together, discuss, and provide radical analysis of the tasks, agitation, and collective confrontation to the forms of facism, white supremacy, nationalism, militarization, racism, sexism, ableism, and transphobia threatening our community. The year started with a revival and contextualization of Second Wave “womyn’s” music, weaving archival material from the Lesbian Herstory Archives with multi-media performance, with country camp trio Ménage à Twang. Next, CLAGS’ visiting legal scholar Ryan Richard Thoreson examined the rise of appeals to various civil and human rights—particularly freedom of speech, religious liberty, the right to culture or tradition, and the right to life—as a tactic for thwarting the recognition of LGBTQ rights in domestic and international contexts. In September, contributors from the Trans Bodies, Trans Selves resource guide, which won CLAGS’ 2015 Sylvia Rivera Award in Trans Studies, spoke with editor Laura Erickson-Schroth.

This year’s CLAGS conference, After Marriage, convened a discussion about the turning point of LGBTQ politics and activism after marriage equality, featured scholar activists Lisa Duggan, David Eng, Urvashi Vaid, Paulina Helm-Hernandez, Mignon Moore, Sean Strub, Darnell Moore, and many more. The National Park Service LGBTQ Heritage Initiative also launched in 2016, and CLAGS hosted Megan Springate, the lead consultant on the initiative increase representation of LGBTQ history and heritage in park service programs.

In terms of visual arts, in October, CLAGS’ 2014 Duberman Fellow traced the trajectories of two rural and urban working-class avant-garde artists: Eddie Martin (aka St EOM) creator of Passaquan, and Wayne Rogers (aka Jayne County) from rural Georgia to NYC and back. CLAGS partnered with the Graduate Center Library to host a panel accompanying their exhibit of original activist posters from the Lesbian Herstory Archives, discussing posters, newsletters, and zines from the largest collection of lesbian materials in the world. In November, director Lonny Shavelson screened 3 to Infinity: Beyond Two Genders, a film documenting non-binary experience and identity.

The Kessler Award lecture took place just after the 2016 election, and was aptly titled: “When We Win We Lose: Mainstreaming and the Redistribution of Respectability.” The Kessler award is given to a scholar who has, over a number of years, produced a substantive body of work that has had a significant influence on the field of LGBTQ Studies. The awardee, who is chosen by the CLAGS Board of Directors, receives a monetary award and gives CLAGS’ annual Kessler Lecture. The 2016 Kessler Award went to to Dean Spade, Associate Professor of Law at Seattle University and co-founder of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project. Spade provided us much needed with tactical supports to continue to build collectively in a newly configured era of post-neoliberalism. We opened the spring 2017 semester by screening two films on LGBTQ issues in Nigeria, with a panel discussing current approaches.
to queer justice in Nigeria with panelists from The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs) in Nigeria, Columbia University, Nomvuyo, CUNY Graduate Center, and AVAC, moderated by board member Lourdes Dolores Follins. Our next screening of CLAGS’ 2012 Giard Fellowship winner’s film: Peace of Mind by Director Cary Cronenwett’s film that follows the last film that trans filmmaker-artist-activist Flo McGarrell was in the process of making, before his untimely passing in the 2010 Haitian earthquake.

We were thrilled to launch the anthology of Black LGBTQ Health in the US: The Intersection of Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation edited by board member Lourdes Dolores Follins and Jonathan Mathias Lassiter, that explores how Black LGBTQ people understand their own health, overcome various biopsychosocial and spiritual barriers, and lead healthy lives. CLAGS partnered with the Graduate Center Library again to bring poet, playwright, and performer Rommi Smith for a performance combined on scholarship on the history of women jazz and blues musicians.

Our four-part free class series, Seminar in the City, titled “The Age of Promiscuity: Gay Male Sex Before AIDS” was taught by scholars Kalle Westerling and Jeffrey Escoffier, focused on gay male sexual subculture existing in NYC before the HIV epidemic, examining the films, art, and architectural spaces that played important roles in the development of this sexual subculture. Former CLAGS board member Chris Eng gave a lecture called Separate Camps in QOC Critique: The (In)Difference of Asian Labor in Hedwig, which argued for engaging Hedwig and the Angry Inch through camp aesthetics to speak to larger anxieties surrounding the radical nature of queerness in its fraught relation to racial difference. With a heavy focus on film this year, our next screening was Alterations with Juan Carlos Zaldivar, CLAGS’ 2015 Giard Fellowship winner, a short film about an adolescent trans woman as she sets out to reconnect with her amnesic mother after presenting female, as they evolve outside their prescribed roles of mother and son.

In 2014, CLAGS kicked off a national LGBTQ Scholars of Color Network at the first LGBTQ Scholars of Color Conference under the leadership of Dr. Kevin Nadal. This year’s conference gathered LGBTQ people of color in research, evaluation, and scholarship, building a vibrant network of LGBTQ Scholars of Color to address issues we face within the academy and fostering a pipeline for emerging LGBTQ Scholars of Color. Keynote speakers included Reina Gossett and Harlan Pruden. Next year’s conference will be held at San Francisco State University in an effort to realize a national mobile network.

In May, CLAGS Visiting Scholar Charles Upchurch offered the first historical account of a forgotten attempt to reform Britain’s sodomy laws in the 1820s. Our programming went well into the summer this year, with the annual José Muñoz Award, also started by Dr. Kevin Nadal and given in honor of LGBTQ activists who have promoted queer and trans studies and visibility in their work. This year’s awardees are Broadway artist-activists Wilson Cruz, Frenchie Davis, and Nathan Lee Graham, with previous awardees including Janet Mock and Jose Antonio Vargas. We closed out the year on a solemn note, commemorating the first year since the Orlando Pulse shooting which targeted the Latino LGBTQ community, and its aftermath saw a rise in anti-Muslim discrimination. Mathew Rodriguez of Mic.com moderated with Carmelyn Malalis, chair and commissioner of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, Cecilia Gentili, of Gay Mens Health Crisis and Translatina Network; Kevin Nadal, of CLAGS, and queer Muslim activist Eman Abdelhadi.
CLAGS Fellowship Awards 2016-2017

CLAGS Fellowship Award - $2,000

An award to be given annually for a graduate student, an academic, or an independent scholar for work on a dissertation, a first book manuscript, or a second book manuscript. The CLAGS Fellowship is open to intellectuals contributing to the field of LGBTQ studies.

Intended to give the scholar the most help possible in furthering their work, the fellowship will be able to be used for research, travel, or writing support.

2016 Awarded to Shanté Paradigm Smalls for their project Hip Hop Heresies: Queer Aesthetics in New York City.

The Duberman-Zal Fellowship - $2,500

Named for CLAGS founder and first executive director, Martin Duberman, and partner, Eli Zal, this endowed fellowship is awarded to a graduate student, an independent scholar, or an adjunct from any country doing scholarly research on the LGBTQ experience.


The Robert Giard Fellowship - $7,500

An annual award named for Robert Giard, a portrait, landscape, and figure photographer whose work often focused on LGBTQ lives and issues, this award is presented to an emerging, early or mid-career artist, from any country, working in photography, photo-based media, video, or moving image, including short-form film or video. The award now alternates annually between artists working exclusively with still images (photography) and those working with moving images (video or film). In either case, this award will support a directed project, one that is new or continuing, that addresses issues of sexuality, gender, or LGBTQ identity.

2016 Awarded to Leonard Suryajaya for his project titled Don’t Hold On To Your Bones.

2017 Awarded to PJ Raval for his in progress documentary film titled Justice for Jennifer.

The Kessler Award - $2,500

The Kessler award is given to a scholar who has, over a number of years, produced a substantive body of work that has had a significant influence on the field of GLBTQ Studies. The awardee, who is chosen by the CLAGS Board of Directors, receives a monetary award and gives CLAGS’ annual Kessler Lecture.

2016 Awarded to Dean Spade.

2017 Awarded to Sarah Ahmed.
The Paul Monette–Roger Horwitz Dissertation Prize - $1,000

This award, which honors the memories of Monette, a poet and author, and his partner, Horwitz, an attorney, will be given for the best dissertation in LGBTQ Studies, broadly defined, by a PhD candidate within the City University of New York system. The dissertation should have been defended in the previous year.

2016 Awarded to Christopher Eng for his dissertation titled Dislocating Camps: On State Power, Queer Aesthetics & Asian/Americanist Critique.

The Sylvia Rivera Award in Transgender Studies - $1,000

This award, which honors the memory of Sylvia Rivera, a transgender activist, will be given for the best book or article to appear in transgender studies during the year.

2016 Awarded to Eric Stanley for their project Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex.

Graduate Student Paper Award - $250

Each year, CLAGS sponsors a student paper competition open to all graduate students enrolled in the CUNY system. A cash prize is awarded to the best paper written in a CUNY graduate class on any topic related to gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or transgender experiences and scholarship. Essays should be between 12 and 30 pages, well thought-out, and fully realized.

2016 Awarded to Navid Khanaze for his paper titled Reading Arendt after Sex and Obergefell: Education as the Solution for the Crisis in the Queer Revolution.

2017 Awarded to Margaret Wolff for their abstract The importance of multidimensional sexual orientation measurement to identify sexual minority women’s substance use disparities and prioritize their treatment needs: a multivariable logistic regression analysis using the 2002–2013 National Survey of Family Growth.

Undergraduate Student Paper Award - $250

Each year, CLAGS sponsors a student paper competition open to all undergraduate students enrolled in the CUNY or SUNY system. A cash prize is awarded to the best paper written in a CUNY or SUNY undergraduate class on any topic related to gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or transgender experiences.

2016 Awarded to Kadeem Robinson for his paper titled The Contintual Homosexual: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Homosexuality in Late Imperial China Through the Exploration of Law, Society, and Literature.

Student Travel Award - $250

Each year, CLAGS sponsors two student travel awards open to all graduate students enrolled in the CUNY system. A cash prize is awarded to a student presenting subject matter that addresses gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or transgender issues in their respective field. Presentations can be for conferences held in the U.S. or abroad.

2016 Awarded to Jennifer Chmielewski for their talk titled Disciplined desires: LGBTQ girls of colors’ experiences of surveillance and policing in New York City public schools, presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Women in Psychology in Pittsburgh, March 2016.

2017 Awarded to Margaret Wolff for their abstract The importance of multidimensional sexual orientation measurement to identify sexual minority women’s substance use disparities and prioritize their treatment needs: a multivariable logistic regression analysis using the 2002–2013 National Survey of Family Growth.
2017 Awarded to Julianna Kerras-Jean Giles for their submission Affirming Spaces: An Ecological Examination of LGBTQ Affirmation in Runaway and Homeless Youth Agencies.

2016 Charles Upchurch for his project Sympathetic Ink: Identity, Activism, and the 1820s Attempt to Reform the British Sodomy Laws.

2017 Emily Allen Paine for her project Sexual, Gender, and Racial Identity in the Doctor’s Office: LGBTQ Experiences of Healthcare Across Organizational Contexts.
Edward Carpenter Collection
Shawnta

Posters, panels, and books outlined the Graduate Center Library’s collaborative relationship with CLAGS in 2016–2017 academic year, with the Graphic Activism exhibition held in both the Graduate Center main lobby and library display cases with materials from the Lesbian Herstory Archives’ graphics collection of posters, zines, and comic art, from the 1970s to present day. The exhibition was accompanied by a panel in Fall 2016 followed by a performance of archival storytelling in Spring 2017 with visiting scholar Rommi Smith, poet, playwright, performer, and the first British Parliamentary Writer in Residence. Annual library collaboration with CLAGS extends to the Carpenter Fund, the endowment from a generous donor, which allows for purchasing of books and materials directly related to LGBTQ subjects.

In the 2016–2017 academic year, the Carpenter Fund allowed for the purchase of sixty titles for circulation to Graduate Center students, faculty, and staff, as well as the entirety of CUNY. An array of titles, new and classic, with a focus on LGBTQ scholarship across varying fields of study, collection development included publishers from mostly university presses to a select few independent presses like Aunt Lute Books of San Francisco. Of the purchased titles, we included controversial monographs such as Bonnie Morris’ Disappearing L: Erasure of Lesbian Spaces and Culture, to internationally published titles, such as Virgin Envy: The Cultural (In)Significance of the Hymen by Jonathan A. Allan, Cristina Santos, and Adriana Spahr, eds, published by University of Regina Press, Saskatchewan’s only scholarly publishing house. We also selected close to home, identifying titles by CLAGS and CUNY affiliates and faculty. Notable mentions (still in processing): Jews, Queers, Germans: A Novel/History a 2017 publication by CLAGS founder Martin Duberman or Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity, a 2017 publication by former CLAGS Board member Riley C Snorton. And what is a queer book collection without memoirs of local authors, such as Indestructible: Growing Up Queer, Cuban, and Punk in Miami by New York City-based artist Cristy C. Road? — That was a rhetorical question.


For the complete list of materials purchased from the Carpenter Fund for 2016–2017 or to recommend for 2017–2018, please contact the LGBTQ Library liaison, Shawn(ta) Smith–Cruz ssmith4@gc.cuny.edu.
CLAGS Internship

CLAGS offers semester or year-long internships for students and individuals interested in receiving experience working for an LGBTQ research center devoted to the dissemination and support of LGBTQ research, culture, and activism. Some areas of our internship programs include: Admin & Finance, Digital Media, Membership, Fellowships & Awards, and Events. Our internship program provides individuals with an opportunity to assist the CLAGS staff in work that is integral to our success and mission, such as helping with administrative work around the office and assisting with the planning and attendance of our events and conferences. All intern and volunteer positions are unpaid, but offer school credit. In the past, interns have used their experience at CLAGS to fulfill program requirements or to satisfy course work in their academic discipline. If you are interested in interning with CLAGS, please take a look at our website for complete information at: http://www.clags.org/support/intern-volunteer-at-clags/.

Interning at CLAGS during and following the 2016 presidential election was an impactful and empowering experience. As a Programs Intern, I was responsible for helping advertise, organize, and staff CLAGS events and programs. Since the organization’s foundation, CLAGS interdisciplinary academic programming has always been and, now more than ever, is crucial in promoting LGBTQ education and activism. Last year, the Graphic Activism Panel showcasing lesbian posters and zines from 1970 to today brought a unique anecdotal and archival experience to the CUNY Graduate Center where attendees were able to hear first hand accounts from queer activists and artists while viewing artwork in a gallery-type setting. To me, this event in particular represented the overall mission of CLAGS work – to educate and encourage New York’s LGBTQ community and its allies to engage in and celebrate LGBTQ activism and history.

Annette Covrigaru is a gay, bigender American-Israeli writer, University of Haifa Holocaust Studies MA student, & was a 2017 Lambda Literary Writer in Residence.

I was a student at Borough of Manhattan Community College, and I was looking for an internship for the spring semester of 2017. Yana and I were connected through a LGBTQ Student Leadership Program at CUNY, and they told me that CLAGS was looking for a Media & Marketing Intern. My time as an intern here was filled with great experiences. I was instantly welcomed by the friendly staff, and it didn’t take long before I felt like a part of CLAGS. Yana and I worked close together in reaching the learning objectives that I had set for myself. I learned about the ins and outs of marketing, and I got holistic understanding the organizational structure of CLAGS. Thanks to my internship experience, I feel confident in pursuing a career in communications.

Lino Ahston is an international student from Sweden. A graduate of BMCC, he moved to New York City in 2015. With an interest in Public Relations, he plans to finish his B.A in Communication Studies. He has currently been accepted to Brooklyn College for the fall semester of 2017.
And here is how the fellowship impacted me:
As an administrative and finance intern for CLAGS, I was able to build nonprofit skills while interacting more with the queer community. Prior to this internship, I had very limited knowledge of queer scholars, activists, and spaces. This internship opened up an entire new world to me, both personally and professionally. I would like to thank Jasmina, Yana, and Kevin for their kind guidance during my tenure at CLAGS.

Nancy Larcher is a senior at City College, majoring in history and political science. She is deeply interested in learning and giving a platform to the histories of marginalized people. Nancy is also a passionate advocate for LGBTQ and immigrant rights. She hopes to become a historian and use oral history as a tool to integrate community organization with academic research. Nancy’s ultimate goal is to serve the public through her research skills and dedication to social justice.

“I’m glad I got to work at CLAGS. Being involved in the community—academic or otherwise—is pivotal. When I was selected to be an intern, I was so excited! I got to utilize my editing skills by assisting with the financial report, and learned a lot about attention to detail in event planning. Working at CLAGS, even just once a week, was a joy. I can’t wait to attend their events in the future!”

Summer Medina is an MFA Candidate at Stony Brook University (Manhattan Campus). She works to spread empathy in her writing, and create a sense of community in readers. Mostly writing queer narrative, she has had her work published in Huffington Post and Public Pool. When she isn’t busy dismantling an oppressive system, she enjoys baking, playing board games, and running from her problems.
Visiting Scholar

The CLAGS Residency Fellowship Program assists scholars and professionals whose research on the LGBTQ experience can benefit from access to CLAGS’s resources and its location in midtown Manhattan at the CUNY Graduate Center.

The Scholars-in-Residence Program is designed to encourage research and writing on the history, literature and culture of the LGBTQ community, or other dynamic projects relating to the LGBTQ experience, broadly conceived; to promote and facilitate interaction among the participants including fellows funded by other sources; and to facilitate the dissemination of the researcher’s findings through lectures via CLAGS’s ongoing Events Series.

The CLAGS Scholar-in-Residence will be allowed to spend up to six months in residence. Beyond a CLAGS affiliation, fellows will receive office space, access to libraries and electronic databases, as well as opportunities to meet and work with leading LGBTQ scholars in New York City.

No monetary stipend is available to fellows. The Fellowship Program is open to all disciplines with projects that are related to LGBTQ studies. Creative writing (works of poetry and fiction) and projects that result in a performance are not eligible. Applicants finishing dissertation topics are welcome to apply.
Charles Upchurch is an Associate Professor of British history at Florida State University. He received his Ph.D. in from Rutgers University in 2003, and his research focuses on nineteenth-century British gender and social history. His book, Before Wilde: Sex Between Men in Britain’s Age of Reform was published in 2009 by the University of California Press, and explores the ways in which family and class influenced the interpretation of same-sex desire in the period between 1820 and 1870. Prof. Upchurch’s current book project investigates a group of men linked to the British parliament who attempted to reduce the penalties for homosexual acts in the 1820s. He has published articles in Gender and History, the Journal of Social History, and the Journal of the History of Sexuality. Since 2014 he has served as a Distinguished Academic Patron of LGBT History Month in the United Kingdom.

My semester at CLAGS was spent working on my next book, Sympathetic Ink: Identity and Politics in the Early Nineteenth-Century Effort to Reform the British Sodomy Laws, and I had productive exchanges on the project at my research presentation and throughout my time in residence. The paper on pedagogy I presented at the October 2016 CLAGS “After Marriage” Conference was expanded as a result of the discussion and subsequently published as the cover story in the March 2017 issue of Perspectives on History. I have been a member of CLAGS since the late 1990s, and my semester in residence was a great opportunity to both continue and strengthen my association with the organization.

Emily Allen Paine is a doctoral candidate in Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin expecting to complete her PhD in May 2018. She studies the interplay among sexual, gender, and racial identities, social institutions like the healthcare system and the family, as well as how stress, stigma, and discrimination shape health across the life course. With the support of the National Science Foundation, Emily is currently working to explain why sexual minority women and transmasculine individuals are less likely to access healthcare compared to their peers, and how constructs of gender, sex and sexuality in healthcare contexts shape LGBTQ experiences and utilization of healthcare.

My time as the CLAGS: Scholar in Residence proved invaluable to my research. Writing up observational fieldnotes in the CLAGS office space was a joy and a privilege. Kevin Nadal introduced me to local scholars researching sexuality and health, who in turn supported my research and professional development. I am grateful to CLAGS for providing the space and community to help my project succeed.
Each year, CLAGS’ work is made possible by the generosity of our supporters. We receive support not only from our volunteer Board of Directors, but also from foundations, corporate supporters, and from individual members. While the Graduate Center, CUNY provides us with office space, our general operating costs still exist and are funded primarily from individual donors and memberships. Indeed, CLAGS’s membership program is vital to our sustenance: it not only provides our organization with unrestricted funds that let us prioritize the most cutting edge and greatly needed programs, it is also used for the vital but less glamorous aspects of our work: stipends for our speakers, postage, student fellowships, staff support and even the paper and office supplies that we need to keep things running smoothly. To become a member, you can make a secure donation online through Network for Good (https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/1434026)
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The CUNY Diversity Project Development Fund
Sheldon Applewhite, Ph.D.
is a tenured Assistant Professor of Sociology at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) with the City University of New York for seven years. He received his Ph.D. from Howard University in Sociology in 2006 with specializations in medical and urban sociology. His research interests include HIV prevention, urban studies, education, men’s health, and race and gender. He is the founding organizer & founding member of We Got Issued (WGI), a collective’s empowerment & leadership organization that combined community organizing skills with multi-disciplinary cultural work & performance. East Coast Coordinator / Road Manager and performer for Mango Tribe, the country’s first & only APIA women & genderqueer interdisciplinary social justice performance ensemble. Her work has been published and performed nationally and internationally. Applewhite has led anti-bullying workshops in schools for youth and teachers in NY and NJ. She has organized, created, and facilitated leadership & empowerment trainings and anti-oppression workshops with youth, women, the LGBT community, and people of color. She also administers treatment to animals, some of whom she considers as her greatest teachers. Applewhite has offered her care all across the United States, and as far away as the Philippines.

Lourdes Dolores Follins
is an Associate Professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Human Services at Kingsborough Community College (CUNY). She earned her Ph. D. in Clinical Social Work from New York University and is a native New Yorker. As a clinical social worker, an organizational consultant, and a behavioral scientist, Lourdes Dolores has worked with and on behalf of children, adolescents, and adults who are marginalized because of their social status, their ethnic and/or sexual identities for over 20 years. Her research and clinical interests are resilience in and health disparities among LGBTQ people of color and the experiences of historically underrepresented faculty at community colleges. Lourdes Dolores is the co-edited book, Black LGBT Health in the United States: The Intersections of Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation (Lexington Press), will be published in 2016.

Rodrick Colvin
is an associate professor in the Department of Public Management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY). In addition to his interest in employment policy, he is also interested in organizational behavior in police departments, and lesbian and gay civil rights. He currently teaches courses in public administration, human resource management, and policy analysis. Prior to joining the faculty of the Department of Public Management, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Dr. Colvin was the Research Director at the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce’s Policy Institute. Prior to joining the Taskforce, he was actively engaged in applied research, management, and consulting with private, public and nonprofit organizations, including conducting program evaluations with the US Government Accountability Office and the Center for Urban Youth and Technology.

Debanj Dasgupta
is Assistant Professor of Geography and Women’s, Gender, Sexuality Studies at the University of Connecticut. Debanj’s research and teaching focuses on racialized regulation of space, and the global governance of migration, sexuality, and HIV. Prior to his doctoral degree, Debanj worked for over sixteen years within several international development agencies, HIV/AIDS, LGBT rights and immigrant rights organizations in India and the US. In 1994, Debanj founded the first HIV prevention program for men who have sex with men and gay men in Kolkata, and since relocating to the United States has organized LGBT immigrants & asylum seekers in the New York tri-state area. Debanj serves on the political geography editorial board of the Geography Compass. He is the recipient of the Ford Foundation funded New Voices Fellowship, American Association of Geographers and National Science Foundation funded T. J. Reynolds National Award in Disability Studies, and the International AIDS Society’s Emerging Activist Award. His scholarly work has been published in journals such as Disability Studies Quarterly, Contemporary South Asia, SEXUALITIES, Gender, Place & Culture, and the Scholar and the Feminist (S&F online). He is the co-editor of Friendship As Social Justice Activism Critical Solidarities in Global Perspective (forthcoming from Social Press), and Queering Digital India: Activism, Identities and Subjectivities (forthcoming from the University of Edinburgh Press).

Marta Esquín
is a social justice educator, multicultural affairs administrator, community builder, and diversity consultant. In addition to her consulting work with various foundations and various colleges and universities around the United States, she is currently the Director of Intercultural and Social Justice Programs within the Office of Multicultural Affairs at Columbia University. She holds a degree in Higher Education Administration from Teachers College, Columbia University. Marta’s passion and current work focuses on creating opportunities for students to have difficult dialogues about issues of social equity that create schisms between communities. She is particularly interested in raising awareness about how microaggressions manifest to create hostile environments for marginalized toiletries within work and school settings. Most recently, she has been developing trainings, assessment tools, and educational opportunities to address the impacts of microaggressions within educational settings. Through her work, she is most committed to creating spaces for healing and liberation for communities impacted by oppression, violence, and marginalization.

Jen/Jack Gieseking
is a cultural geographer and environmental psychologist whose work examines the everyday co-productions of space and identity that support or inhibit social, spatial, and economic justice in urban and digital environments, with a special focus on sexuality and gender. She is working on her first book, Queer New York: Confrontating Geographies of Lesbians’ and Queer Women’s In/Justice in New York City, 1993–2003. Jack is the New Media and Data Visualization Specialist, Postdoctoral Fellow in the Digital and Computational Studies initiative at Bowdoin College. Her website is gieseking.org.

Melinda Goodman
is an AIDS, LGBT, and sex rights activist. She has worked with and on behalf of children, adolescents, and adults who are marginalized because of their social status, their ethic and/or sexual identities for over 20 years. Her research and clinical interests are resilience and health disparities among LGBTQ people of color and the experiences of historically underrepresented faculty at community colleges. Her book on Charles Ludlam and queer theater & performance, creating spaces for holistic healing & performance, expanding the dialogue of intersectionality while challenging us all to manifest our conversations & study into sustainable daily practice. Applewhite has been the National Trainer & Campaign Organizer for ACORN, Co-Founder of national media justice coalition REACH/N-Hop, National Trainer & founding member of We Got Issued (WGI), a collective’s empowerment & leadership organization that combined community organizing skills with multi-disciplinary cultural work & performance. East Coast Coordinator / Road Manager and performer for Mango Tribe, the country’s first & only APIA women & genderqueer interdisciplinary social justice performance ensemble. Her work has been published and performed nationally and internationally. Applewhite has led anti-bullying workshops in schools for youth and teachers in NY and NJ. She has organized, created, and facilitated leadership & empowerment trainings and anti-oppression workshops with youth, women, the LGBT community, and people of color. She also administers treatment to animals, some of whom she considers as her greatest teachers. Applewhite has offered her care all across the United States, and as far away as the Philippines.

Miles Grier (on leave)
is an assistant professor in the English Department at Queens College (CUNY). He teaches classes within and across Shakespearean Studies, Early American Studies, and African-American Studies, with a historical and multimedia approach. He is currently working on a book manuscript entitled Reading Black Atlantic: Atavistic Encounters with Othello 1604–1855. In this project, he follows Shakespeare’s blackamoor across two and half centuries of race and stage presentation, showing the play’s implication in a British–American project of producing legible gendered and racialized characters out of the strangers in a far-flying Atlantic economy. The project features performances of the play at Whitbread Hall in 1604, in front of
Catherine guests in colonial Virginia’s capital of Williamsburg, and before US diplomats in London in 1785. While paying attention to these historical performances, he is also interested in professional writers such as Aphra Behn and Herman Melville who rewrite Shakespeare’s—and the relationship between white writers and enslaved bodies—in attempts to overcome disadvantages of gender and postcolonial positioning.

**Alexander Hardy**

New York City-based food-lover Alexander Hardy is a writer, mental health advocate, dancer, teacher, lupus survivor, and co-host of *The Extraordinary Negroes* podcast. He has written for *Bobby Magazine*, *CNN.com*, *Esquire*, *Gawker*, *Courvoisier*, *The Huffington Post*, *Saint Heron*, and *Very Smart Brothas*, and is a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor. Alexander is a board member of the Center for LGBTQ Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center and Founder and Creative Director of GenSomeJ, a multimedia campaign and event series promoting mental and emotional wellness among Black and brown folks. Alexander does not believe in snow or Delaware.

**Stephanie Hsu**

is an Associate Professor of the English Department and Women’s & Gender Studies at Pace University. She is a founding member of O-WAVE, a grassroots organization for queer women and trans/gender variant people of Asian/South Asian/Pacific Islander descent in the tri-state area. She received her doctorate in English at New York University in 2009, and she teaches and writes in the fields of Asian American Studies, Trans Studies, and Disability Studies.

**Sel J. Hawing**

is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Women and Gender Studies Department at Hunter College (CUNY) and recently a Co-investigator at the Baron Edmond de Rothschild Chemical Dependency Institute, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, and an Adjunct Professor at the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Columbia University. Sel has received numerous grants, awards, and fellowships from such organizations/institutions as the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institutes of Health, the American Public Health Association, the International AIDS Society, and the Association for Women in Psychology. Sel has participated as a Research Investigator on studies funded by institutions/organizations such as NIDA, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, New York State AIDS Institute, and the Keith Haring Foundation. Publications include over 30 sole-, first-, and co-authored articles and book chapters in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes as well as first-author on multiple public health reports and advisor for edited volumes, reports, and health resource guides. Sel was recently Program Chair of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus of the American Public Health Association.

**Shereen Irayatullah**

(pronouns: they/they) is an Associate Professor of English and the Writing Program Director at York College, CUNY, Jamaican, Queer. Her areas of research include Literacy Studies, Autoethnography, and Gender and Queer Theory.

**Bianca Laureano**

is an award-winning Latinx sexologist who has been in the US sexology field for over 15 years. Her background is in Black and Latinx sexualities, education, media justice, and youth culture. She resides in New York City where she hosts the Brooklyn-based All Lives Matter Film Series titled BLACK PERVERT, about the intersections of Black and lgbtq communities. She is a founding member of WCOSHN (Women of Color Sexual Health Network) and founder of The Latinx@ Project and LatinxSexuality.com. Bianca is on the board of The Black Girl Project and Director of Education and Regional Programs at ScenarioS USA. To find out more about Bianca visit her site BiancaLaureano.com.

**Rick Lee**

is the Associate Director of the Tyler Clementi Center at Rutgers University. He regularly teaches courses on AIDS and politics, and gender and sexuality, and the history and literature of New York City.

**Veena Manikova**

is a critical candidate in English at The Graduate Center, City University of New York, focusing on queer interventions in racial liberalism in the works of Lorraine Hansberry, James Baldwin, Carson McCullers, and Lillian Smith. Her essay, “The Tragic ‘Complexity of Manhood’: Masculinity Formations and Performances in James Baldwin’s ‘Giovanni’s Room’” appears in Contemporary Masculinities in the UK and US: Between Bodies and Systems, part of Palgrave’s Global Masculinities series, edited by Michael Kimmel. Manikova teaches the Pratt Institute and has previously taught at Baruch College, New York University, and the University of Florida. She is the New-York-based Balkan Queen Initiative.

**Lisa Merrill**

Professor, Department of Speech Communication, Rhetoric and Performance Studies, (Ph.D., New York University), teaches courses in performance studies, gender and intercultural communication, nonverbal communication, public address, dramatic activities in educational and therapeutic settings, cultural and performance history, and women’s studies. Dr. Merrill’s ongoing research and publications are in the fields of performance studies, American studies, critical race and cultural studies, and women’s and gay and lesbian history. She has published widely on the performance of gender, race, and sexuality in historical and contemporary cultural settings. Dr. Merrill’s critical biography of 19th-century actress Charlotte Cushman, When Romeo was a Woman: Charlotte Cushman and Her Circle of Performers (University of Michigan Press), was awarded the 2009 Joe A. Callaway Prize for Best Book in Theatre or Drama by an American author. In addition to publishing over a dozen book chapters and articles in scholarly journals, Dr. Merrill served on the editorial boards for the Journal of Comparative American Studies and Text and Performance Studies, and the University of Edinburgh Press. Dr. Merrill served as President, Women’s Theatre Program (WTP) of the Association for Theatre and Higher Education, August 2004–August 2006. Dr. Merrill is also a registered drama therapist.

**Nomvuyo Nolutshungu**

is an Adjunct Professor and Assistant Director of Graduate Studies in Political Science at Morehouse College. She has previously worked for CAGLS as Membership and Fellowships Coordinator. Her writing has appeared in venues such as The New Inquiry, Poetry Foundation, Black Perspectives, Warscapes, and Callaloo. Her areas of specialization include African-American literature, higher education, gender and sexuality, and the history and literature of New York City.

**William Orchard**

is Assistant Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in English at Queens College, where he teaches classes in Latinx literature, queer studies, and visual culture. He has co-edited two books, *The Plays of Josefina Niggli* (U of Wisconsin Press, 2007) and *Bridges, Borders, and Breaks: History, Narrative, and Nation in 21st-Century Chicana/o Literary Criticism* (U of Pittsburgh Press, 2017). He is currently finishing a book about Latinx graphic novels titled *Drawn Together: Pictures, Pedagogy, and Politics in the Latinx Graphic Novel*. He is also the co-organizer of CAGLS’s Colloquium for the Study of Latinx, Latino, and Latinx Culture and Theory, and is the current chair of CAGLS’s Fellowships Committee.

**A. Lavelle Porter**

is an Assistant Professor of English at New York City College of Technology, CUNY. He holds a Ph.D. in English from the CUNY Graduate Center and a B.A. in history from Morehouse College. He has previously worked for CAGLS as Membership and Fellowships Coordinator. His writing has appeared in venues such as The New Inquiry, Poetry Foundation, Black Perspectives, Warscapes, and Callaloo. His areas of specialization include African-American literature, higher education, gender and sexuality, and the history and literature of New York City.

**Simon Reader**

is an assistant professor of English at CUNY. He is working on a book about Victorian writer’s notebooks.

**David Rivera**

is an associate professor of counselor education at Queens College (CUNY). A counseling psychologist by training, his practical work includes consultations and trainings on a variety of cultural competency issues. David holds degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Wyoming. His research focuses on cultural competency development and issues impacting the marginalization and well-being of low-income/first-generation college students, people of color, and oppressed sexual orientation and gender identity groups, with a focus on microagressions. Dr. Rivera is board co-chair.
organized the conference After Marriage: The Future of LGBTQ Politics and Scholarship. As a member of the CLAGS Board, he co-
Teaching Award in 2015. He also serves as a Research Associate of the Department of
Hays fellowship and the Marvin B. Sussman Dissertation Prize from the Yale Sociology
of Law & Feminism.
In its dissertation form, his current project was awarded a Fulbright-
Sociology, Qualitative Sociology Review and the Yale Journal
Social Inquiry, Social Politics, the South African Review of
people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or
incorporated into South African marriage law: people living
ethnographic research among two groups recently
manuscript explores these themes through comparative
intersection of law, culture, and family. His current book
is an interdisciplinary social scientist working at the
intersectionality, LGBTQ issues, gender variance, spirituality, resilience, and well-being.

Maria R. Scharrón-del Río
is an Associate Professor and the Program Coordinator of the School Counseling Program in the Department of School Psychology, Counseling, and Leadership (SPLC) at Brooklyn College (CUNY). A predoctoral Ford Foundation and American Psychological Association's Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) fellow, they received their Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, and completed their clinical internship at the Cambridge Hospital with the Harvard Medical School in Boston. After moving to New York City, they worked as an assistant child psychologist at the Washington Heights Family Health Center, a primary-care clinic that serves a predominantly Latino/a immigrant community. They are an active leader in GLARE (GLBTQ Advocacy in Research and Education) since joining the Brooklyn College faculty in 2006. They are committed to the development of multicultural competencies in counselors, psychologists, and educators using experiential and affective educational approaches. Their research, scholarship, and advocacy focus on ethnic and cultural minority psychology and education, including mental health disparities, multicultural competencies, intersectionality, LGBTQ issues, gender variance, spirituality, resilience, and well-being.

Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz
is an Assistant Professor and library Head of Reference at the Graduate Center, the liaison to LGBTQ Studies and serves on the CLAGS board. Shawn’s current project is processing the papers of the first Black lesbian organization, Salsa Soul Sisters as Coordinator at the Lesbian Herstory Archives.

Sacred Walker
is the CEO and Lead Holistic Trainer of Kuumba Health LLC. Kuumba Health is a wellness and leadership institute for rising and seasoned caring professionals, to infuse well-being into their own daily lives and to stay connected to the vision that called them to the profession in the first place. Sacred Walker is a Holistic Psychologist, Interfaith Chaplain, and is deeply trained in several forms of mind-body approaches of care including drama therapy. Her Master’s Level healing arts and one-of-a-kind trainings courageously build inclusive spaces for caring professionals- ranging from rising campus members to seasoned organizational leaders facilitating harmonizing experiences that heal divides, reduce stress, and foster socio-emotional learning, the spaces she facilitate become both therapeutic and create in roads to excellence. In her spare time Sacred loves the good company of fellow visionary leaders and the delight of dance and music. Her qualitative research within Ivy League towers focuses on the physiological and psychological impacts of environmental stressors, and she explores wide reaching creative health solutions which explores quantitatively the effect of on family systems of macro domestic violence on those experiencing intersectional environmental stressors, and what insights contemporary and ancient integrative teachings and historical frames such as trans atlantic slavery bring.

Kalle Westerling
is a doctoral student in Theatre at The Graduate Center (CUNY), where he’s working on a dissertation on the queening of spaces in 20th century New York City burlesque and boylesque. He is also the Public Projects Specialist and Graphic Designer for the Futures Initiative at The Graduate Center, and Co-Director for the Scholars project for the The Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC). In 2006, his first book La Dolce Vita, on the Swedish drag group After Dark, was published. His full CV is available at www.westerling.nu.

Michael Yarbrough
is an interdisciplinary social scientist working at the intersection of law, culture, and family. His current book manuscript explores these themes through comparative ethnographic research among two groups recently incorporated into South African marriage law: people living in communities that observe African customary law; and people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. His work is published or forthcoming in Law & Social Inquiry, Social Politics, the South African Review of Sociology, Qualitative Sociology Review and the Yale Journal of Law & Feminism. In its dissertation form, his current project was awarded a Fulbright-Hays fellowship and the Marvin B. Sussman Dissertation Prize from the Yale Sociology Department. Yarbrough now works as an Assistant Professor in the Law & Society major at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), where he won a Distinguished Teaching Award in 2015. He also serves as a Research Associate of the Department of Sociology at the University of Johannesburg. As a member of the CLAGS Board, he co-organized the conference After Marriage: The Future of LGBTQ Politics and Scholarship.
Meet the Staff

Kevin Nadal, Ph.D.  
Executive Director (July 2014–June 2017)

In addition to his work at CLAGS, Kevin Nadal is an Associate Professor of Psychology at both John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the CUNY Graduate Center. He is the president of the Asian American Psychological Association, as well as national trustee of the Filipino American National Historical Society. He has written over 90 journal articles and 5 books, including That’s So Gay: Microaggressions and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community. He is married to RJ Mendoza-Nadal, the Civil Rights Community Relations Specialist of the Kings County District Attorney’s Office, and they live in Manhattan with their 8 year old, 8 pound chihuahua.

Justin Brown  Executive Director (incoming 2017)

Jasmina Sinanovic  
Director of Finance and Administration

Jasmina Sinanovic teaches, thinks, and performs. Originally from former Yugoslavia, Jasmina identifies as an artist and thinker in exile and a member of Balkan diaspora. New York City is and has been for over a decade Jasmina’s intellectual home and sanctuary. Jasmina teaches at the Women Studies Department at City College and the Department of Communication, Arts and Sciences at the Bronx Community College. Jasmina holds an M.F.A. in Dramaturgy from Stony Brook University and M.A. in Theatre from CUNY. As an active member of WOW Café Theater, a woman and trans* people theater collective in East Village, Jasmina has created and produced several works there. As a performing artist Jasmina touched audiences across the US and internationally. Jasmina is a founding member of Balkan Queer Initiative.

Noam Parness  
Memberships and Fellowships Director (?-? 2016)

Noam Parness is a gender-queer art lover and intellectually curious human. They received their B.A. in Philosophy and Jewish Studies from CUNY Queens College. Most of Noam’s research interests lie at the intersections of history, art, and activism. Since leaving CLAGS, Noam joined the Leslie–Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art as an Exhibitions Assistant. They have volunteered with a number of arts organizations, such as MIX NYC and the Pop-Up Museum of Queer History.

Isaiah DuPree  
(? 2016 – present)  
Memberships and Fellowships Director

Isaiah has also worked with grassroots LGBTQ advocacy groups from New York to Rwanda. With a strong commitment to social justice and youth empowerment initiatives, he is very excited to join the staff at CLAGS.

Yana Calou  
Events & Programs Manager

Yana Calou is a genderqueer Brazilian-American writer, artist, and media activist on economic, racial and gender justice issues. Yana is Lambda and VONA Voices fellow, and has performed at the Pop-up Museum of Queer History, La MaMa, Dixon Place, and BAX. They study queer theory and literature at the CUNY Graduate Center, and have led communications and programming for the Retail Action Project, Queer Survival Economies, the Utah Pride Center, GLAAD, Planned Parenthood, and the Women’s Media Center.