

Keynote Speakers

Miranda Joseph

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Abstract:

Envisioning Queer Collectivity, Contesting Racial Capitalism

This presentation begins with a brief review of the critiques of community by Joseph and other scholars, particularly with regard to the deployments of community as a supplement to capitalism and neoliberal governmentality. That critique has been matched by widespread efforts to articulate visions of collectivities that would not be liable to critique as racist and exclusionary (thus responding to a prior critique of the functions of community when naturalized and authenticated through identity, place or history). Guided by José Esteban Muñoz's rich, sophisticated and persistent contributions to the effort to envision such alternatives, and especially queer-of-color collectivities, Joseph surveys the theoretical resources and terms on which he drew, from publics and counterpublics to affect to commons. Finally, she explores how those efforts engage the relation of the collectivity to capitalism and governance.

Bionote:

Miranda Joseph is Professor of Gender & Women's Studies at the University of Arizona, and for 2016, a Winton Chair in the Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *Debt to Society: Accounting for Life Under Capitalism* (2014), which explores modes of accounting as they are used to create, sustain, or transform social relations, and *Against the Romance of Community* (2002), which examines the supplementary relation of community with capitalism in the context of political debates over LGBT art and culture and the discourses and practices of NGOs. In ongoing current work, such as "Investing in the Cruel Entrepreneurial University" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114:3 (July 2015), Joseph explores the impact of financialization on universities. And she is undertaking interdisciplinary collaborations to examine the limits and potentials of various forms of "counter-accounting," such as "Challenging Assumptions: Crossing Disciplinary Divides to Make Knowledge about Gender and Finance," co-authored with Joyce Serido, *Feminist Formations* 26.2 (Summer 2014). Her recent publications include: "American Studies and the University of Debt" (Response to Curtis Marez's Presidential Address) *American Quarterly* 66.2 (June 2014); and "Neoliberalism and the Battle Over Ethnic Studies in Arizona," co-authored with Sandra K. Soto, *Thought and Action: The NEA Higher Education Journal* (Fall 2010), for which they received the 2010 National Education Association Excellence in the Academy Award: Democracy in Higher Education. She is a member of the Governing Council of the American Studies Association. She received her PhD in Modern Thought and Literature at Stanford University in 1995.

Abstract:

Community, Mediality, Seriality: On Narrative Feedback Loops and Capitalist Self-Reflexivity

Drawing on work done by the Popular Seriality Research Unit, my lecture will present five interlinked analytical perspectives on commercial serial storytelling. I argue that popular series and serials are best described as (1) evolving narratives: they exist not so much as structures that have been designed but as entities that keep developing in adaptive feedback loops with their own effects. (2) Hence, practices of recursivity, such as the continual readjustment of possible continuations with respect to what has already been narrated, are essential to serial storytelling. (3) Commercial series and serials can be examined as narratives of proliferation, because they tend to expand beyond the bounds of their original core texts. (4) Thus, it is helpful to think of popular-serial practices of community formation according to the Latourian model of actor-networks. Following this model, popular series and serials can be analyzed as self-dynamic cultural agents, comprised not only of acting persons and institutions but also of action-conducting forms, objects, and media. (5) Consequently, a cultural-ecological approach (indebted to Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined" communities) is well suited to describe the development, since the nineteenth century, of commercial series and serials in correlation with the evolving affordances of their technological and ideological environments.

Bionote:

Frank Kelleter is chair of the Department of Culture and Einstein Professor of American Cultural History at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies (Freie Universität Berlin). His main fields of interest include the American colonial and Enlightenment periods, theories of American modernity, and American media and popular culture since the 19th century. Between 2010 and 2016, he was director of the DFG-funded Popular Seriality Research Unit and co-directed several of its sub-projects. He is the author of *Die Moderne und der Tod* (1997), *Con/Tradition* (2000), *Amerikanische Aufklärung* (2002), *Serial Agencies: "The Wire" and Its Readers* (2014), and *David Bowie* (2016).