

PACE UNIVERSITY

Dyson College of Arts and Sciences
SOCIETY OF FELLOWS

RESEARCH QUERIES: WAYWARD, WANDERING, WONKY

Co-led by Cynthia Delgado and Perl Egendorf

SCHEDULE

Friday, October 10

2:45 p.m. Assemble at bus
3:00 p.m. NYC Bus departs NYC campus
3:45 p.m. Assemble at Bus in Pleasantville
4:00 p.m. Bus departs Pleasantville campus

4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m. Check-in and “wandering activity” (self-paced)

6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. Dinner

7:15 p.m.–8:45 p.m. **Opening Session: wayward, wandering, wonky**

Cy Delgado and Perl Egendorf

In this opening session, the seminar co-leaders will welcome the participants and set the frame of the weekend’s theoretical and practical inquiries. We will consider the structures of power (historical, social, economic and political) that might incite us to re-frame research in wayward, wandering, and wonky ways. *Wayward* from what? Whither *wandering*? And just how *wonky*? Using experiences and findings from the self-paced “wandering activity” participants undertook earlier, we will discuss how research and knowledge production as a linear, clean, and solo process is a fantasy. We will acknowledge and celebrate how research requires failure, collaboration, and serendipity.

9:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m. **Fireside conversations**

“Collaborative teaching and training in research”

led by Emilio Fernández and his research mentees

Saturday, October 11

7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m. Meditation Space Reserved (Perl)

8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. Breakfast

9:15 a.m.–12:00 p.m. **Morning Session: Sideways, Winding**

9:15 a.m.–10:00 a.m. Cy and Perl

Speaker Research Journeys

This session will introduce our guest speakers through their own research paths, to begin to ground our theoretical questions on lived research experiences.

10:05 a.m.–10:50 a.m. Shamita Dutta Gupta

"Make hay while the sun shines"

Research is a winding path through a beautiful meadow of flowers. The weather is ever changing. Expect the dark clouds, the thunderstorms, the sun breaks through, and there is your first glimpse at a beautiful rainbow. I shall share glimpses of my path.

10:55 a.m.–11:40 a.m. James Reich

"Digression as the source of pleasure in Sanskrit poetry"

Subandhu's 6th century prose poem *Vāsavadattā* is, at its core, a simple love story. A prince meets a princess and they fall in love. But in the course of telling this story Subandhu continually wanders away from the main storyline and lingers on other things, such as lush descriptions or elaborate word play. The characters also wander apart and lose each other before finally getting back together at the very end of the story, at which point the book abruptly closes. It is almost as if the pleasure of the story itself, and the erotic longing of the characters, only exists so long as one is wandering and delaying final gratification. All these dynamics can be seen within one single sentence in the poem, a sentence that is simultaneously one of the most important and one of the longest in the book. By reading this sentence closely we can feel more deeply what Subandhu is trying to tell us about pleasure, joy, goals, and wandering.

11:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m. *Reflections* Small group reflections, one person shares out

12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. Lunch (+ Rest)

1:30 p.m.–5:15 p.m. **Afternoon Session: Outwards, Anew**

1:45 p.m.–2:30 p.m. Erik Laskaris

“The Tree of (Physics) Research”

Step in the shoes of a physics undergrad, who slowly moves up the ladder of academia. Help him with his research as he becomes a graduate student, postdoc, and hopefully, maybe one day, a professor at a great university!

2:35 p.m.–3:20 p.m. Perla Masi

“Unlearning: Poetry and the art of not knowing”

What if the most brilliant insights in life come not from mastery, but from surrendering certainty? In this talk, I'll explore poetry as a practice of unlearning: the liberating experience of letting go of what we think we know so that understanding can emerge. Drawing from poets who embrace the unknown, fragility, and silence, we'll consider how the act of writing and reading poetry becomes an invitation into vulnerability, openness, and genuine curiosity. Together, we'll reflect on how embracing “not knowing” can deepen our creativity, sharpen our attention, and reorient us toward wonder and awe in a world that is often blinded by false questions and fabricated truths.

3:25 p.m.–4:10 p.m. Brandyn Heppard

“A queer phenomenology of Comedy”

Although the first job of the philosopher is to clarify their terms, the task of defining comedy has been a daunting task for philosophers. One reason for this is the strained relationship that philosophy and comedy have shared throughout their long, intertwining existence. While philosophy has historically shown a preference for whatever it has deemed to be higher art-forms (read: tragedy), comedy has time and again proven itself to be a “notoriously elusive quantity, one that evades scrutiny and has a tendency to bolt the moment critical attention is turned towards it” (Stott 2005, 2). As a result, comedy has remained undertheorized and all attempts at theorizing it have been found wanting. Which leads to the question: is it even possible to “know” comedy or define it? In order to answer this question, I want to contextualize and historicize comedy by examining the origins and legacies of comedy, as well as some of the leading theories about the nature of comedy. Ultimately, I will propose a “Copernican turn” in our attempts to understand comedy in order to reorient us to the phenomena of the comic spirit.

4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m. Ty Defoe

“Echoes Across Seven Generations: Mapping Our Time Beyond the Self”

Through Seven Generations thinking as a framework explored through

embodied mapping and temporal dialogue, participants will consider how their inquiries ripple across past, present, and future, reframing research as a relational act of accountability and imagination. By Ty Defoe (Citizen of Oneida/Anishinaabe/Indigiqueer Nations)

- 5:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. *Reflections* Small group reflections, one person shares out
- 5:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m. Break / Free time
- 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. Dinner
- 7:15 p.m.–9:00 p.m. **Evening Session: Inwards, Expanding**
Film Screening of “Chasing Coral” (dir. Jeff Orlowski-Yang)
- 9:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m. **Fireside Conversations**
Discussion of film

Sunday, October 12

- 7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m. Meditation Space Reserved (Brandyn)
- 8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. Breakfast + Check out
- 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m. **Closing Session: our wayward, wandering paths**
Cy and Perl
Map your path as a researcher
For our closing session we will lead a workshop using zines and collages to trace, map and document our own journeys through research. We will have open group discussions with some concluding reflections on the weekend's inquiries.
- 11:15 a.m. *Assemble at Bus, Stony Point Center*
- 11:30 a.m. *Bus departs Stony Point Center*
- 12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m. Picnic, Croton Point Park
- 1:30 p.m. *Assemble at Bus, Croton Point Park*
- 1:45 p.m. *Bus departs, Croton Point Park, Returns to Pace*