

RHETORIC COLLIQUIIUM

SEPT
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David Chai is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research covers the fields of ancient and medieval Chinese philosophy, aesthetics, metaphysics, phenomenology, and comparative philosophy.

“Names are Guests of Reality”

Co-Sponsors: *The Center for Chinese Studies, Mr. & Mrs. Pai Ruchu Presidential Professorship in the Arts & Humanities*

The Zhuangzi, one of the foundational texts of Daoism, famously proclaims that “names are guests of reality.” If we take this expression at face value, as many interpreters do, its significance within Daoist thought as a whole is substantially reduced. In this talk, **David Chai** explores some of the reasons why Daoism views all human-centric concepts and norms as “guests” of reality, paying particular attention to the repercussions of this stance on our understanding of the self.

OCT
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Speakers include **Shane Butler, Louise Hornby, Jim Porter, Alex Purves, Debarati Sanyal, Mario Telò, Victoria Wohl, Dora Zhang**

“Elements”: A Symposium

Co-Sponsor: *Department of Ancient Greek & Roman Studies.*

Elements assembles diverse inquiries into forms of matter to provide a meeting ground for interdisciplinary scholarship on earth, water, chemicals, minerals, and other sub-stances. Spanning disciplines and historical eras, series authors attend to the material specificity of the elements and recognize them as lively forces that shape culture, politics, and communication.

OCT
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J. Kameron Carter is Professor of African American Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. Professor Carter engages questions of Blackness, race, colonialism, political theology, and ecology through what he calls “the black study of religion.”

“Political Theology Revisited; or, Du Bois’s Whiteness Critique”

Co-sponsor: *The Townsend Center for the Humanities.*

This meditation extends the reach of the black study of religion formally onto the terrain of settler colonial statecraft, indeed, onto the terrain of political theology. The case is made for how what Cedric Robinson called “the terms of order” are the product of Christian medieval political theology. Carter turns to a young W. E. B. Du Bois, specifically his analysis of the problem of the settler as a messianic “Strong Man,” to get some traction on this argument.

NOV
8

Simon(e) van Saarloos, author of *Take 'Em Down. Scattered Monuments and Queer Forgetting* and Rhetoric PhD student at UC Berkeley, invites poets **Claudia Rankine** and **Pamela Sneed** for a conversation on commemoration.

“How Do We Care For Erased Stories”

Co-Sponsors: *The Stone Chair Funds, Black Studies Collaboratory, the Othering & Belonging Institute, Townsend Center, Arts & Research Center, Department of English, and the Holloway Poetry Series.*

In *Citizen, An American Lyric*, poet, playwright and MacArthur fellow **Claudia Rankine** writes: “This would be your fatal flaw—your memory, vessel of feelings ...” The accumulation of everyday violence and racism forms heavy memories that make it difficult to imagine a present and future different from the past. In *Funeral Diva*, poet and visual artist **Pamela Sneed** laments surviving the AIDS crisis in NYC as a Black lesbian.

DEC
5

Linda Williams taught courses on popular moving-image genres (pornography, melodrama, and “body genres” of all sorts). In 1989 she published a study of pornographic film entitled *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure and the Frenzy of the Visible* (second edition 1999).

“Porn Studies: A Symposium Honoring The Work of Linda Williams”

Co-sponsors: *The Film and Media Department, the Townsend Center, Department of English, the LGBTQ Citizenship Cluster, the Center for the Study of Sexual Culture, and the Gender and Women’s Studies Department.*

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the journal *Porn Studies*, scholars of sexuality, media, and performance revisit **Linda Williams’** pioneering work in the field and reflect on its ongoing legacies.

Featuring Talks From:

Annie Sprinkle & Beth Stephens
Charles-Antoine Courcoux
Elena Gorfinkel
Eva Hayward
Katie Horowitz
Shannon Jackson

Dolores McElroy
Nguyen Tan Hoang
Ara Osterweil
Ariel Osterweis
Simon(e) van Saarloos
Kevin Wynter
Damon R. Young