

JESS WHATCOTT

San Diego State University • Women's Studies Department
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Jesswhatcott.org

EDUCATION

- 2019 PhD, Politics
 Designated emphases in Feminist Studies and Critical Race & Ethnic Studies
 University of California Santa Cruz
- 2016 M.A. Politics
 University of California Santa Cruz
- 2011 M.A. Social Science, Environment & Community Program
 Humboldt State University
- 2004 B.A. Political Science, minor in Women's Studies (Summa Cum Laude)
 Humboldt State University

EMPLOYMENT

- 2019-present Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, San Diego State
 University
 Affiliated faculty, LGBTQ+ Studies
 Affiliated faculty, Center for Comics Studies
- 2017-2018; Lecturer for Critical Race, Gender & Sexuality Studies, California Polytechnic
2011-2013 University-Humboldt

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Critical disability studies; abolition feminism; eugenics; the carceral state; museums and memorializations of disability confinement; re-institutionalization; disability and US migration policy; borders and debilitation; queer of color critique; California histories; queer, crip, and decolonial US histories; speculative fiction; graphic narratives and comics; genealogical methods; discourse analysis; scholar activism

PUBLICATIONS

MONOGRAPHS

Whatcott, Jess. (2024). *Menace to the Future: A Disability and Queer History of Carceral Eugenics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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REFERRED ARTICLES

Whatcott, Jess and Liat Ben-Moshe (2021). “Abolishing the Broom Closets in Omelas: Feminist Disability Analysis of Crisis and Precarity.” *Feminist Formations*. 33:3 (Winter), 1-25.

Whatcott, Jess (2021). “Crip Collectivity Beyond Neoliberal Governance in Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*,” *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, 10:1. Published online at: <https://csalateral.org/section/cripistemologies-of-crisis/crip-collectivity-beyond-neoliberalism-octavia-butler-parable-of-the-sower-whatcott/>

Whatcott, Jess (2021) “Aiding and Abetting the Unruly Past: Queer and Critical Disability Studies Approaches to American Political Development,” *Politics, Groups & Identities*, 11:1. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21565503.2021.1908372>

Whatcott, Jess (2018) “No Selves to Consent: Women's Prisons, Sterilization, and the Biopolitics of Informed Consent,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 44: 1, 131-153.

INVITED CONTRIBUTIONS

Theodora Danylevich, Meghann O’Leary, and **Jess Whatcott**. (2024). “Critical Disability Studies at American Studies Association, 3-6 November 2022, Hilton New Orleans Riverside, New Orleans.” “Comment from the Field.” *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 18:2, 243-248.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Whatcott, Jess (2021). “Sexuality, Disability, and Madness in California’s Eugenics Era,” in *Routledge Handbook of Disability and Sexuality*, eds. Russell Shuttleworth and Linda Mona (London: Routledge).

Whatcott, Jess (2020). “‘We Survived You’: Resisting Eugenicist Imaginaries Through Feminist Speculative Fiction,” in *The Future is Unwritten: Representations of Political Resistance and Emancipation in Science Fiction*, eds. Judith Grant and Sean Parsons (Maryland: Lexington Books).

ACADEMIC BLOGS

Whatcott, Jess (2022). “We Need Black Feminism to Write Queer History from Below,” Short Takes: Provocations on Public Feminism, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*.

Whatcott, Jess (2017). “Sexual Deviance and ‘Mental Defectiveness’ in Eugenics Era California,” *NOTCHES: (re)marks on the history of sexuality*. <http://notchesblog.com/2017/03/14/sexual-deviance-and-mental-defectiveness-in-eugenics-era-california/>

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Whatcott, Jess. (2024) “*This Remembrance Day, Remember the Dead So We Can Fight for the Living*,” guest blog post, Disability Visibility Project, September 16, 2024, <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/>

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Whatcott, Jess and Nicholas Villarreal. “Feminist Disability Studies.” Entry for *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Politics and Gender*. Accepted for publication.

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Whatcott, Jess and Jenna Wilson. "Feminist Abolition." Entry for *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Politics and Gender*. Accepted for publication.

Whatcott, Jess and Samaria Avila. "Income Security." Entry for *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Politics and Gender*. Accepted for publication.

Whatcott, Jess and Aurora Valdez de la Torre. "Unpaid Labor." Entry for *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Politics and Gender*. Accepted for publication.

Whatcott, Jess and Jessica Calvanico. "A 'First Wave' of Carceral Feminism: White Women's Criminal and Juvenile Justice Reform Work at the Turn of the Twentieth Century." Article in progress.

Whatcott, Jess. "Remembering Eugenics at the Museum of Mental Health." Article in progress.

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

- 2024 Excellence in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Award (Tenure-Track Faculty); College of Arts and Letters; San Diego State University; annual award, \$1500
- 2023 Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Award; Division of Research and Innovation; San Diego State University; competitive grant, 1 course release
- 2022 Faculty Mentor, Ethics and Critical Disability Studies Summer Research Award for graduate student Victoria Sulak; competitive funding, \$5000
- 2022 Most Influential Faculty Member of the Women's Studies Department; selected by the Outstanding Graduating Senior
- 2022 Critical Thinking Grant; College of Arts and Letters; San Diego State University; competitive grant, 1 course release
- 2021 University Grants Program; Division of Research and Innovation; San Diego State University; competitive funding, \$9,400

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

PAPERS BY INVITATION

- 2022 Whatcott, Jess. "Queer Anti-Eugenics in the Archives of California's Disability Institutions," Centering Race and Disability in Histories of Eugenics; The Huntington Library; October

UNPUBLISHED, REFERRED PAPERS BEFORE PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

- 2023 Whatcott, Jess. "Nostalgia and Memory at the State Hospital Museum," American Studies Association; Montreal, Canada; November

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- 2023 Whatcott, Jess. "Nostalgia for Eugenics at the State Hospital Museum," Berkshire Conference of Women, Genders and Sexualities; Santa Clara, California; June
- 2023 Whatcott, Jess. "Re-membering Eugenics at the Museum of Mental Health," Western Political Science Association; San Francisco, California; April
- 2022 Whatcott, Jess. "The Political Economy of Carceral Eugenics," Western Political Science Association; Portland, Oregon; March
- 2021 Whatcott, Jess. "Queer and Crip Refusals of California Eugenics," American Studies Association, October (virtual)
- 2021 Whatcott, Jess. "Maternalist Eugenics and the Research of Grace Fernald," California Eugenics Legacies Symposium, University of California Humanities Research Institute, June (virtual)
- 2020 Whatcott, Jess. "Containing the Unruly Past: 'Fixing' Queer and Disabled Racial Subjects in Political History," Western Political Science Association; Los Angeles; May (due to COVID-19 conference moved online)
- 2019 Whatcott, Jess. "Refusing State Care, Refusing Respectability: Claiming Queer Kinship with California's Defective Class," Beyond Care Symposium: Queer, Feminist, and Trans Studies Research Cluster; University of California Davis; June
- 2019 Whatcott, Jess. "Eugenic Facts/Speculative Fictions: Foreclosing on Feminist/Queer/Crip Futures in California Public Law," Gender, Bodies, Technology; Blacksburg, Virginia; April
- 2019 Whatcott, Jess. "Building the State that Cares and Citizens Who Desire the State in Progressive Era California," Western Political Science Association, San Diego, April
- 2018 Whatcott, Jess. "Building State Biopower Through Discourses of Care: Women Reformers and Eugenics Policies in Progressive Era California," Queering Care and Cure Symposium: Queer, Feminist, and Trans Studies Research Cluster; University of California Davis; May
- 2018 Whatcott, Jess. "'In the Old Days... You Could Nab Somebody Like This': Re-Citing Eugenics in the Discourse About Mass Shootings," Western Political Science Association; San Francisco, California; March

OTHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

- 2024 Accepted, "An Abolitionist Feminist Disability Studies: Turning Toward Empire, the State, and Institutions," National Women's Studies Association; Detroit; November

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- 2023 Chair, “CDSC Sponsored Panel-Crippling Solidarity: Love in Private, Public, and Everywhere In Between,” American Studies Association; Montreal, Canada; November
- 2023 Discussant, “Remembering Eugenics Past, Reconciling the Present, and Reparations for the Future,” American Studies Association; Montreal, Canada; November
- 2023 Moderator, “Comic Justice,” Comic Arts Conference at Comic Con International; San Diego, California; July
- 2022 Roundtable, Elizabeth Pollard, Pamela Jackson, **Jess Whatcott**, and Gregory Daddis, “The Transformational Power of a Comics and Social Justice Curriculum,” Comics Arts Conference at Comic Con International; San Diego, California; July
- 2021 Discussant, “The Medical, the Body, and the Carceral,” American Studies Association; virtual conference; November
- 2019 Roundtable, Tanja Aho, Ryan Cartwright, Hailee Gibbons, Meghann O’Leary, John Wang, and **Jess Whatcott**, “Mad Time/s of/and Anxiety, Chronic Illness, and Neuroqueerness: Incarcerating Realities, Imagine-Building Futures,” National Women’s Studies Association; San Francisco; November
- 2018 Roundtable, Tanja Aho, Brady Forrest, Jessi Jackson, Carol Moeller, and **Jess Whatcott**, “Madness and Decolonization: Histories, Stories, Futures,” Critical Ethnic Studies Association; Vancouver, British Columbia; June
- 2017 Discussant, “Carceral Humanisms,” Critical Prison Studies/Critical Disability Studies Caucuses sponsored panel; American Studies Association Conference; Chicago, Illinois; November

COURSES TAUGHT

Graduate Courses at SDSU

Body Politics

Feminist Methods of Inquiry

Senior Level Undergraduate/Graduate Electives at SDSU

Feminist Disability Studies

Queering Comics

Feminist Thought

Capitalism in Feminist Thought

Lesbian Lives and Cultures

Undergraduate GE Courses at SDSU

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Introduction to Trans Studies
Women, Gender, and US History, part A
Women, Gender, and US History, part B

Undergraduate Courses at other Universities

Feminism and the Body
Critical Race, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Theory and Methods
“Queer” Across Cultures
Sex, Gender, and Globalization
Act to End Sexualized Violence
Gender and Society
Gender, Race, and Class
Introduction to Ethnic Studies
Introduction to Queer Studies
Introduction to Women’s Studies

TEACHING AWARDS AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- 2023 Curriculum Development Grant in Bioethics and Health Humanities; Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs; San Diego State University, \$4000
- 2023 Inclusive Pedagogy Grant; College of Arts and Letters; San Diego State University
- 2022-2023 Designer of “Queering Comics,” National Endowment for the Humanities funded Comics Studies Initiative at San Diego State University, \$5000
- 2020-2021 Convener and co-facilitator, Women’s Studies Racial Justice Pedagogy Working Group
- 2021 Inclusive Pedagogy Grant; College of Arts and Letters; San Diego State University

INVITED LECTURES

- March 2024 “California’s History of Eugenics and Disability Institutions,” Ethnic Studies Department, Saddleback Community College
- Nov 2023 “Queering Comics,” Media and Belonging class, Critical Gender Studies, University of California San Diego
- Nov 2022 “Anti-Eugenics in the Archives: Building Queer Kinship with the Ghosts of California’s Disability Institutions,” LGBTQ+ Research Consortium, San Diego State University
- Nov 2021 “Ecologies of the Prison/Detention Industrial Complex,” Women, Globalization and Ecology class, Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, San Francisco State University

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- March 2021 “Free Them All: Why California’s Eugenics History Matters Today,” Center for Inclusive Excellence, San Diego State University
- Feb 2020 “No Selves to Consent: Women’s Prisons, Sterilization and the Biopolitics of Informed Consent,” Feminist Theories class, Feminist Studies Department, University of California Santa Cruz
- June 2019 “Queer Resistance and Queer Refusal in California’s Early 20th Century Eugenics Institutions,” Women’s Studies, San Diego State University
- April 2019 “California Eugenics as Queer History,” Women’s Studies, San Diego State University
- Feb 2019 “Eugenics in the Carceral State: Troubling Treatment as an Alternative to Incarceration,” Crime and Justice Studies, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION

MA THESIS/PROJECT CHAIR

- 2024-current M.A. Thesis Chair–Tess Kossoff (Women’s Studies)
- 2023-2024 M.A. Thesis Chair – Vale Magaña (Women’s Studies)
“Towards Transformative Justice: Envisioning Survivor-Centric Approaches Beyond Title IX for Addressing Campus Sexualized Violence at San Diego State University”
- 2023-2024 M.A. Thesis Chair – Mack Moore (Women’s Studies)
“Go Ask Mack: A Queer and Mad Reading of *Go Ask Alice*”
- 2022-2023 M.A. Project Chair – Victoria Sulak (Women’s Studies)
“A Relationship and Sexual Health Curriculum for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities”
- 2022-2023 M.A. Thesis Chair – Eva Gomez (Women’s Studies)
“#CancelLatinidad?: Power Relations and Media Representations in Contemporary Reggaetón and Latine Culture”
- 2022-2023 M.A. Project Chair – Natalie Valencia (Women’s Studies)
“*ChelaLuna: Dawn of Uranus* - A Feminist Speculative Fiction Novella as Pedagogy”
- 2021-2022 M.A. Thesis Chair – Nicholas Villarreal (Women’s Studies)
“Critically Engaging Representation: Queer, Fat, and Disabled BodyMinds in Romantic Films”
- 2021-2022 M.A. Thesis Chair – Jenna Wilson (Women’s Studies)
“Shaping Change Beyond the Carceral: Octavia E. Butler’s Parable Series as a Tool of Abolition”
- 2021-2022 M.A. Project Chair – Alejandra Aguirre (Women’s Studies)
“An Abolitionist Curriculum for 9-12th Grade History/Social Studies”

MA THESIS/PROJECT READER

- 2023-current M.A. Thesis Reader – Shane James (Interdisciplinary Studies)
- 2023-2024 M.A. Thesis Reader – Juana Bejarano (Women’s Studies)
“A Feminist Perspective on Veganism: Zines for the Liberation of Humans and Other Animals”

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- 2023-2024 M.A. Thesis Reader – Shaylee Anderson (Communication)
“So, I Decided to Find My Own Power”: A Critique of Postfeminist Agency and Empowerment in “Good For Her” Films
- 2022-2023 M.A. Thesis Reader – Adeja Powell (Communication)
“In Defense of the Monstrosity: Queer Abjectness in the Modern Slasher”
- 2022-2023 M.A. Thesis Reader – Emily Ramirez Uribe (Women’s Studies)
“I Gotchu’: The Transmogrification of Electronic Sound”
- 2021-2022 M.A. Thesis Reader – Sophia Guthrie (Anthropology)
“The OnlyFans Content Creator Project: A Collaborative-Action Ethnography”
- 2021-2022 M.A. Thesis Reader – Hailee Menchaca (History)
“Ya Acabó la Canción: Reproductive Injustice and Chicana Testimonio as Resistance in *Madrigal v. Quilligan*”
- 2021 M.A. Examination Committee – Rashanna Lee (Women’s Studies)
“Race, Gender, and Veganism”
- 2020-2021 M.A. Thesis Reader – Anna Buckley (Women’s Studies)
“Redefining Burden: A Mother & Daughter’s Navigation of Alzheimer’s Dementia”
- 2020-2021 M.A. Thesis Reader – Barbara Perez (Women’s Studies)
“A Feminist Epistemological Critique of Comparative Cognition Research”
- 2020-2021 M.A. Thesis Reader – Andrea Sanchez (Communication)
“Consent, Identity, and Communicative Competence Among BDSM Practitioners”
- 2019-2020 M.A. Thesis Reader – Kerry Scroggie (Women’s Studies)
“The Rise of Genetic Genealogy: A Queer & Feminist Analysis of *Finding Your Roots*”
- 2019-2020 M.A. Thesis Reader – John Gove (History)
“From the Campus to the Community: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights in 1970s San Diego”

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- 2021-present Lavender Graduation Organizing Committee
- 2024 Judge, SDSU Student Research Symposium
- 2024 Reviewer, *SPLICE: The Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship*
- 2021-2022 Safe Zones Coordinator
- 2021-2022 Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs core faculty
- 2019-2021 Sexual Violence Task Force
- 2020 Consultant, Pride Center, faculty training for working with trans/non-binary students
- 2017-2018 Sexual Assault Prevention Committee (Humboldt State University)

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DEPARTMENT SERVICE

- 2022-present LGBTQ+ Studies Faculty Advisory Committee
- 2022-present Department Name Change Committee
- 2020-present MA Graduate Student Application Committee
- 2024 Outstanding Graduating Student Award Committee
- 2023-2024 Bread and Roses Feminist Research Speaker Series Co-Coordinator
- 2023-2024 Carstens-Wertz Graduate Student Fund Committee
- 2023 Graduate Teaching Associate Committee
- 2022 Outstanding Graduating Student Award Committee
- 2021 Graduate Teaching Associate Committee
- 2021-2022 Search Committees, Feminist Economic Justice and Feminist Environmental Justice
- 2020-2022 Bread and Roses Feminist Research Speaker Series Co-Coordinator
- 2020-2021 Department Diversity Committee
- 2021 Lecturer Application Committee
- 2020-2021 Carstens-Wertz Graduate Student Fund Committee

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2021-present Co-chair, Critical Disability Studies Caucus of American Studies Association
- 2022-2023 Co-chair, Western Political Science Association Critical Disability Studies Virtual Community
- 2020-present Reviewer: *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (1), *Politics, Groups, & Identities* (1), *Disability Studies Quarterly* (3), *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (1), *Contemporary Political Theory* (1), *American Political Science Review* (1), *California History Quarterly* (1), *Feminist Pedagogy* (1)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

American Studies Association

- Critical Disability Studies Caucus
- Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans History

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National Women's Studies Association

- Disability Studies Interest Group

Society for Disability Studies

Western Political Science Association

- Critical Disability Studies Virtual Community

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 2020-2024 Collective member, Detention Resistance and Free Them All San Diego
- 2023 Panelist for pre-show roundtable on disability in Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, Diversionary Theatre Company, San Diego
- 2020 Panelist for Women's Centennial Roundtable Event "I Believe...", San Diego Public Library