

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

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Critical disability studies; mad studies; abolition feminism; queer of color critique; the carceral state; eugenics; the criminalization of migration; carceral feminisms; California histories; queer, crip, and decolonial US histories; speculative fiction; graphic narratives and comics; genealogical methods; discourse analysis; scholar activism

PUBLICATIONS

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:

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<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*. Published online at: <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, No. 1, 131-153.

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/>

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Whatcott, Jess. "Menace to the Future: Carceral Eugenics in California." Book manuscript under contract, Duke University Press.

Theodora Danylevich, Meghann O'Leary, and Jess Whatcott. "Critical Disability Studies at American Studies Association 2022, New Orleans." "Comments from the Field" invited by special issue editors for the *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*.

Calvanico, Jessica and Jess Whatcott. "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.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

2023 Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Award; Division of Research and Innovation; San Diego State University

2022 Faculty Mentor, Ethics and Critical Disability Studies Summer Research Award for graduate student Victoria Sulak, \$5000

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- 2022 Most Influential Faculty Member for Outstanding Graduating Student of the Women's Studies Department
- 2022 Critical Thinking Grant; College of Arts, and Letters; San Diego State University
- 2021 University Grants Program; Division of Research and Innovation; San Diego State University, \$9,400
- 2019 Dissertation Fellowship, Social Sciences Division, University of California Santa Cruz, \$12,000
- 2017-2018 Alumni Service Award, Graduate Division, University of California Santa Cruz, \$500
- 2013-2017 Cota-Robles Fellowship, University of California Santa Cruz, \$173,000

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 *Accepted.* 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-memembering 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)

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- 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
- 2017 Whatcott, Jess. "'Making Good': Institutionalizing Immoral Girls and Women in Progressive Era California," California American Studies Association; Long Beach; April
- 2017 Whatcott, Jess. "'Making Good': Diagnosing and Treating Girls' and Women's Deviant Sexuality in Eugenics Era California," Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science; Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; March
- 2016 Whatcott, Jess. "Prisoner Sterilizations and the Politics of Over-Population in California," Western Political Science Association; San Diego, CA; March

OTHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

- 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

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- 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
- 2014 Discussant, “Doing Critical Race and Ethnic Studies in a Neoliberal Age” Symposium for Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, University of California Santa Cruz, June

COURSES TAUGHT

Graduate Courses at SDSU

Body Politics
Methods of Inquiry

Undergraduate Courses at SDSU

Feminist Thought (undergraduate/graduate)
Capitalism in Feminist Thought (undergraduate/graduate)
Lesbian Lives and Cultures (undergraduate/graduate)
Introduction to Trans Studies
Women, Gender, and US History, part A
Women, Gender, and US History, part B

Undergraduate Courses at other Universities

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

OTHER PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM

- 2022-2023 Designer of “Queering Comics,” National Endowment for the Humanities funded Comics Studies Initiative at San Diego State University
- 2020-2021 Convener and co-facilitator, Women’s Studies Racial Justice Pedagogy Working Group

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INVITED LECTURES

- Nov 2023 “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,” Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, San Francisco State University
- 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 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

- 2023-current M.A. Thesis Chair – Mack Moore (Women’s Studies)
- 2023-current M.A. Thesis Chair – Vale Magaña (Women’s Studies)
- 2022-current M.A. Project Chair – Victoria Sulak (Women’s Studies)
- 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

- 2022-current M.A. Thesis Reader – Adeja Powell (Communication)
- 2022-2023 M.A. Thesis Reader – Emily Ramirez Uribe (Women’s Studies)
“I Gotchu’: The Transmogrification of Electronic Sound”

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- 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

- 2021-2022 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; 2012-2013 Sexual Assault Prevention Committee (Humboldt State University)
- 2015-2017 Coordinated Community Review Team (University of California Santa Cruz)

DEPARTMENT SERVICE

- 2023-present Bread and Roses Feminist Research Speaker Series Co-Coordinator
- 2022-present Department Name Change Committee
- 2022-present LGBTQ+ Studies Faculty Advisory Committee
- 2020-present MA Graduate Student Application Committee
- 2022-2023 Lavender Graduation Organizing Committee

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- 2021, 2023 Graduate Teaching Associate Committee
- 2022 Outstanding Graduating Student Award 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* (2), *Journal of Lesbian Studies* (1), *Contemporary Political Theory* (1), *American Political Science Review* (1)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

American Studies Association

- Critical Disability Studies Caucus
- Critical Prison Studies Caucus

Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans History (American Historical Association)

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-present Collective member, Detention Resistance
- 2020-present Coalition member, Free Them All San Diego
- 2012-2013 Volunteer, Humboldt County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

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2003-2013 Organizer, Bar None (Humboldt County)

COMMUNITY PRACTICE

2009-2018 Core organizer and support Staff, North Star Quest Camp, Petrolia, CA
Overnight feminist informed summer camp for girl identified youth

2010-2013 Program Assistant, Humboldt County Teen Court, Eureka CA
Diversion program for system involved youth

COMMUNITY RESEARCH CONSULTING

2015 Campus Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Survey for Graduate Students,
Graduate Student Association and UAW Anti-Oppression Committee, UCSC

2015 Santa Cruz Jail Conditions Survey, Sin Barras, Santa Cruz, California

2013 Safer Campus Community Project Survey, Sexual Assault Prevention Committee,
Humboldt State University

2012-2013 Community Safety and Accountability Assessment, Humboldt County Domestic
Violence Coordinating Committee, Eureka, California