



The Future of
Black Studies

An Undergraduate Salon

featuring

Professors **Erica R. Edwards** and **Joseph R. Winters II**



Erica Edwards is Associate Professor of English and the Presidential Term Chair in African American Literature at Rutgers University–New Brunswick; she is the author of *The Other Side of Terror: Black Women and The Culture of US Empire* (NYU Press, 2021) and *Charisma and the Fictions of Black Leadership* (University of Minnesota Press, 2012) and co-editor of *Keywords for African American Studies* (NYU Press, 2018).



Joseph Winters is the Alexander F. Hehmeyer Associate Professor of Religious Studies and African and African American Studies at Duke University; he is the author of *Hope Draped in Black: Race, Melancholy, and the Agony of Progress* (Duke University Press, 2016); his second book project (under contract with Duke UP) is tentatively titled “Disturbing Profanity: Hip Hop, Black Aesthetics, and the Volatile Sacred.”

Exley Science Center 150 (Tishler Hall)
Thursday, April 28, 10:20-11:40 a.m. ET

Introductions by Professor Garry Bertholf (African American Studies Department, Wesleyan University)

I. Stuck in the Past and the Erasure of the Contemporary

Olivia Adams (FILM/AFAM/WRCT '23) – “‘My intuition is telling me there’ll be better days’: The Afro-Pessimism of ‘Trap’”

Cyann Byfield (SOC/AFAM '23) – “‘P[****] bout to get a standing ovation’: Black Respectability Politics and Commodity Fetishism”

Christina Onuzuruike (AFAM/FILM '24) – “‘It’s *giving* redundant’: Black Studies, the Canon, and the Contemporary”

Sophie Levis (AMST/COL '24) – “Narrative Refusal: Temporality, Language, and Citation”

Ayer Richmond (FILM/AFAM '24) – “The Disciplinary Gentrification of Black Studies: A Critique of the Aim”

Shakira Abdul-Rauf (PSYC/AFAM/CHEM '24) and Stephanie Aka (AFAM/DANC/FGSS '24) – “‘I’m just doing it to do it’: On the Political and Ethical Commitments of Black Studies”

Virtual Respondent: Professor **Erica Edwards** (Department of English, Rutgers University–New Brunswick)

II. The Psychic and the Corporeal

Aldo Lopez (FILM/ENGL '22) – “The ‘Brick Body Complex’: Beyond Flesh-Inscribed Geographies”

Sam DosSantos (PHIL/ENGL/AFAM '25) – “The Paraontology of Color: Biopolitics, Linguistics, and the Synestheticization of Race”

Ethan Barrett (AFAM '24) and Finn Kassell Osborne (ARST/ENGL '24): “The ‘Doubled Mind’: Sociogeny, Ontology, Cosmogony”

Virtual Respondent: Professor **Edwards**

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Exley Science Center 150 (Tishler Hall)
Tuesday, May 3, 10:20-11:40 a.m. ET

Introductions by Professor Bertholf

III. Tones

Cameron Scott (AFAM/FILM '24) – “To Love: Exploring Self-Making in McGruder’s *The Boondocks*”

Eliza Marovitz (ENVS '25) – “‘Where the feet could slip back into eyeballs’: Rhythm and the Release of Structure”

Kai Ruwende (AFAM/ENGL '25) – “‘You ain’t ever gonna fly’: A Black Feminist Ruminant on Afropessimism/Black Optimism”

Elodie Frey (AFAM/GOVT '23) – “‘Where you gonna run to?’: Nina Simone and the Genealogies of ‘Sinnerman’”

Alise Mackey (AMST/FILM '24) – “‘Rooting for Everybody Black’: Visualizing the Black Body”

Virtual Respondent: Professor **Joseph Winters** (Departments of Religious Studies and African and African American Studies, Duke University)

IV. Deconstructing the Boundary

Aidan Fitzmaurice (ENGL/GOVT '23) – “‘Once We Have Torn S[***] Down’: Praxis and the Limits of Theorizing From the Inside”

Jessica Simpson (PSYC/ANTH '22) – “Undoing Religion: Decolonizing Race, Gender, and Sexuality”

Georgia Gerber (AFAM/SOC '24) – “Rereading the Role of the White Ally”

Xiran Tan (CEAS/ENGL '24) – “Bandung and the Illusion of an Alternative Future: On Afro-Asian Solidarity”

Felix Clayton (AFAM/GOVT '24) – “‘Experiments in Living Otherwise’: Blackness and Pedagogy”

Virtual Respondent: Professor **Winters**

For virtual attendance:



Zoom Meeting ID: 934 5993 0466
Passcode: 31501



This event is co-sponsored by the African American Studies Department (AFAM), the Center for African American Studies (CAAS), and the Africana Research Collective (ARC). For more information, please contact Professor Garry Bertholf at gbertholf@wesleyan.edu.