Greetings from the FCHI on the 19th year of its existence as Emory’s version of an institute for advanced study in the humanities. For new readers (and even for seasoned ones), I thought it might be useful to describe how we operate. Let me preface what follows by explaining that I felt it imperative, in my role as director, to enhance the FCHI’s profile as a research hub for faculty and students not resident at the Center, even while continuing to provide our residential fellows with an ideal working environment where, insulated from all professional obligations other than research, they can complete a major publishing project. Like Princeton’s IAS and Stanford’s Humanities Center, we annually bring a complement of senior fellows, postdocs, and graduate dissertation fellows to our campus on North Decatur Road for a nine-month residency. There are generally twelve fellows per year, jointly funded by an endowment established by the National Endowment for the Humanities and a consortium of private philanthropists, with additional support generously provided by the Dean of Emory College. This year, for the first time, we were also pleased to welcome a two-year postdoctoral fellow, and in addition, through the enthusiastic support of President Claire Sterk, we have a President’s Fellow on board, Prof. Erin Tarver of Oxford College. (The President’s Fellowship allows us to offer a nine-month residency to a tenured faculty member from one of Emory University’s constituent schools, i.e., Candler, Oxford, Law, Medicine, or Public Health.)

The heart of our communal week is the fellows’ work-in-progress seminar, held on Wednesdays at noon and open to all, during which a pre-circulated paper is discussed intensively. These papers, about 25 pages in length, are articles, sections of book chapters, or dissertation chapters, currently being written at the FCHI by the presenting fellow. Starting with my arrival as director in 2017, we converted the annual Faculty Response Forum, founded by my distinguished predecessor, Dr. Martine Brownley, into an expanded version of the work-in-progress seminar. Each of the roundtables is now headed by one of our fellows who presents her/his work to interested faculty, students, and members of the general public; topics are posted in advance of the forum, so roundtable participants can reserve a chair at their table of choice (and also elect to receive a paper in advance of the session). Prefaced by an Emory faculty presentation of about 20-30 minutes on a humanities research project, either just completed or in progress, the forum is a delightful event—lively and enlivening, public-facing, intellectually challenging, and always well attended. This year’s speaker will be Ruby Lal, Professor of South Asian Studies, and author, most recently, of the marvelous book *Empress: The Astonishing Reign of Nur Jahan*.

The FCHI is now home to several other research seminars, convened under the CHIIRS banner (CHI Interdisciplinary Research Seminars), which meet on a bi-weekly or monthly basis: these include the Digital Publishing in the Humanities Seminar (led by Sarah McKee), the Asian Studies Seminar, the East Asian Studies Writing Group, Europe and Beyond (co-sponsored by the Center for Hellenic Studies at Georgia State University), and GALACSI (Georgia Atlantic, Latin American, and Caribbean Initiative). Of course, we continue to offer our popular Great Works Seminars, public humanities fora taught by former senior fellows, at which research conducted at the FCHI is disseminated to a wider public. Another popular forum, the
Georgia Humanities Seminar funded by Georgia Humanities, explores topics related to the state’s artistic, literary, and cultural history. In conjunction with the Mellon-funded Interventions Project of the Laney Graduate School, which encourages faculty to incorporate public scholarship and an expanded range of professional competencies into their Ph.D. programs, the FCHI now sponsors bi-monthly luncheon meetings for graduate student stakeholders in Interventions.

Another new development is the expansion of our fall- and spring-term fellowship programs for undergraduates. With the generous support of Dr. Jeffrey Lesser, Director of the Halle Institute, we recently co-instituted a Halle-FCHI Global Research Fellowship, which funds capstone research projects at the intersection of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Nine fellowships are offered annually to students who apply in their junior year; the fellowship funds international travel to sites, libraries, and archives relevant to the student’s research project. In fall term of the student’s senior year, s/he becomes a resident fellow of the FCHI, with access to the Center’s undergraduate student commons. Fellows are invited to participate in the weekly work-in-progress seminar, and they present at the Halle-FCHI Global Fellows Colloquium, which generally takes place toward the end of November. In the spring term, nine senior honors students become fellows of the FCHI and members of the weekly work-in-progress seminar. In addition, they participate in monthly seminar meetings with the director, at which they have the opportunity to present their respective projects to fellow honors students from other departments, whose approaches to methodology and historiography, and whose sense of the “state of the question,” differs from theirs. Like the Halle-FCHI Global Research Fellows, the Senior Honors Fellows conclude their residency by presenting at the Senior Honors Fellows Colloquium organized by the FCHI.

The FCHI also sponsors special series of events. This year, under the auspices of the FCHI Public Scholarship Forum, and in collaboration with The Letters of Samuel Beckett (Director, Lois Overbeck), we have organized the four-part series, “Translation in Word and Image: Assumptions and Implications.” The Departments of English and German are co-sponsors of the series, which began in late October with a presentation by Bo Cao, Professor of English Language and Literature at the College of Foreign Studies, Hunan Normal University. Taken as a whole, “Translation in Word and Image” proposes to examine four types of translation:

- translation of literary texts from one language to another, one culture to another, one medium to another;
- translation of ancient, medieval, or early modern texts into a modern vernacular language and, connected to this, of prosody into prose;
- translation of visual images across media, e.g., of a painting into a reproductive print;
- the translational dynamics of the emblem, a composite literary genre that brings words and images into mutual relation, jointly translating text into image, image into text.

Each session, the inaugural one just past and the three scheduled for Spring 2020, features scholars who have studied the mode of translation in question and/or have themselves engaged in the respective process of translation. In publicizing the series, the organizers describe its primary themes along these lines:

Translation is both a method of inquiry and an hermeneutic that conveys ideas across languages and media. When the medium is textual, the translator must take account of the fact that both spoken and written language are always shifting, idiomatic, and personal. Language is also cultural, an accretion of assumptions, conventions, history, and values which are themselves subject to change. These dimensions of language are inherent in the object of translation as well as in the act of translating. The language[s] and culture[s] of the reader also add a layer to this complexity of moving parts.

Similarly, the form and function, manner and meaning of images raise complex issues for any visual translator, since they are culturally embedded and contingent, determined and determinative. Verbal
transmission of visual experience has long been considered an advanced rhetorical exercise, but assumptions about translating images began to change markedly in the sixteenth century. This arose from the development of new print technologies—engraving and etching, for example—that allowed artists to disseminate visual information more widely, precisely, and profitably than had previously been possible. A one-of-a-kind painting or work of sculpture could now be represented as a printed image and circulated in hundreds of copies. The issues raised by this sort of translation (to what extent are print media transparent to the objects they purport to translate, to what extent are they transformative or distortive) continue to be posed especially today, when the vexed relation between traditional media and digital technologies has raised pressing questions about multi-modality and mediality.

“Emerging Technologies and the Future of the Humanities” is another series launched by the FCHI, with generous co-sponsorship from Provost Dwight McBride, Senior Associate Dean for Research Ron Calabrese, Dean James Curran of the Rollins School of Public Health, Director Lynne Nygaard of the Center for Mind, Brain, and Culture, Director Robyn Fivush of the Institute for Liberal Arts, and the chairs of most of Emory College’s humanities departments. The initiating gift was a one-time donation to the FCHI, known as the Grove Seminar Fund.

The series, beginning in Spring 2020 and extending through Spring 2021, will consist of six faculty fora centering on the work of a distinguished visiting speaker. Jill Lepore, who has agreed to be the first speaker, will also give a work-in-progress seminar for faculty and selected graduate students. Bruno Latour and Akira Lippitt (University of Southern California) have also been approached, and further speakers will be selected by members of the FCHI Executive Advisory Committee. On raison d’être in approaching Lepore and Latour to inaugurate the series is as follows:

“Emerging Technologies and the Future of the Humanities” is our response to recent publications by Jill Lepore (These Truths) and Bruno Latour (Down to Earth), both of whom, in different ways, address the problem of how authoritative arguments are constituted in and through mutually contingent networks of knowledge-production. For Lepore, the humanities, even while striving to assimilate ‘numbers’ and ‘data’ as evidentiary sources, turn historically on the making of ‘facts’ as the prime unit of knowledge. In These Truths, she cites Thomas Jefferson’s admonition, ‘Let facts be submitted to a candid world’, to drive home her point that American constitutional democracy, as construed by Jefferson, Franklin, et al., was founded on a fact-based paradigm of persuasive argumentation. She then goes on to show how digital technologies or, better, digital ways of knowing have called the ‘fact’ into question. It is by discerning the place of the authoritative ‘fact’ within the humanities (a relation that goes back to the thirteenth century), and distinguishing fact-based evidence from ‘numbers’ and ‘data’, which she respectively associates with the social sciences and the natural sciences, that Lepore strives to understand the shifting and contested epistemologies of our technology-laden present; or, as she so deftly puts it: ‘We have a much better vantage on the tenuousness of our own grasp of facts when we understand where facts come from’.

Bruno Latour’s Down to Earth, which focuses on climate change, is the most recent of his publications to make the case that just as scientific facts are socially networked, so too, the cognitive processes that produce them are embodied cultural practices. It is precisely because these situated practices are culturally (and rhetorically) embedded, that the sciences are inextricably bound to the humanities, and to humanist discourses that articulate how scientific facts are forged socially and interactively, not apart from values and local circumstances, but in response to them. Technologies of all kinds—
instrumental, mechanical, digital—are amongst the historical conditions in and through which objectivity is manufactured as a cultural construct.

Finally, I want to let you know that for the first time ever, the FCHI will undergo an external review in Spring 2020. I welcome the review, which should help me and my Executive Director Keith Anthony, along with the Executive Advisory Committee, to plan strategically for the long-range future of the center. Please consider a gift to the department to continue this exciting momentum.

Walter S. Melion
Director, FCHI
Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Art History

2019 Fox Center Faculty Forum

Deboleena Roy is Professor of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology, and was a 2014-2015 Senior Fellow at the FCHI. She was one of the first to publish with the Digital Publishing in the Humanities Grant funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, housed at the Fox Center. In her work, *Molecular Feminisms*, Roy investigates science as feminism at the lab bench, engaging in an interdisciplinary conversation between molecular biology, Deleuzian philosophies, posthumanism, and postcolonial and decolonial studies.

I’m absolutely honored to be delivering the opening remarks for this year’s response forum. I want to start by thanking Walter, Keith, Colette, and Amy for organizing this year’s event. I also want to thank Tina Brownley, the former director of the Fox Center. Together they have worked tirelessly to make the FCHI into a center and scholarly meeting place like no other.

When Walter asked if I would be willing to speak, I was thrilled because I knew I would have a chance to talk about my affection for the Fox Center to a large audience in one go. For those of you who know me, you already know about the magical time I had at the Fox Center because it was all I talked about. I rubbed the fact that I had that fellowship into anyone and everyone’s face I could that year. I was awarded a faculty fellowship in 2014 – and I have to say that it couldn’t have come at a more perfect time. I was just wrapping up a three-year term as DGS. I’ll going to go ahead and just say it – I love working with graduate students, but good god, I think part of my soul had been sucked out by the end of that three-year term – that part of your soul which inspires one to think and write. My fellowship at the Fox Center did nothing short of stopping me from joining the academic undead. In that year, I wrote an article on feminist theory and the neurosciences that was published in the feminist journal *Signs*, I drew up a book proposal for what was to become *Molecular Feminisms*, and I laid down the groundwork for an NSF grant that brought together my interests on sex differences research, neuroepigenetics, and reproductive justice. In fact, receiving a Fox fellowship changed the trajectory of my scholarly career. It gave me time to think and write, but most importantly, it gave me the motivation to take some intellectual risks. I’m not sure if it was the fact that I had a “room of my own” at the
FCHI and a constant supply of delicious food stocked in the FCHI fridge, but during that year, I was inspired to go out on a limb and pursue new kinds of interdisciplinary projects.

As a feminist neuroscientist and a joint faculty member in WGSS and NBB, interdisciplinary work is my bread and butter. After years of conducting research and teaching courses across the natural sciences and humanities, I know that interdisciplinarity can be thought of in multiple ways. The primary focus of my interdisciplinary work has been motivated by a commitment to understanding and learning to appreciate the intricate practices of disparate disciplines. In his opening remarks at last year’s Response Forum, Dean Elliot made a reference to the Science Wars and the impact it has had on the humanities. For those of you who might be unfamiliar with what is now referred to as the Science Wars, this was a period of heated debate and somewhat hostile exchanges between scientific realists and poststructuralists that took place in the mid-to late 90s. These debates involved discussions around scientific objectivity and the possibilities of societal influences on scientific inquiry (what we might today refer to as unconscious bias). The publication of several books and journal articles during this period led to a series of high-profile disputes, and in some cases, a deep mistrust between academics in the sciences and in the humanities.

I started my PhD in molecular biology and reproductive neuroendocrinology just as the Science Wars were in full swing. As a graduate student in the neurosciences in Canada, I was actually blissfully unaware of one of the most scandalous scholarly disputes that transpired during the Science Wars – the Sokal Affair – but somehow, I had already come to the understanding that science and society were co-constituted. I already knew that I wanted to become a feminist scientist who could bring reproductive justice work into conversation with reproductive biology research. I also knew that this would entail learning the intricate practices of different disciplines and developing an appreciation for different ways of encountering the world.

Now, nearly two decades after the Science Wars, we find ourselves in a new era. We find ourselves in a political time and place where all forms of academic research, whether in the physical and natural sciences, the social sciences, or the humanities, are all potentially under threat. Who would have thought, back in the 90s, when the Science Wars were raging, that scientists would have to stand up for science itself? Who would have imagined that scientists would be Marching for Science? It turns out that the skills that humanities scholars and social justice advocates have had to hone over the last two decades, including interdisciplinary institution-building, community organization and outreach, and finding creative ways for obtaining funding support, are now key skills required for everyone in academia – scientists included. In a curious way, I see this strange moment as also providing us with opportunities for forming new interdisciplinary alliances.

During my time at the Fox Center, I started thinking about putting my interdisciplinary skills into action in novel ways. While I was designing my CHIRS seminar, I decided that I would use the seminar as an opportunity to have students in both the sciences and the humanities come together in order to learn how to form a joint conversation. It’s one thing to teach neuroscience students about feminist theory and women’s studies students about biology. It’s a different project to provide students with the tools to create their own interdisciplinary conversations. By spending a year with other fellows at the Fox Center and by hearing about the scope and arc of other book projects, I realized that much of my work across the natural sciences and women’s studies had prepared me to facilitate such meetings. My book, *Molecular Feminisms: Biology, Becomings, and Life in the Lab* is really a project about learning how to making interdisciplinary connections. It is written not so much as a treatise following the Science Wars, but rather as a guide for building coalitions and horizontal social movements from within the sciences and humanities. In the book I develop what I call a biophilosophy of becoming that aims to address key questions related to ontology, epistemology, and ethics that drive feminist, postcolonial, and decolonial STS interrogations of scientific knowledge production. I attempt to do this by thinking with an *in vitro* cell line of hypothalamic neurons, by thinking with bacteria, and by thinking with the everyday lab techniques involved in molecular biology research. If I may, I would like to
read a short selection of my book – which by the way, thanks to the Digital Publishing in the Humanities Initiative at Emory – is now also available through Open Access.

A Note about Methodology*
Grasses, apparently, are notorious for crossing taxonomical boundaries but are generally recognized to grow in three ways: as cespitose grasses (grass that grows in bunches with straight roots), turf or sod grasses (grasses that grow by spreading their roots outward horizontally), and matgrasses (which fall somewhere between the other two grass formations). The roots of cespitose grass grow in clonal patterns, whereas all other grass species grow and extend their roots either as rhizomes or stolons. Like the rhizome, the stolon is not just a taxonomical classification but also a strategy for plant propagation. Both stolons and rhizomes form internodes from where new root systems can begin. Stolons, which are referred to as “runners” for their ability to move horizontally above ground, have the additional capacity of serving as “foraging organs for light.”

Stolons have the ability to extend runners in multiple directions and also the capacity to sense their surroundings. As an interdisciplinary project, Molecular Feminisms goes by the way of the stolon and the stoloniferous plant, creating runners along different directions, foraging in and out of properly defined disciplinary formations—all the while aiming to connect and contribute to the field of feminist STS. If extending toward and trying to touch shared objects of inquiry counts as a methodological strategy, this book does just that by attempting to extend runners between feminist theory, postcolonial and decolonial theory, posthumanist ethics, new materialisms, philosophy of science, and molecular biology. While there is a clear emphasis on the foraging strategies used by the stolon, the fact that stoloniferous plants also grow nodes with roots that go down into the ground is not ignored in this work.

To sketch the methodological approach that ties this book together, I want to briefly recall an exchange I had with a well-known sociologist and STS scholar soon after completing my PhD and starting my tenure-track position. During that encounter this very generous colleague cared to ask me about my work and was curious about how and why, with a PhD in molecular biology and neuroscience, I had ended up in a women’s studies department. After briefly listening to me fumble my way around saying that I wanted to bring feminism and science together to generate new kinds of conversations, he quickly summed up my methodological allegiances by saying, “Oh—you’re an ethnographer! You study scientists in the lab!” If being an ethnographer means observing and interpreting the actions of the people and culture around oneself, then yes, I am an ethnographer. But to be clear, this book in no way meets any standards of a proper ethnography. While I was training to become a scientist, and conducting my own experiments in a lab, I was not systematically taking notes on my colleagues around me or documenting how as scientists we come up with our hypotheses and conduct our scientific experiments.

Rather, I went deep into studying the practices of molecular biology, and through a slow and sometimes imperceptible process, perhaps much like watching grass grow, I became an expert in learning how to spot both the challenges and possible points of entry for creating interdisciplinary work and shared moments of perplexity. Having been trained in the biological sciences and having now spent a significant amount of time as a feminist STS scholar, I have come to the conclusion that the hardest task of interdisciplinary scholarship entails not only learning how to come to the table but also knowing how to assemble a table that will actually support joint conversations. This process takes time, and the results are not always immediate. A methodology of reaching out and making connections requires the slow and painstaking work of developing shared vocabularies and respect for distinct and sometimes quite
disparate practices. It takes time to learn how to frame one’s questions in a way that they can actually be heard from another disciplinary standpoint.

*This passage is taken from Roy’s *Molecular Feminisms: Biology, Becomings, and Life in the Lab*. The Open Access version can be viewed here: [https://uw.manifoldapp.org/projects/molecular-feminisms](https://uw.manifoldapp.org/projects/molecular-feminisms)

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**Meet the Halle/FCHI Undergraduate Global Research Fellows**

The Halle Institute for Global Research and the Fox Center offer Fellowships to support research outside the United States for juniors in any school (Arts and Sciences, Business, Nursing) contemplating honors theses or other types of senior capstone projects. The international research portion of the fellowship is followed by participation in the vibrant research community of Emory faculty, graduate students, and visiting scholars based at the FCHI and the Halle Institute.

Mary Bohn, East Asian Studies  
Rizky Etika, Art History  
Junyi Han, History and Media Studies  
Aleksei Kaminski, African Studies and Economics  
Rachael Lewis, Biology  
Darien “Penny” McElwee, Psychology  
Sophia Minnillo, Linguistics and French Studies  
Xavier Sayeed, Music and Jewish Studies  
Daniel Thomas, History and International Studies  
Kira Tucker, English and Creative Writing

On November 13, the Halle Institute and the Fox Center sponsored a day long Undergraduate Response Forum in Convocation Hall, with public presentations by the Summer/Fall 2019 Undergraduate Global Research Fellows and the Fall 2019 SIRE Fox Center Fellow.

left - right first row: Daniel Thomas; Mary Bohn; Xavier Sayeed  
left - right second row: moderator Julie Miller; moderator John Brooks;  
FCHI Director Walter Melion; moderator Ryan Carr

left - right first row: Penny McElwee; Kira Tucker;  
Martin Pimenel (SIRE Fellow); Junyi Han  
left - right second row: Halle Director Jeff Lesser;  
Walter Melion
Recent Publications by Fox Center Alumni

Angelika Bammer, Senior Fellow 2002-2003

Robyn Fivush, Senior Fellow 2016-2017

Julia C. Bullock, Senior Fellow 2017-2018

Angie Heo, Post-Doctoral Fellow 2011-2012

Stephen A. Crist, Senior Fellow 2006-2007

Noëlle McAfee, Senior Fellow 2016-2017

For more information on their projects, please visit [http://fchi.emory.edu/home/fellowships/](http://fchi.emory.edu/home/fellowships/).
Alumni news
Anthony Cuda, 2003-2004
Associate Head and Associate Professor, Department of English
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

I’m very pleased to tell you that I’ve accepted the role of the Executive Director of the T. S. Eliot International Summer School in London. We’ve just completed the program, the 11th annual one, and it was a magnificent success. Ronald Schuchard, my mentor at Emory and now my co-editor and close friend, was the founding director.

Information on the globally renowned summer school is here: https://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/study-training/study-weeks/ts-eliot-international-summer-school.
Alumni Reflections

Benjamin Kahan 2009-2010
Associate Professor, Department of English
Louisiana State University

During my 2009-2010 fellowship year, the FCHI offered me an abundance of gifts: the time and space to write and think about my book manuscript, which has since become Celibacies: American Modernism and Sexual Life (Duke, 2013), the rich archival resources of Emory’s rare book room, and the intellectual camaraderie of the university’s faculty and that of my fellow Fellows. While I spent the preponderance of my time at the FCHI working on Celibacies, I also began work on a second book which was published this year by University of Chicago Press: The Book of Minor Perverts: Sexology, Etiology, and the Emergences of Sexuality. Statue-fondling Pygmalionists, wanderlusters, eroticized geniuses, nymphomaniacs, and even one pervert described as “a walking psychopathia sexualis,” this book narrates the shift from what Michel Foucault calls the “thousand aberrant sexualities” to one: homosexuality. It revivifies these numberless and long forgotten perverts by attending to what we might think of now as the wacky, quirky, homophobic, or preposterous explanations of how their desires take shape. Examining these now largely vestigial etiologies enables us to see both how sexuality was imagined differently and how a multiplicity of competing models of desire jumbled and jostled together to forge the contours of modern sexuality.

Ingrid Meintjes 2017-2018
Postdoctoral Associate, Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies
Duke University

A dissertation completion fellowship is an extraordinary gift. Not only was I able to complete my dissertation, Bodies Built for Care: From Indigenous Technologies in South Africa to Social Robotics, but my work was able to grow in unexpected ways thanks to the generous mentorship and unique collegiality which is the community of Fox Fellows - scholars spanning the career, disciplinary and philosophical spectrum.

As a Digital Publishing Dissertation Completion Fellow, I was also able to participate in a community exploring and transforming the disciplinary limits of the humanities. In my case, I was able to consolidate my work as a Graduate Research Assistant on an NSF project with Prof. Deboleena Roy - a former Fox Fellow (http://wgss.emory.edu/RoyLab/).

This project made visible, through digital methodologies, the common ground between microbiologists and reproductive justice advocates in order to catalyze transformation in reproductive science. While at FCHI I was able to develop a journal article that argues for critical digital humanities as a methodology which amplifies the social justice commitments of feminist science and technology studies. I also completed a draft of the first journal article focused on my doctoral research: "But, ain’t I a cyborg? Bodies Built for Care and The Postcolony."

Without a doubt, the privilege of time to focus on my research - not only to finalize my dissertation but to develop my research trajectory resulted in the fortuitous position of being invited to connect and work with a global network of scholars working on rethinking economies of care. Specifically, my research, which focuses
on unpaid HIV/AIDS care work in informal communities in South Africa and develops a decolonial feminist science studies approach to unpaid care labor, earned me a postdoctoral associate position hosted by the Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies Department at Duke University attached to this project. As part of my associateship, I will be convening a research seminar engaging Duke undergraduate and graduate students in conducting vertically integrated research to tackle the overarching project questions. One exciting endeavor is to think about a Global Care Index, incorporating a range of perspectives on economies of care, metrics, commodification, and the very definition of communities of care and the social practices which support them. The project is at its inception, but if you would like to follow our progress, or even join the network, you will be able to do so here: https://www.economiesofcare.com

My FCHI dissertation completion fellowship allowed me to position my work in the most favorable way possible, an unquantifiable gift to my academic and advocacy endeavors.

Deborah Schlein 2012-2013
Ph.D. candidate, Department of Near Eastern Studies
Princeton University
I recently returned to Emory for a quick trip, and, as I was walking around campus, I came down North Decatur Road, and stopped in front of the Fox Center. The house brought back memories of my senior year at Emory, during which I spent a great deal of time writing my honors thesis as an undergraduate research fellow representing the Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies department. This process also entailed much reading of 10th-century Arabic sources, staring out of windows on rainy days, constant snack consumption, and receiving advice and feedback from the various scholars who frequented the center during lunchtime conversations.

This kind of environment and support prepared me for the next six years of my academic career. This past June, I received my PhD in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University, where I wrote my dissertation on the history of Yunani Tibb, or Greek medicine, in Mughal and colonial India. To do this, I utilized Arabic and Persian manuscripts that I’d worked with in various Indian manuscript libraries in order to tell the story of those who studied and benefitted from this medicine as well as those who helped develop and change it in its early modern South Asian environment.

With an eye toward history of science, as well as resource accessibility, and an appreciation for the book in all its forms, I start a librarian postdoc at New York University this Fall. As a Provost’s Postdoctoral Librarian fellow, I will be working with the Middle Eastern Studies librarian and the South Asian Studies librarian at NYU’s Bobst Library to train as an area studies librarian from 2019 to 2021. During this time, I will also be working on transforming my dissertation into a book on the history of Yunani Tibb in India that is written for the general public. I’m looking forward to the journey, and I have my time at the FCHI to thank for helping to instill in me a love of the research process.

Jennifer L. Brady 2009-2010
Associate Director of Studies, Committee on Degrees in History & Literature
Harvard University
I still feel very grateful for my time at the Fox Center. As a Dissertation Completion Fellow, I had time not only to finish writing a chapter or two, but also to pull the project together and think about its direction. But the experiences during my fellowship that stick with me most relate to the
community at the Center, and continue to inform my approach to my role as an Associate Director of Harvard’s History & Literature program. Our faculty is composed almost entirely of scholars who have recently completed their Ph.D.s, and form a vibrant community of people dedicated to teaching and scholarship in the humanities, who often collaborate in informal and collegial ways around their work. One of my first glimpses of that kind of community outside of my graduate program was at the Fox Center. I found it enlivening and enriching at a crucial moment in my graduate career, and am happy to be in a position where I can foster that kind of community.

Cana McGhee 2018-2019
PhD Candidate in Historical Musicology
Harvard University

There are two things that I will remember about my year-long FCHI experience. One is the yellow house that witnessed my daily morning writing sessions, without which I would not have achieved my goal to fuse original translations with literary analysis and French-language art song into commentary on nationalism. Even now, I do not fully recognize the magnitude of that undertaking for an undergraduate thesis! The second is one of the weekly work-in-progress luncheons. Senior Fellow Rosemary Magee presented her autobiographical project, the collage-like narrative of which beautifully transcended time and genre. The diverse roundtable of mindsets achieved the communal vision of interdisciplinarity I had prior to embarking on a thesis. As my project evolved, I believed in its organic emergence from lifelong interests in music, literature, and language, and it became clear that the same was true of other Fellows. The discussion of Rosemary’s project was fittingly personal, anecdotal, and about everyone’s individual resonances. It struck me that other luncheons unfolded similarly, with each scholar processing new ideas to generate other versions through their own realms of familiarity. I realized that interdisciplinarity emphasizes engagement between ideas, which at minimum, only requires one person connecting varied concepts and influences. Rosemary’s talk revealed how one person can possess enough knowledge to create something interdisciplinary, and that, by extension, my own experiences were enough to produce valid scholarship. That lesson impacted me academically and personally in ways that are difficult to describe. Despite the challenge of capturing its loveliness, my time with FCHI was humbling. It also prepared me for a hoped-for future in academia, the next steps of which have taken me along the path of pursuing a Harvard PhD. Leaving Emory, though, only enriches the sense of empowerment in accepting individuality as a source of collective strength, and I will be forever grateful.

Fox Center Interdisciplinary Research Seminars
For over ten years, the Fox Center has been home to a wide variety of Interdisciplinary Seminars. Dr. Sandra Still offers a reflection on the Contemporary Women Novelists Reading Group, one of our original seminars and still going strong.

“My tenure as Convener of the Contemporary Women Novelists Reading Group began in the fall of 2009. In the words of Dr. Martine Brownley, the group’s originator: “The reading group began in the spring of 2009, after a group of graduate students I had in a Contemporary Women Novelists seminar in the fall of 2008 was so impressive, particularly in applying feminist theory to the novels, that I found myself wanting the conversations to continue. One of the strengths of CHIRS groups is that they can include undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty, interested members of the community, etc. — basically, groups of people who might not otherwise be carrying on intellectual conversations with each other.”
I attended the first gatherings of the reading group in the spring of 2009. Somehow, I was encouraged (coerced?) to take over as convener. As I was then the librarian for English and Women’s Studies, I had frequent contact with a number of graduate students. For our first semester, we decided to read four novels. Since then, we have read three titles each in spring and fall semesters. We gather at 7:00 pm on three Tuesday nights a semester and enjoy sandwiches, salad, wine or water, and cookies—a boon for those coming from Emory or elsewhere who don’t want to go home and come back. Everyone’s opinion matters, and we often find that after having decided we don’t like a novel, we see other facets of the narrative during the discussion, which we had not recognized previously.

During the course of the semester, everyone is free to suggest titles for the next semester. We all vote on the list, and the top three titles become our novels for the following season. Since we all come from different places in work and life, the various perspectives are welcome and illuminating. We always welcome new members, so please contact me if you are interested in joining us.”

2019-2020
Interdisciplinary Research Seminar (CHIIRS)
Sponsored by
The Bill and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry

Gender, Sexuality, and Pluralism in the Muslim World:
Perspectives from Sharia Courts and Everyday Life
Moderator: Michael Peletz, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Anthropology

Global Legal History
Facilitator: Yanna Yannakakis, Associate Professor and
Winship Distinguished Research Chair (2017-2020) in the History Department
This seminar’s objective is to develop theories and methods for the practice of a global legal history.

Contemporary Women Novelists Reading Group
Facilitator: Dr. Sandra J. Still, English (Emerita)
Robert W. Woodruff Library
Faculty and graduate students come together from a range of disciplines interested in reading and discussing novels by contemporary women writers.

The East Asian Studies (EAS) Writing Group
Facilitator: Julia Bullock, Associate Professor
Department of Russian and East Asian Languages and Cultures
This writing group is a collaborative space for the promotion of research and writing on East Asia.

Europe and Beyond
Moderator: Walter S. Melion, Director, Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry
Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Art History

Experimental Ethnography
Moderator: Professor Debra Vidali, Department of Anthropology
This seminar evaluates a range of experimental ethnographic projects across different genres.

Digital Humanities Community of Practice
Sarah McKee, Senior Associate Director for Digital Publishing, FCHI
Keith Anthony, Executive Director, FCHI
GALACSI
Georgia Atlantic, Latin American, and Caribbean Studies Initiative
Moderator: Julia Gaffield, Georgia State University
A group of scholars engaged in pedagogical and research collaborations focused on the history of the Atlantic World, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

East Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Seminar (EAMES)
Moderators: Cheryl Crawley, Department of Russian & East Asian Languages and Cultures and Devin Stewart, Chair, Department of Russian East Asian Languages & Cultures

We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for its support of this program. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these seminars do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

FCHI Great Works Seminars
Each year, the FCHI offers two seminar series designed for the greater community. These seminars focus on a notable work, text, movement, or historical moment and are framed within academic and popular sources. Led by faculty and experts in their field, these seminars are held either during the fall or spring semester and are free and open to the public.

2019-2020 Great Works Seminars

Making Women (Free): Colonialism, Orientalism, and Liberalism in Conversation
Moderator: Falguni A. Sheth, Associate Professor, Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Believing that Muslim women are oppressed, many liberal nations--France, Italy, Austria, and now Canada, among others, have gone to lengths to regulate when and where Muslim women can wear the hijab. Even today, black women and men face restrictions on their hairstyles in U.S. workplaces. Why do the self-presentations of women of color make liberal societies so uncomfortable, even when liberals agree that individual freedom and autonomy are crucial principles to protect? Philosopher Frantz Fanon suggested that the French colonial government in Algeria concentrated its efforts on regulating women’s haïks in order to control, if not destroy, Algerian society. This seminar explores these questions through the works of Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak and others who shed light on this topic.

Honey on the Page: Yiddish Children’s Literature and the Jewish Twentieth Century
Moderator: Miriam Udel, Associate Professor of Yiddish Language, Literature, and Culture in the Department of German Studies and The Tam Institute for Jewish Studies
This seminar examines a set of primary sources that have been neglected until now: stories and poems written in the early decades of the twentieth century for Yiddish-speaking children. We will analyze these texts critically, placing them in their European and American contexts and seeing what they have to teach about the
movements and events that dominated the Jewish twentieth century and how they address questions that still perplex contemporary Jewish communities. Session topics include: 1) A Sabbath for Socialists  2) Family as State, State as Family’ 3) The Evergreen Legend of the Jewish Pope.

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2019-2020 Georgia Seminars

Convergence/Divergence: Perspectives on Georgia Women Writers
Moderator: Rosemary M. Magee, writer and scholar of southern literature and religion, and past director of the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library at Emory University.

Middle Georgia over the last century shaped writers and artists of lasting influence—including Flannery O’Connor, Alice Walker, Joel Chandler Harris, Raymond Andrews, and Benny Andrews. This seminar focuses primarily on the work of Alice Walker and Flannery O’Connor, born less than 25 miles of each other, within this broader cultural milieu. We will read their essays and short stories to consider the convergence of time and place as well as the divergence of race and class. Their papers, held by the Rose Library, will provide an opportunity to discover points of connection and disconnection while examining the significance of their lives and work.

Close Escapes: Four Poets on Leaving Georgia
Moderator: Lizzy LeRud, scholar of American poetry and poetics, a former Fox Center fellow and current Marrion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow at Georgia Institute of Technology. Born in Georgia, poets John Rollins Ridge, Conrad Aiken, and Alice Walker all experienced moments of extreme trauma that pushed them out of their home state. Born in Florida, Chelsea Rathburn moved to Georgia in 2001, returning to a place that had once been her family’s longtime home. Just months ago, Rathburn became Georgia’s newest poet laureate. These departures (and, for some, homecomings) marked significant events in these poets’ lives that correspond in turn with some of the state’s most pivotal moments: Indian Removal, the rise of Jim Crow laws, the Great Migration, and contemporary debates about women’s rights as mothers. How does leaving Georgia and leaving for Georgia influence these writers and their work? How do a state’s policies and communities shape the lives of its writers?

We are grateful to Georgia Humanities for its support of this program. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these seminars do not necessarily reflect those of Georgia Humanities.