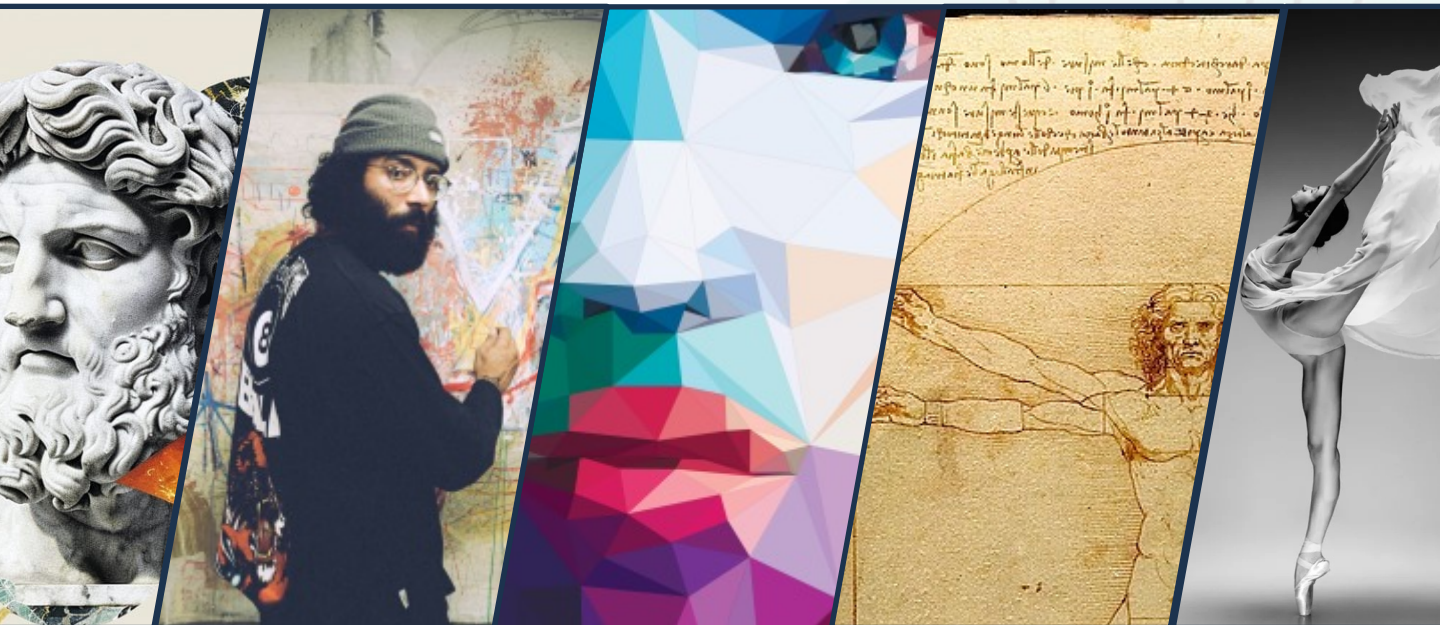


Institute for the Humanities



OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY®

SEPTEMBER 2024



WELCOME BACK! We hope everyone had a healthy and productive summer. As we approach a new school year, we would like to look back at some of the previous year's accomplishments.

The Institute for the Humanities helped organize and sponsor two highly successful events: The nine-day visit of Native Hawaiian artist, illustrator, educator, and activist, **Solomon Enos**, which included live painting demonstrations, classroom visits, and the opening of his show *Papahānaumoku: A Panoply of New Island Cultures* at the Baron and Ellin Gordon Art Galleries; and two lectures (one for the Literary Festival and one

for the Arts@ODU) by actor, director, musician, and art historian, **Dr. Peter Weller**.

In summer 2024, the Institute for the Humanities launched their campaign "Across the University: Humanities at Work." This project emerged out of **Dr. Anne Muraoka's** HUM 603 Strategic Professional Development Pro-Seminar, where students conducted an extensive survey on the function and importance of the humanities from constituents across the university and the Hampton Roads community. This is only the first part of a larger campaign to raise awareness of the value of the humanities and what the Institute for the Humanities can offer.

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Announcements

The Institute for the Humanities

would like to recognize and congratulate students and faculty who received awards for the 2024 – 2025 academic year:

Kayla Bruce – Recipient of the 2024 – 2025 Louis I. Jaffe Memorial Scholarship – Art History and Humanities

Danielle Brown – Recipient of 2024 – 2025 Charles K. Sibley Scholarship in Art History (Graduate) and the 2024 – 2025 Louis I. Jaffe Memorial Scholarship – Art History and Humanities

The Institute for the Humanities would also like to acknowledge our faculty Capstone and Theses mentors:

Dr. Brett Bebber
Dr. Vittorio Colaizzi
Dr. Andrew Kissel
Dr. Kate Mattingly

Dr. Amy Milligan

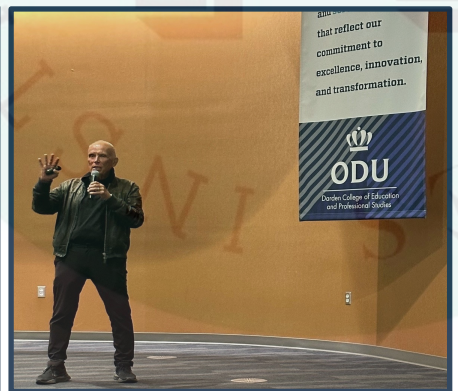
Dr. Myles McNutt
Dr. Megan Nutzman
Dr. Amanda Petersen
Dr. Elizabeth Zanoni

Tiffany Goodman – Recipient of the 2024 – 2025 Susan Rowell Graduate Scholarship in Humanities

Dr. Anne H. Muraoka – Recipient of the 2024 Outstanding Service to the College Award

The Humanities Department would also like to acknowledge our recent M.A. graduates:

Kayla Bruce, Fall 2023
Sarah Gorman, Fall 2023
Jessica Gurley, Fall 2023
Dan A. Blachman, Summer 2024
Cathryn Janka, Summer 2024





Meet: **Dr. Lida Zeitlin-Wu**

Dr. Lida Zeitlin-Wu is a media historian and theorist. Originally trained in modern languages, her interdisciplinary research focuses on the commodification and rationalization of sensory experience – particularly color – under technocapitalism. Dr. Zeitlin-Wu holds a B.A. in Slavic Languages & Literatures and Visual Art from the University of Chicago, a M.A. in both Film & Media and Comparative Literature, and a PhD in Film & Media (all from the University of California, Berkeley). From 2022-2024, she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan. This Fall semester, she joins ODU and the Institute for Humanities as an Assistant Professor in Media Studies, Department of Communication & Theatre Arts.

What is your personal definition of the Humanities and why do you think they are important?

We often tend to think about the Humanities in terms of particular objects or fields of study, especially those that fall outside of the realm of STEM—art, literature, music, film, etc. But as an interdisciplinary scholar with a somewhat eclectic academic trajectory (I've studied and written about everything from Russian literature, to comics, to meditation apps, to AI colorization tools), the Humanities for me are less about specific artifacts than they are a world view or orientation. They're about generating questions and imagining alternative possibilities and less about concrete answers or application-based approaches. What does approaching

technology as a humanist look like as opposed to an engineer, for instance? In both my research and teaching I emphasize critical thinking and formal/visual analysis—the ability to take apart a text, broadly defined, and to mine it for its ideological implications. How do objects as innocuous seeming as color charts show racial or gender bias? How does a color chart from the 1950s point to historically specific ways of relating to the senses that are similar or different to 2024's Pantone Color of the Year? Finally, the Humanities for me also mean not taking for granted who the “human” in “Humanities” is. As we're constantly reminded, humanity is not something that is equally afforded to everyone, so even the term itself merits dissecting and critiquing.

Dr. Zeitlin-Wu, you are currently working on a new book, *How Color Became a Technology: The Making of Chromatic Capitalism*. Can you share a little about the project, how it was conceived, and how it has evolved?

This monograph is the culmination of over a decade-long obsession with color that began when I was writing a BA thesis on color in Vladimir Nabokov's work and then shifted substantially as I pivoted towards Film & Media Studies and completed a dissertation called "Seeing by Numbers: Color Systems and the Digitization of Perception." The book is an outgrowth of the dissertation, but it's really a different project. Whereas my doctoral work was more focused on shifting understandings of "the digital" and theories of perception as seen through the lens of color, *How Color Became a Technology: The Making of Chromatic Capitalism* has the argument built into the title. It's about how something as ephemeral as color became a technology, how capital wielded it, and how this capture and commodification of the color spectrum created normative subjects along racialized, classed, and gendered lines while simultaneously generating novel forms of pleasure and suffering as part of a larger aspiration towards "the good life" in the United States. To take a specific example, think of something like a personality quiz that promises the quiz-taker that their favorite color will reveal some deeper insight about themselves and in turn make them happier at home or at work. This is a

perfect example of chromatic capitalism in that it relies on a set of predetermined, rationalized color standards to uncover a subjective, irrational aspect about selfhood—and then seeks to commodify that subjective aspect. My goal in writing this book, which spans roughly the late-nineteenth century to the present day and draws on original archival research, is to highlight mass-produced color's indispensable role in the history of capitalism, and how contemporary case studies (like augmented reality filters on TikTok) must be understood as part of a century-long project of quantifying perception and selfhood that continues to take on new forms in our digital present.

Could you share some insight on how color theory influences storytelling and emotional impact in both media productions and/or theatrical performances?

This is a bit of a tricky question to answer. There's no denying that color plays a key role in constructing visual narratives and soliciting emotional impact from the viewer (as a case in point, I recently saw the digitally remastered version of *The Wizard of Oz* on the big screen at Naro Expanded Cinema in Ghent). At the same time, I also believe that color has much more to offer us than as an allegorical or narrative device, and that the body of knowledge that goes under the name of "color theory" is less a set of laws or rules than one of many ways of thinking about color. In my classes, I'm always pushing my students to move away from treating

color as a purely symbolic device, which is really less about color itself and more about what it stands for. For instance, when I teach the 1998 film *Pleasantville*, which was one of the earliest films to use digital color grading throughout, we move beyond the overtly allegorical aspects of the film and look at its unique technical affordances—it would have been impossible before digital color grading to have black-and-white in the same frame, for instance (with the exception of hand-coloring or tinting). We also look at the way the film conflates color as a sensory phenomenon with color's racial valences—characters that go from black and white to color become labeled “coloreds” in an explicit reference to Jim Crow-era segregation, despite the film having an all-white cast, and we then situate the film historically amidst 1990s discourses about multiculturalism and racial colorblindness.

Do you have any upcoming research projects or collaborations that explore the synergy between color theory, media, theatre, and communications that you can share with us?

Yes! I find immense joy in collaboration, which is something we don't see enough of in the Humanities. I have two forthcoming collaborative books coming out in early 2025. The first is an edited volume with Dr. Carolyn L. Kane (Toronto Metropolitan University) called *Color Protocols: Technologies of Racial Encoding in Chromatic Media* (forthcoming from MIT Press), which is a collection of essays from scholars in the Humanities, arts, and social sciences

writing at the intersection of color and race. I was also lucky to have the chance to be one of fourteen authors (yes, you read that right) on an experimental multi-voiced monograph with the research collective The DISCO Network. The book, which we all wrote together on an intensive writing retreat in rural Pennsylvania is called *Technoskepticism: Between Possibility and Refusal* (forthcoming from Stanford University Press's “Sensing Media” series). It argues for a “technoskeptical” stance towards new technologies that neither involves completely embracing nor refusing them, as seen through the experiences of those who have historically been excluded from these conversations, particularly disabled people and people of color.

Can you share what your favorite color is and why?

As I mentioned when discussing my book project, I'm fascinated by this very question, which didn't become a common thing we asked people until after World War II. Why is it that someone's favorite color becomes a way of gleaning insight into their personality? That said, my favorite color is teal or turquoise. I like bold, bright colors that fall under “jewel tones,” and I make a conscious effort to invite color into my wardrobe and home. In academia and in the corporate world, bright colors are too often shunned or seen as gaudy or unprofessional, and this is often gendered. At a conference last spring, I saw a woman wearing a bright teal suit in a sea of blacks and grays. It brought a smile to my face.

Is there anything else you would like me to include in your bio or anything else you would like for me to share?

My research on the senses extends to taste and food studies, which I hope will be the subject of my second book. If there are any ODU faculty or grad students working in this area, please do reach out!

Thank you for your time, Dr. Zeitlin-Wu and welcome to ODU.

If you are interested in learning more about Dr. Zeitlin-Wu's research, you can visit her homepage at [Lida Zeitlin-Wu](#).

Introducing: **Dr. Jasper Waugh-Quasebarth**



Dr. Jasper Waugh-Quasebarth is a cultural anthropologist and folklorist whose interests include human/environmental relationships, placemaking, education, and museums and public scholarship. His most recent research focused on craft labor, the creation of musical instruments, and grassroots community organizations in the Appalachian and Carpathian Mountains. Dr. Waugh-Quasebarth joins ODU this fall as the new Director and Curator of the Baron and Ellin Gordon Art Galleries.

Dr. Waugh-Quasebarth, can you share with us any upcoming goals and/or events you have planned for the Gordon Art Galleries?

I'm interested in bringing forward the commitments of the Gordon Art Galleries of celebrating the legacies and impacts of self-taught artists with further explorations of the contexts from which creative expression emerges. Materials, ecologies,

economies, and politics are all entangled in our everyday forms of self-expression, and I'm looking forward to seeing where those connections can take us. I'm particularly interested in thinking through how the materials we use in artistic expression link us to environments and create a sense of place, so you can expect to see that as a recurring theme in upcoming programming!

In the spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration, how do you see the art gallery engaging with university departments outside of the Institute for the Humanities?

Interdisciplinary collaboration is at the heart of my work. I love finding connections in relationships both theoretical and collaborative. If we can bring diverse methodological and expressive toolkits to the galleries, I think our programming will be all the richer for it. I see natural sciences, humanities, computer and health sciences, education, engineering, business – you name it – as having a piece of the story to tell in the arts as well as a being a core part of what drives interest from audiences. Inviting other faculty, students, and community partners to collaborate in the curatorial process and programming will give us more compelling narratives to accompany our exhibitions and a better engaged audience.

Do you have any plans to include any local or indigenous communities in future presentations or exhibitions?

Absolutely! Place is such a critical piece to making impactful programming and fulfilling the civic engagement mission of the university. I'm thinking of ways in we can engage local communities in exhibitions that both honor and critically engage place-making in the Tidewater as well as its connections to other global regions. For instance, I'm thinking of the legacy of the coal industry and railroad industry links this area to

areas I've worked with in Appalachia in concrete, material ways, creating a cultural linkage of place between the two regions. Any discussion of place must also consider the legacies of settler-colonialism, so I'm also really interested in connecting with indigenous communities in Virginia and from the Chesapeake Bay and mid-Atlantic regions to envision how they might want to represent historical and emerging expressive traditions.

Can you share where your interests in anthropology and folklore stem from? Will anthropology and folklore play a major role in any upcoming art exhibitions?

Anthropology really captured my interests as an undergraduate student by exposing me to radically different ways of thinking– imbuing personhood, say, to a landscape or an object. I was fortunate as a student and a young professional to conduct fieldwork first in Guyana and then in Central Asia, where I had to think outside of myself in many ways and think critically about the responsibilities of representing the lives of other people. For me, these experiences changed how I value relationships with the human, nonhuman, and material world, which resonated with the values and foundations of Folklore Studies as I came to know it in my graduate research. Training in these fields has given me a way to frame my work both conceptually and methodologically, so they will certainly play a role in upcoming exhibitions!

A large amount of your scholarship is focused in Appalachia. Dr. Waugh-Quasebarth, can you share your favorite Appalachian folklore?

Appalachian folklore is definitely having a moment in the popular imagination – Mothman, ramps, what’s not to love?! I’ve done a lot of work around music and craft traditions focused mainly on making musical instruments, and the intersection of the world of plant knowledge with craft is something that’s particularly interesting to me.

But I would say the thing that has stuck with me over the years are the ballads that have been collected and reworked by generations of musical performers. I love sitting with timeless performances that are made their own by extraordinary artists. Versions of “One Morning in May” performed by Virginia balladeer Texas Gladden and artist Nina Simone are wonderful examples that demonstrate the persistence of folk traditions and the varied forms they can take.

Welcome to ODU Dr. Waugh-Quasebarth and thank you for your time.

If you are interested to learn more about Dr. Waugh-Quasebarth’s research in anthropology and folklore, you can watch [Engaging with Community-based research in Appalachian Ohio](#).



Alumni Spotlight: **David Tortolini**

David Tortolini is currently a PhD student in American Studies at Purdue University. He received a B.A. in English and a M.A. in Humanities from ODU in 2021. Tortolini’s research examines how colonialism and imperialism have impacted our understanding of flavor. His work examines how coffee roasters discuss and reproduce flavors in physical/digital spaces. Tortolini has also researched the impacts of digital cooking shows and food television in relation to cultural appropriations and their effects on marginalized and minority communities.

Can you share with us any current or upcoming projects you are working on at Purdue University?

Sure, I have become fascinated with using visual components as part of my methodology. I have been working on what I call coffee tasting performances where I make coffee for small groups, and we discuss how we are experiencing the flavors and the moment with the coffee outside the norm. Essentially, it is the key arguments of dissertation being removed from margins of the page to a cup. I am also working on a collaborative project discussing my colleagues' and my approaches to academia and our work through perspectives of ethical working practices.

Can you briefly explain how colonialism has historically shaped our understanding of flavors and how these influences persist in modern food studies?

So, most of our understanding of taste and our senses are based on Western epistemologies. Through colonialism and the expansion of Western empires, these Western-centric frames of understanding the world and our body became the global standard/referencing point. We have archival texts where we see people who have performed actions of violence, control, and erasure upon colonized and enslaved people based on people's sensorial mapping of them. We can observe how those in power were enforcing standards of tasting, defining how things are to taste, create community boundaries

situated around smell and implemented formal and informal education practices.

I am really interested in how standard and definition practices are happening right now. There has not been a major shift to the approaches of these practices from 17th century to now, just changes in words and technologies. Through my work of looking at how coffee roasters create conversations and rhetoric around flavor. This happens in two ways by actually defining the fruit that is being harvested and by roasters online using stories that exoticizes the life of the coffee farmer(s). None of this helps the coffee farmer, in fact they worsen exploitative systems.

How does your research integrate elements of digital studies and cultural appropriation?

My work looks at the physical/digital divide and how we have recoded the systems of inequality and societal structures in digital spaces. I am interested in the discussion of coffee flavors and our senses by coffee roasters online and how consumers perceive it.

Your research has a heavy focus on coffee. Can you share with us why you have a personal connection to coffee and your favorite flavor?

I enjoy making coffee or yerba mate, it is basically all I drink. As an Argentinean-American, yerba mate has more of a special place in my heart than coffee. I actually do not have a favorite coffee flavor anymore. I tell everybody it is all about the vibe,

my favorite coffees are the ones I vibe with best, *jaja*. From an academic perspective, it has fascinated me how coffee can fit into so many fields of research, from global supply chains, agriculture, to my little space(s).

Why did you choose to pursue a Humanities degree? Is there any advice you want to share with current or potential Master of Humanities graduate students?

I liked the department because it roots itself in being an interdisciplinary

space. I like interdisciplinary scholarship because it forces us to be in conversation and have expertise in so many fields all at once. There is a fluidity and a beauty to that.

What I would like to tell students. First off, enjoy your time and have fun. During your time at the Institute for the Humanities, try out new frames of thought and places of inquiry. The Institute of the Humanities provided me with space and encouragement to explore things outside of my comfort zone, which has led me to the work I'm doing right now.

Thank you for your time, David and good luck at Purdue University.

If you are interested to learn more about David's research, you can read his M.A. thesis:

[Media Effects on Cultural Perceptions as Seen in Food Media and Food Cultures](#)

Student
Spotlight:
Danielle Brown



I'm **Danielle**, the new Graduate Assistant for the Institute of the Humanities.

My professional background in the luxury apparel industry and an enduring emotional connection to clothing and accessories has manifested into a sincere appreciation of fashion as art.

I began my journey at ODU as an Interdisciplinary Individualized Studies major where I was able to craft my own unique course of study, which I titled Fashion History and Culture. When selecting courses to include in my degree program, I opted for courses where I would be able to view, or at the very least, talk about clothing. I was unaware that my first art history course, Renaissance and Baroque Women with Dr. Muraoka, would shift the trajectory of my life.

Art and other works of art from antiquity to the modern period are literally teeming with depictions of wearable textiles and accessories, yet scholarship referencing fashion is surprisingly neglected. Clothing is typically mentioned in a purely descriptive manner and/or as a means of identification. However, if we take the time to acknowledge the role fashion has played throughout history, we can employ art to glean a more in depth understanding of our human experience.

Dressing and adorning the body is a global commonality that we all share. Clothing is important because we live in it everyday. With Dr. Muraoka's support and guidance, I was able to

seamlessly merge my admiration of apparel and art history into a fashionable research niche.

As an undergraduate, I was enrolled in the Linked B.S./M.A. Humanities degree program, and I recently completed my B.S this summer. This semester, I begin as a full-time student in the in the Humanities program with a concentration in Art History.

All of my research, including my M.A. thesis, is dedicated to exploring the ways in which wearable textiles and fashionable accessories have influenced our global community from cultural, political, religious, and economic aspects. Upon completion of the Humanities program, I plan to publish historical fashionable content and develop original fashion focused art history curriculum.

Art is a reflection of our lives and there is something for everyone. For anyone who has not taken an art history course, I challenge you to register for one and find your own niche. When you do, let me know. I want to hear about how you found what you love.





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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT **DR. ANNE H. MURAOKA**, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES: AMURAOKA@ODU.EDU





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THE Master of Arts in Humanities is interdisciplinary in focus and our students can choose a wide variety of graduate-level courses offered through various departments of the College of Arts and Letters. Students may design a program to meet their own intellectual and professional objectives. Students will work closely with the program director to design a coherent program of study that encourages critical thinking, individual vision, and dynamic scholarship. Together, the student and program director design a curriculum that is comprised of courses from across the disciplines and fields in the College of Arts and Letters. These include art history, linguistics, literature, world languages and cultures, history, international studies, music, philosophy, political studies, geography, sociology, anthropology, communication, film studies, and women's/gender studies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT **DR. ANNE H. MURAOKA**, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES: AMURAOKA@ODU.EDU



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Gay Cultural Studies Fall Faculty & Staff Social

Enjoy dinner
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September
18, 2024

Free drink ticket to the first
15 people to arrive!

Time:

🕒 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Location:

📍 Elation Brewery
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Sept. 23, 7:30 PM

**Free Improvisation
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Sept. 24, 12:30 PM**

**Ranaan Meyer, Double Bass
Nick Kendall, Violin
Charles Yang, Violin**

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Free garage parking: Corner of W. 49th St. & Bluestone Ave.

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10 or more, \$15 general

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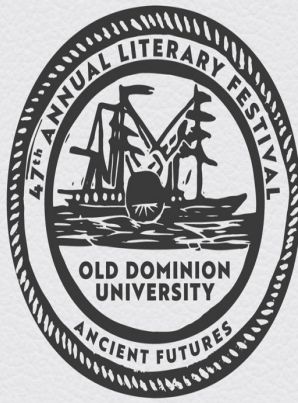


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Photograph (detail) by Mark Atkinson



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Event information and access links are available at odu.edu/litfest.
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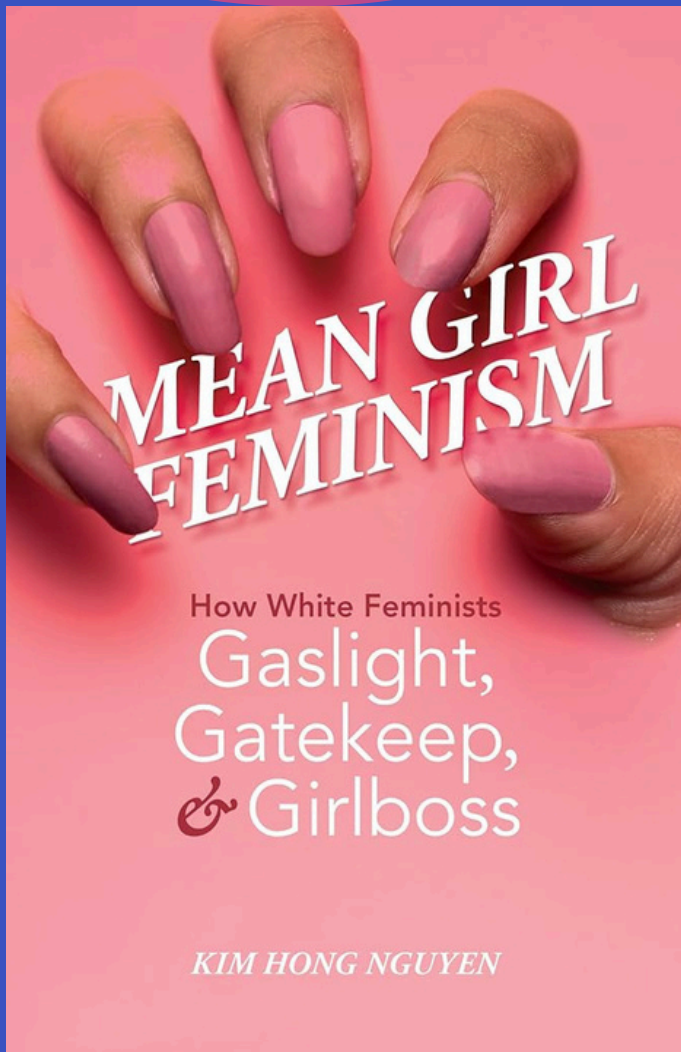


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KIM HONG NGUYEN
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FEMINISM**

How White Feminists

**GASLIGHT,
GATEKEEP,
& GIRLBOSS**



Kim Hong Nguyen
Author

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5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
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