

Nieuwsbrief 295

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SAVE THE DATE: ASCA BORREL JUNE 5TH 2026

All ASCA members and friends are welcome to the drinks after the closing of the ASCA Workshop!

ASCA WORKSHOP 2026: WAYWARD VISUALITY:

THE QUESTION OF VIOLENCE AND LIBERATION

Amsterdam, 3 – 5 June 2026 | Organized by Eleri Connick, Sabahat Zehra and Rodrigo Brum | contact::

ascaworkshop2026@proton.me

Just over a month until the 2026 ASCA Annual Workshop and we are delighted to share more details about the keynote speakers and what you can expect over the three days.

The conference will open with our first keynote speaker - **Augusta Conchiglia**. The Italian journalist and photographer clandestinely entered Angola in 1968 and travelled hundreds of kilometres with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (PMLA) She'll be sharing her stories of intimately capturing the anti-colonial movement over a two-year period of living with the PMLA.

On Wednesday evening, we will excitingly be screening Augusta's film, *A prorosito dell'Angola* at 5.30pm at Spui25. The film which explores Portuguese colonialism and political struggle will be open to the public to watch so we encourage arriving early.

On Thursday June 4, we'll be joined by **Naveen Minai**, Assistant Professor of Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Wesleyan University. Her scholarship thinks through the everyday intimacies of capital, war, and empire through cultural histories, practices, and spaces in reorienting notions of Asia and Asia(n).

And finally, on Friday June 5 with **María del Rosario Acosta López**, Professor in the Department of Hispanic Studies at the University of California, Riverside. Her work is at the intersection of philosophy, critical theory, and Latin American studies. exploring how societies marked by war, disappearance and structural violence remember.

The conference will close on Friday June 5 with an exciting screening of Mohammad Malas's 1987 film *al-Manam (The Dream)* as a starting point for considering contemporary moving-image works made by or with Palestinians that refuse the expository dimensions of conventional documentary and forensic media. As part of the round-table Wayward Imaginaries of Liberation. The full schedule will be available on the ASCA website next week and will also include information on how to sign up to the ten workshops that will be taking place during the three days. The workshops are diverse and varied from working with surveillance imagery to poetry - we are so excited to share them with you soon!

DISSERTATION DEFENSE: KATE SACCONE

Showing Early and Silent Films Today: Curatorial Challenges, Considerations, and Possibilities | Supervisors: Giovanna Fossati, Christian Olesen | 22 MAY 2026, Aula, 11.00 hrs.



My dissertation examines the contemporary

presentation of silent films made between approximately the late 1890s and the late 1920s. I assert this public-facing curatorial practice as a singular subfield of archival film exhibition that warrants more sustained critical attention as such. To help delineate its boundaries and embedded issues, I ask: What exactly are we doing when we present early and silent cinema today? What are the explicit and implicit conditions of curatorial engagement? What relations, structures, processes, strategies, constraints, matters, challenges, considerations, and possibilities come into play when we show early and silent films to contemporary audiences and engage with them at a curatorial level? I ultimately argue that contemporary silent film curating can be understood as the act of managing both presences *and* absences, and that these absences can take a variety of “negative” forms, including temporal distance (Chapter 1), sonic absence (Chapter 2), material loss (Chapter 3), and interpretive mutability (Chapter 4). Grounded in critical feminist thinking and employing a range of methods—including practice-based research, case study analysis, and exploratory interviews—I treat these negative categories as crucial elements of contemporary silent film curating today as well as generative starting points for vital transformative conceptual and practical engagement moving forward.

NEW ASCA VISITING FELLOW NATALYA LUSTY

May-June 2026



Natalya Lusty is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2018-2025). She teaches and publishes across the fields of cultural and media studies, fashion studies, gender and sexuality studies and visual culture. She is the author of *Surrealism, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (Routledge, 2017) and the editor of *Cambridge Critical Concepts: Surrealism* (2021) which won the Association of Australia and New Zealand Art Writing and Publishing Award for best anthology in 2022. Whilst at ASCA she will be presenting a masterclass on “Critical Approaches to Art and Media in the Age of AI,” co-hosting a workshop with Dr. Roberto Filippello on “New Work on Feminist and Queer Fashion” and working with him on a special

journal issue on “Queering Fashion Screens.” During her visit Prof. Lusty will also participate in the research seminars and activities of ASCA groups/units such as Queer Analysis, Fashion/representations in global context, and Cross Media.

SPECULATIVE MEDIA: LITERATURE, DIGITAL STORY-WORLDS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Speculative Fiction and Imaginaries of the Future organizes this one-day event on May 6 10:00 -16:30

in REC V0.08 [Roeterseilandcampus - building V](#)

With Steven Jankowski and Ruthanna Emrys.

Steve Jankowski is an Assistant Professor in New Media Histories at the University of Amsterdam. His research interests include histories of encyclopedic knowledge, utopian computation, and political theories of democracy. He has published in *New Media & Society*, *Big Data & Society*, and *Internet Histories*. He is currently a co-editor of a special issue of *Convergence* on “Utopian Media Studies” and he has led projects funded by the Wikimedia Foundation.

Ruthanna Emrys is a cognitive psychologist and science fiction writer. She is particularly fascinated by the psychology of emerging technologies and their role in governance. She is the author of *A Half-Built Garden*, a solarpunk novel about crowdsourced decision-making, watershed management, and arguing with aliens. She currently lives in the Netherlands, where she works as an independent consultant.

TEXTILE PRODUCTION AND REPRESENTATION

From Pre- to Postmodernity

Conference May 6–8, 2026 | Netherlands Institute at Athens (NIA) Makri 11, Athens (Metro “Akropoli”) | Keynote Speaker: Professor Joanne Turney | Organized by Joyce Goggin.

Textile Production and Representation: From Pre-to Postmodernity will be held at the Netherlands Institute, Athens, Greece, May 6 - 8, 2026. Speakers at this three-day, interdisciplinary conference will address textile production and representation from the premodern period to the present. The conference features contributions on historical and contemporary textile production, from harvesting materials (i.e. wool, linen, wood fiber, recycled materials, plastics), to processing, creation, and design, as well as papers that address uses of textiles and how they circulate through private and domestic economies, industry, and markets. Speakers will also address the above topics and their representation in various media, from painting to literature and film, to the use of textiles in political activism. In taking an interdisciplinary approach to textiles, and allowing for extended historical perspectives on their production, this conference aims to bring to light new connections between modes of

production and ways of thinking about them at various junctures over several centuries. For the program detail, please check the [ASCA Website](#).

APPLYING CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES TO THE CITY CENTRE OF AMSTERDAM

Walking tour with Rochelle Villani | Organized by the Critical Animal Studies group by Divya Nadkarni and Rochelle Villani | 7 May, 2026, 15h – 17h + self-paid drinks for those who would like to join

During a two hour walking tour starting at OMHP, we interact with the landscape of the city from a critical animal studies-perspective. We will explore facades that include or allude to non-human animals in comparison to facades that portray enslaved persons. On Dam Square we discuss the negative position of pigeons in the postmodern city and their histories, and one street further, a fast-food restaurant that includes photos of half-naked women sitting on hamburgers. The visit ends with an arranged meeting with The Police Cat, a famous cat on Instagram, and this also sparks the discussion of what it means to use animals for animation and the influence this specific case has on the status of the police. In a broader sense, we discuss what it means to live with ‘domesticated’ animals.

The examples bring us to discuss the (neo)colonialist, capitalist, sexist and specisist frameworks and invite participants to reimagine kinship, curiosity and care in relation to living and building in the city. After the visit there is a borrel in a nearby café to continue discussions that arose during the tour.

RECORDS IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERARY IMAGINATION

English Department Lecture by Flore Janssen organized by Michael Miller | Thursday, 07 May—17:30-19:00, PCH 1.04

In the monumental study *English Archives: An Historical Survey*, Richard Olney describes the nineteenth century as the beginning of ‘The Age of the Archivist’ (2023: 171). This period saw the formalizing of record-keeping structures and bodies, such as the Public Record Office in Britain, as well as conceptions of best practice in record-keeping: the first archival manual, the *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* [Handleiding voor her ordenen en beschrijven van archieven] by S. Muller, J. A. Feith and R. Fruin, was published in the Netherlands in 1898. This talk will explore how this growing consciousness of the importance of records and their preservation is translated into nineteenth-century literature. We can all call to mind many examples of letters and wills acting as pivotal instruments in the plots of novels from the period, but we don’t often stop to consider the function

of these documents as records in a legal and archival sense. In this talk, I will bring archival theory into conversation with selected case studies from nineteenth-century literary writing to examine what I see as a growing obsession with records, recording and record-keeping in the period; and one that still influences present-day practices and conceptions of records, archives and their roles.

Dr. Flore Janssen is Assistant Professor in Comparative Literature at the Universiteit Utrecht. Her research focuses on the long nineteenth century and she is particularly interested in representations of marginalization and histories of activism during this period. Her work is strongly rooted in archival sources and contexts and she completed an additional graduate qualification in Archives and Records Management in 2021. Since then her research methodology has increasingly embraced archival theory. This talk is part of her new and developing book project on archives and records in the nineteenth-century popular imagination.

ARCHIVES, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND THE TEMPORALITIES OF KNOWLEDGE

Lecture by Evangelia (Lina) Chordaki (University of Athens) + Workshop by Evangelia (Lina) Chordaki (University of Athens) and Yiorgos-Eugenios Douliakas (Leiden) | Date: 8 May 2026 | Leiden University, Leiden | Contact & registration: g.e.douliakas@hum.leidenuniv.nl | Registration deadline: 1 May 2026 Credits: 1 ECTS

The program consists of a workshop in the morning led by Chordaki and Douliakas and a keynote lecture by Chordaki in the afternoon.

The starting point for the event is *Evangelia (Lina) Chordaki’s* latest book, published by Cambridge University Press, titled *Making Sense of Knowledge: Feminist Epistemologies in the Greek Birth Control Movement (1974–1986)*. This book launch and lecture introduce *Making Sense of Knowledge*, a feminist history that examines how knowledge itself becomes a site of political struggle, transformation, and possibility.

The book begins with a major historical moment in February 1983 (Athens), when five hundred women publicly declared that they had had abortions. Their act of speaking out—bold, collective, and unprecedented—was antimilima: talking back. More than a political gesture, antimilima marked a moment in which feminist actors confronted legal and medical authority, but more importantly the epistemological order that had long excluded their experiences from recognition as knowledge. *Making Sense of Knowledge* follows the reverberations of such moments, reconstructing a world in which feminist actors intervened in the conditions through which knowledge becomes authoritative, speakable, and real.

At the center of the book lies the concept of affective epistemologies of antimilima, which reinterprets feminist acts of speaking back as epistemological practices. Antimilima names the transformation of lived and embodied experience into forms of knowledge that challenged established expertise and reshaped epistemic authority. Through feminist magazines, pamphlets, activist networks, and archival practices, feminist actors developed forms of experiential expertise that blurred the boundaries between scientific and experiential knowledge, theory and political practice, and institutional and collective ways of knowing.

Crucially, *Making Sense of Knowledge* moves beyond assigning epistemic value to emotions. It offers a critical interrogation of the binary model of thought that has historically structured reason and emotion as oppositional domains, and scientific knowledge and embodied experience as analytically distinct registers. The book demonstrates how these divisions have structured hierarchies between different forms of knowledge and between different subjects and their capacity to be recognized as knowers. By theorising the emergence of affective epistemologies of antimilima, the book reveals how feminist actors critically renegotiated these divisions, exposing epistemology itself as a terrain shaped by political struggle, embodied experience, and collective intervention.

Situated within the Greek feminist birth control movement of the late twentieth century, this study offers more than a history of reproductive politics. It presents a political history of making knowledge and making sense of knowledge—a history in which feminist actors confronted institutional expertise while simultaneously producing alternative epistemologies grounded in collective experience. Feminist counterpublics, publications, and archives became sites where knowledge preserved and transformed, allowing marginalized forms of expertise to emerge, circulate, and endure.

This lecture introduces *Making Sense of Knowledge* as an exploration of antimilima as both epistemological and political practice. By tracing how feminist actors transformed embodied experience into knowledge, the book reconstructs knowledge-making as an ongoing process of world-making. Affective epistemologies of antimilima reveal how knowledge does not simply describe the world but participates in its creation—how acts of speaking back become acts of knowing, and how acts of knowing become acts of making worlds.

Workshop: Archives, Social Movements, and the Temporalities of Knowledge

What is an archive, and how does it participate in the making and unmaking of knowledge across time? This workshop approaches archives as epistemic and

political formations that hold traces of the past while enabling knowledge to move, reappear, and acquire new meanings across different historical moments. Archives shape how experiences remain available, how intergenerational connections are sustained, and how forms of knowledge continue to circulate beyond the conditions of their original emergence. The discussion brings into conversation state archives, social movement archives, and personal archives created by participants in collective struggles. State archives consolidate institutional memory through classificatory systems that stabilize authority and organize knowledge according to administrative and political priorities. Archives of social movements emerge from collective action and sustain forms of knowledge produced through political struggle, often in ways that resist institutional containment. Personal archives extend these epistemic trajectories across generations, preserving fragile materials, memories, and attachments through practices of care, responsibility, and transmission, and allowing knowledge to endure through relational continuity.

At the same time, the workshop develops a critical perspective on archival practices themselves. As archives increasingly come to be understood as spaces that allow vulnerable histories and marginalized knowledges to persist, they acquire a powerful ethical and political significance. This revaluation, however, also invites closer examination. What becomes archivable, and what remains outside archival space? Which forms of knowledge are preserved, and which exceed the structures that make preservation possible? Archival practices involve processes of selection, stabilization, and transformation that shape how knowledge endures and how it can be encountered in the present.

By bringing these different archival formations into conversation, the workshop opens a broader reflection on archives as sites of knowledge-making and world-making. Archives sustain intergenerational connections and enable temporal continuities that exceed linear narratives, allowing knowledge produced in moments of struggle to remain active across time. In doing so, they participate in ongoing processes through which histories of injustice remain present, informing how knowledge is carried forward and how more just futures can be imagined.

Speaker's bio

Evangelia (Lina) Chordaki is a historian of science working in Feminist Critical Science and Knowledge Studies and Modern Greek Studies. Her research examines the politics of knowledge production across (techno)science, and medicine, focusing on how authority and credibility are historically constituted through practices of mediation, circulation, and

collective sense-making. Integrating feminist and queer theory with affect theory and the history and anthropology of science, she treats knowledge and knowers as fundamentally situated, analyzing how epistemic hierarchies and regimes of legitimacy emerge at the intersection of institutional, community-based, and activist forms of knowing—particularly in contexts of uncertainty, social inequality, and political transition. Grounded in modern and contemporary Greece in a transnational perspective, her work advances a justice-oriented account of science that foregrounds democratization, plural epistemologies, and the co-production of knowledge, power, and care in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She is the author of *Making Sense of Knowledge: Feminist Epistemologies in the Greek Birth Control Movement (1974–1986)* (2025, Cambridge University Press) and editor of *Queer(ing) Science, Queer(ing) Knowledge* (Palgrave Macmillan, under contract).

Schedule

13:00-13:30 Welcome by organisers

13:30 – 15:30 Workshop with Chordaki and Douliakas: “Archives, Social Movements, and the Temporalities of Knowledge”

15:30 – 16:30 Break

16:30 – 18:00 Book presentation & talk by Chordaki: *Making Sense of Knowledge Feminist Epistemologies in the Greek Birth Control Movement (1974–1986)* 18:00 – 19:00 Small reception

THE OTHER AI: AUTOMATING INTIMACY WITH/THROUGH/BEYOND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Flipping the focus from effective AI to affective AI, from intelligence to intimacy, this event gathers scholars and artists of the psycho-digital realm to ask how bots, avatars and replicas are getting under our skin. | Organized in partnership with the Queer Analysis research group, NICA, as well as the V2 Lab for Unstable Media and het Nieuwe Instituut, both in Rotterdam | 8-9 May 2026

As chatbots become our newest social obsession, it is more important than ever to explore the practices, pleasures and pitfalls of falling in (love) with AI through the lens of the other AI: automated intimacies. Most discussions have tended to approach artificial intelligence from a cognitive perspective, as a tool to help with mental or menial tasks, even as users evolve from seeking information to seeking companionship. In *The Other AI*, we will concentrate on the ‘other’ side of so-called intelligent machines: the intimate, sensual, emotional appeal that these machines make to us as creatures of feeling.

Spread over two days at the V2 Lab for the Unstable Media and Het Nieuwe Instituut, the event will be divided along the lines of **sex** and **love**. On **Day One** @

the V2 Lab artists and academics will analyse ‘**Desiring Machines: Sex and Robots**’ to ask how sexual technologies are changing, or revealing, erotic practices. On **Day Two @ het Nieuwe Instituut**, performances, lectures and workshops will focus on ‘**Virtual Love and Companionship – for Real**’, asking after the utopian and dystopian possibilities of technologized love: how real does it feel?

ILUMINACE – FILMIC MATTER AND GEOGRAPHIC SPECIFICITY

On behalf of the interinstitutional Research Group ‘Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition’ (UU/ICON, UvA/ASCA, Eye Filmmuseum), we invite you to the launch of the special issue of Iluminace, ‘Filmic Matter and Geographic Specificity’. | Friday, May 8, 2:30-5:00 PM CEST. | Location: Eye Filmmuseum Collection Centre, Asterweg 26, Amsterdam

Entrance = free; RSVP: f.j.j.w.paalman@uva.nl

Programme:

- Introduction: Byron Davies & Jiří Anger (editors)
- Marek Jancovic: *Cinema’s Atmospheric A Priori: How Weather and Environment Shaped Celluloid Film Manufacturing and Raw Material Supply at Fujifilm, Daicel, and Agfa*
- Video Essay Screening:
 - Libertad Gills: *Por un cine cachinero: Reappropriation as a Survival Strategy in Contemporary Experimental Cinema from Guayaquil* (10’09’’)
 - Laurence Kent: *Hussein Shariffe’s Filmic Ruins: Archival Noise and The Dislocation of Amber* (1975) (8’54’')
 - Jennifer Nightingale: *Knitting on Location: The Norfolk Knitting Pattern Film Series* (15’27’')
- Films of Jop Horst & Joris Baudoin, introduced by Floris Paalman:
 - *Golvenfilm* (‘A Film of Waves,’ 1992, 9’)
 - *Molenjop* (1985, 1’33’')

• Response: Salomé Lopes Coelho (Utrecht University)
Special Issue Launch: Iluminace – Filmic Matter and Geographic Specificity

editors: Byron Davies (University of Murcia) and Jiří Anger (Queen Mary University of London)

The materiality of film and audiovisual media has often been understood in universal terms, or through the language of canonised Western thought. This special issue instead highlights the diverse ways in which filmic matter can be articulated in relation to local and geographic contexts.

Drawing on both written and videographic case studies in manufacturing, preservation, circulation, and artistic appropriation of photochemical and digital film across Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa, the programme will demonstrate how cinema is shaped by the availability (or unavailability) of specific physical

materials and resources, as well as by the conditions of their extraction.

INHUMAN REPARATIONS

Kathryn Yusoff is guest speaker in the New Tendencies in Critical Theory Series hosted by Jeff Diamanti and Marija Cetinic | May 8th, 2026, 15-17:00, Room OMHP D.009. | Co-hosted by the Environmental Humanities Center VU.

Kathryn Yusoff is Professor of Inhuman Geography at Queen Mary University of London. Her transdisciplinary research addresses the colonial afterlives of geology and race, critical environmental studies and the in/humanities. She is author of *Geologic Life* (Duke University Press, 2024) and *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* (University of Minnesota Press, 2018).

New Tendencies in Critical Theory is an annual speaker series hosted by Jeff Diamanti and Marija Cetinic on behalf of BA, MA, and rMA programs in cultural analysis in collaboration with the Supply Chain Criticism seminar hosted by ASCA Political Ecologies.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO ART AND MEDIA IN THE AGE OF AI

Lecture and Masterclass organized by Roberto Filippello and Natalya Lusty (Professor of Cultural Studies, University of Melbourne, and Visiting Fellow at ASCA) | Friday, May 8th, 15:00-18:00 | University of Amsterdam, BG2 (Turfdragerpad 15-17), Room 0.08 | Contact info organizer: r.filippello@uva.nl (Dr. Roberto Filippello)

This masterclass examines the critical tools that we might use to assess some of the uses and abuses of AI and synthetic media. From the rise of deepfakes and racialized surveillance apparatuses to forms of culture jamming and reanimation that retool new technologies for more speculative futures, this class asks how cultural theorists, activists and artists are shaping the debates around AI, synthetic media, and a postdigital world. Placing these critical insights and interventions alongside the longer history of critical approaches to new technology, including by Walter Benjamin and Donna Haraway, we will explore the logics of race, gender and bodies that mediate both exploitative and subversive uses of AI and synthetic media.

The masterclass is delivered by **Prof. Natalya Lusty (University of Melbourne, currently Visiting Fellow at ASCA)**

Bio: Natalya Lusty (she/her) is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2018-2025). She teaches and publishes across the fields of cultural and media studies, fashion studies, gender and sexuality studies and visual culture. She is the author of *Surrealism*, *Feminism*, *Psychoanalysis* (Routledge,

2017) and the edited collection *Surrealism* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Programme

The session blends critical theory, case study analysis, and participatory learning, focusing on how everyday encounters as well as artistic experimentation with AI and synthetic media form part of a longer critical history of techno-optimism and techno-pessimism. Through the concept of “technosymbiosis” the class explores what an ethical and creative AI future might entail.

15:00-16:15: LECTURE (including Q&A)

16:15-16:45: COFFEE BREAK

16:45-17:25: WORKSHOP

16:45-16:55: Introduction to Workshop

In small groups, participants will work through their chosen examples in terms of techno-optimism and techno-pessimism, asking how these binary affective responses have shaped their own experiences of, and critical thinking on, AI and synthetic media.

CARELESSNESS, VIOLENCE, GENDER

lecture by Prof. Lisa Baraitser, 8 May 2026, 15:30 -17:00

[Roeterseilandcampus - building A](#), A2.10. For more info and a registration form, see [Carelessness, Violence, Gender - ARC-GS - University of Amsterdam](#)

Using the death of women in care homes in the UK during the Covid pandemic as an example, Prof. Baraitser will attempt to think about violence against women as a form of psychosocial carelessness. She proposes that the unstable gender binary is subtended by an equally unstable tension between care and violence in mental life whereby the psychic functions of splitting and denial that are mobilised to manage that tension collapse into the socially condoned practices of exclusion and degradation central to misogyny.

A FEMINIST INTERVENTION

ARC-GS 15th Anniversary Event | 11 May 2026, 15.30 – 17.00, De Brug, on the 4th floor of the D building of UvA's Roeterseiland Campus. For more info and a sign-up form, see: [ARC-GS 15th Anniversary Event - ARC-GS - University of Amsterdam](#)

You are all warmly invited to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Amsterdam Research Centre for Gender & Sexuality with us!

The event will feature a discussion, poetry reading, and a surprise intervention. Come experience the intervention and celebrate with drinks.

RADICAL IMAGINATION WORKSHOP

Side event of the ARC-GS 15th anniversary celebration

12 May 2026, 09:00 -13:00 | [Roeterseilandcampus - building B/C/D \(entrance B/C\)](#), B5.12 | Sign up via [Radical Imagination Workshop - ARC-GS - University of Amsterdam](#)

You are invited to participate in a workshop on radical feminist imagination - a side event of the ARC-GS 15th Anniversary celebration. While organizing the celebration of ARC-GS, the question of feminist solidarity came to the fore, and particularly the privileged position of many feminists in Europe who may (still) not realize the complex hindrances experienced by many feminists around the globe. In this workshop we will wrestle with this specter and query the possibilities of challenging its persistent presence with radical imaginations.

ON THE STRUCTURE OF PARENTAL VULNERABILITY

Philosophy and Public Affairs Colloquium 13 May: 15:30 - 17:00. Faculteitskamer 2 (room 1.17; Oude Turfmarkt 145). Zoom. Speaker: Eva Groen-Reijman (UvA) Commentator: Thomas Nys (UvA). Contact Tijn Smits for paper & Zoom link - t.m.smits@uva.nl

Being a parent means being vulnerable in a particular way. While others have pointed out the risks of harm that parenthood brings, they have not made clear what might be specific about *parental* vulnerability, rather than the openness to harm that comes with all intimate relationships. On my analysis, parenthood is characterized by two features which are widely recognized: the responsibility of parents and the vulnerability of children. The connection between these, I argue, renders parents vulnerable too. This structure of parenthood underpins a broad scope of vulnerabilities that play out in many domains of life.

ABOLITIONIST WRITING LAB

Abolition Democracies Seminar organized by Safae El Khannoussi el Boudrin, Daniel Loick and Oscar Talbot | If you want to participate in the seminar or present your own work, please get in touch with Daniel (d.loick@uva.nl). 14 May 2026, 17:00 hrs.

This session will be an opportunity to pitch ideas and discuss early drafts for current work in abolitionist theory. Get in touch with us if you want to present an idea.

CRITICAL AI SEMINAR SERIES: TESTING-in-THE-WILD

The Critical AI Seminar series, organized by Anna Schjøtt Hansen, Tobias Blanke, and Dieuwertje Luitse | Invited talk by Thao Phan on 'Testing-in-the-wild' | May 20, 12-1:30 PM (CEST):

The Critical AI Seminar series continues in 2025 and 2026 with another four lectures that critically address Artificial Intelligence (AI) from various perspectives – across different contexts of application and through different lenses of critique. With these lectures we hope to once again bring together scholars from around the world in engaging discussions and further contribute to Critical AI Studies as a continuing 'field in formation' (Raley and Rhee, 2023).

The seminars are online, open to everyone. For each seminar, one or two prominent invited speaker(s) are invited to give a talk that engages theoretically or empirically with AI.

Registration [here](#)

This presentation analyses the phenomenon of the AI testbed and practices of "testing-in-the-wild." It combines historical and sociological approaches to understand how places like Australia have come to be treated as ideal test sites for new AI systems, using commercial drone delivery company Wing Aviation as a case study. It connects the figuration of Australia as a contemporary testbed with histories of the nation as a colonial experiment. I argue that this historical frame has been consistently deployed to justify the treatment of lands and peoples as experimental subjects across a range of domains: techniques of penal management in the nineteenth century, military weapons in the early twentieth century, and AI-driven systems like drone delivery in the twenty-first century. By connecting this history to the present moment, I show how Australia has been variously treated as a test site and Australians as test subjects based on changing imaginaries of the nation and its people, from proxies for whiteness and Empire in the colonial period, to multiculturalism and ethnic diversity in the contemporary era.

[Thao Phan](#) is a feminist science and technology studies (STS) researcher who specialises in the study of gender and race in algorithmic culture. She is a Lecturer in Sociology (STS) at the Research School for Social Sciences at the Australian National University (ANU). Thao has published on topics including whiteness and the aesthetics of AI, big-data-driven techniques of racial classification, and the commercial capture of AI ethics research. She is an elected Council Member of the Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), a member of the Australian Academy of Science's National Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science, and is the co-founder and current President of AusSTS—Australia's largest network of STS scholars.

THE BIOPOLITICS OF THE DRESSED BODY

Queer Visibility, Affective Labor, and Corporeal Vulnerability

Lecture by Nicola Brajato organized by Diego Semerene | May 20th, 2026 at 17h30 at PCH 1.04

In this lecture, Nicola Brajato will share insights and findings from his current FWO-funded postdoc project *The Biopolitics of the Dressed Male Body*, which explores the dressed body as one of the main battlegrounds of biopolitical normalization and subject formation. Drawing on wardrobe studies interviews conducted with queer men in Belgium and Italy, the research conceptualizes the dressed body as a critical site where biopolitical normalization, spatial politics, and affective experience converge. It does so by investigating the emotional labor inherent to queer dressed embodiments, concerned with calculating and anticipating risks before stepping into public space, navigating negative affects within it, and maintaining awareness of corporeal vulnerability.

Nicola Brajato, PhD, is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Antwerp, funded by the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO). His work focuses on the relationship between fashion and masculinities at the intersection of fashion studies, critical studies on men and masculinities, and queer theory. Nicola has published widely on the relationship between dress, queerness, and the body in different peer-reviewed journals and he has guest-edited a special issue of the fashion studies journal *ZoneModa Journal* on the topic of fashion and gender (2023). He is the author of the academic book *Queering Masculinities in Antwerp Fashion: Menswear, Bodies, and Sexuality* (Bloomsbury, 2026) and of a forthcoming volume on Belgian avant-garde designer Walter Van Beirendonck (Anthem Press, 2027). In person only. Only RMA students seeking credit need to register.

THE NEWBORNS BY KIANOUSH AYARI

This is the fifth screening in the ongoing collaboration between the RPA Decolonial Futures (UvA) and *Het Documentaire Paviljoen* that explores the multifaceted relationship between cinema and (de)coloniality, and the creative resilience of filmmakers working under political constraints, in a series of programmes titled *Cinema Under Siege*. | 20 May 2026, 20:00 -21:35 | [Het Documentaire Paviljoen: De Spiegel](#)

In solidarity with the people of Iran, this edition turns to an unfinished fragment of Iranian film history: the never-completed film *The Newborns* by **Kianoush Ayari**. Shot in the spring of 1979, the film captures a revolution unfolding in real time. Following the regime change, however, the film never received a screening permit and remained loosely edited, shelved in the archive of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting

(IRIB), out of which it was smuggled and digitized three decades later. What value do these fragments of everyday life – neither tied to a time before nor after the revolution – hold today? What visions of possible futures do they project?

Introduced by Nadica Denić, with responses by Alireza Rabiei Kenari and Beri Shalmashi.

[For tickets click here](#)

About the Speakers

Beri Shalmashi is a Dutch writer and filmmaker with Iranian Kurdish heritage. Recently, she won the prestigious Zilveren Camera Storytelling Award with *Big Village*, an interactive film on the resistance of the Kurds against the Islamic Republic of Iran. She works as an advisor to the Netherlands Film Fund and is head of debate center *Avanti*.

Alireza Rabiei Kenari is a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), where he works on the project *From Alleyways to Mediascapes: Micro-Resistance to Iranian Militarism* (2010s–present), examining how everyday practices in Iran have become acts of micro-resistance against pervasive state control and militarized ideology.

Nadica Denić is a film scholar and curator focused on the entanglement of film and contemporary political developments, with specific interest in migration, conflict, and risk. She currently works as a Lecturer in Media and Culture at the University of Amsterdam.

QUEER ANALYSIS + PULSE NETWORK: MEDICAL AND HEALTH HUMANITIES COLLAB

21 May, 15:00-17:00 + drinks, *Bushuis* (Kloveniersburgwal 48) Room E1.02 | with Hein van den Berg and Mariana Gusso Nickel.

Hein van den Berg, "The origins of Emil Kraepelin's comparative psychiatry and his travels to Java and the USA"

Emil Kraepelin, one of the formative influences on present-day psychiatry, undertook research in psychiatric hospitals in Southeast Asia (1904) and the USA (1925). Kraepelin pioneered research into what he called comparative psychiatry, investigating, among others, the influence of cultural factors on psychopathology (Jilek 1995, Engstrom and Crozier 2018). This article analyzes the origins of Kraepelin's comparative psychiatry.

Hein van den Berg obtained his PhD at the VU Amsterdam in 2011, with a prize-winning dissertation on Kant's conception of proper science and Kant's philosophy of biology. After obtaining a grant from the KNAW for research on the history of biology at the TU Dortmund, he became assistant professor at the ILLC of the University of Amsterdam in 2016. He does research on the history and philosophy of logic, biology, and psychiatry.

Mariana Gusso Nickel, "A walk in the forest with nothing but my body': researching the role of masculinities in narrative meaning-making processes by AYAs living with and after cancer"

How do masculinities play a role in experiences of narrative disruption and meaning-making practices of adolescents and young adults (AYAs) living with/after cancer? For this participatory arts-based project, set up as a collaboration between Amsterdam UMC and the FIFort Foundation, 15 male-identifying AYAs were invited to take photos of their daily lives using Photovoice and to participate in a lifeline interview. Images were used by participants as prompts to articulate complex illness experiences, identify (pre-reflexive) expectations associated with gender in their daily lives, and lastly, as a mirror, facilitating identification with their renewed life-stories.

Mariana Gusso Nickel is a PhD candidate at the Contingency, Culture and Oncology research line, at the Department of Medical Oncology, Amsterdam UMC.

WASTELANDS AND URBAN ECOLOGIES

NICA Masterclass with Sandra Jasper (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg) | Co-organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Linda Kopitz and Alex Gekker as part of the ASCA Cities Seminar. For more information and registration, please contact Linda Kopitz (l.kopitz@vu.nl) | Time and Date: 22 May 2026, 10.00-12.00 | Location: Room 0.16, Media Studies, BG1-016

On Friday, 22 May 2026, Sandra Jasper (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg) give a NICA Masterclass on "Wastelands and Urban Ecologies" as part of the ASCA Cities Seminar series. Urban wastelands are spaces of scientific discovery and collective memory. Ruins, deindustrialized zones, former railway yards or military sites, and other seemingly abandoned spaces have produced a profusion of plants and animals, and have afforded a place for other-than-human life in the conception of urban spaces' inhabitation. This masterclass places a particular focus on spontaneous ecologies and their relation to marginal urban spaces. We will discuss a range of cultural and scientific responses to wastelands that reveal new insights on their re-valorization as biodiversity hotspots and public space. We will interrogate the efficacy of current nature conservation policies and other legal tools to counter the loss of marginal spaces of nature in the context of speculative development. In light of this, we will also query ideas around the malleability of urban nature reflected in recent efforts to adapt cities to climate change, increase public health, compensate for development, or 'put nature to work' for its metabolic capacities to clean up pollution. We will also discuss creative approaches to

the study of wastelands and urban ecologies including documentary filmmaking and sound recording, and discuss the potentials and limits of combining natural scientific and social scientific methods.

More information and readings here: <https://www.nica-institute.com/event-wastelands-and-urban-ecologies-masterclass-with-sandra-jasper-friedrich-alexander-universitat-erlangen-nurnberg/>

URBAN BIOACOUSTICS: LISTENING TO ANIMAL VOICES IN THE GDR

With Sandra Jasper (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg) and Jonathan Prior (Cardiff University) | Co-organized by Carolyn Birdsall, Linda Kopitz and Alex Gekker. For more information and registration, please contact Linda Kopitz (l.kopitz@uva.nl) | ASCA Cities Seminar Session: "Urban Bioacoustics: Listening to Animal Voices in the GDR" by Sandra Jasper and Jonathan Prior, 22 May 2026, 15:00-17:00

On Friday 22 May 2026, Sandra Jasper (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg) and Jonathan Prior (Cardiff University) will join the 2025-2026 ASCA Cities Seminar for a talk titled "Urban Bioacoustics: Listening to Animal Voices in the GDR". The session takes place from 15.00-17.00 in room 0.16 (E-lab) at the University of Amsterdam, Turfdraagsterpad 9, Amsterdam.

Sandra Jasper is Professor of Geography and holds the Chair in Cultural Geography and Society-Environment Research at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. Her research interests are in cultural, urban, and environmental geography with a particular focus on urban nature and biodiversity, wastelands and infrastructures, sonic geographies, and feminist theory. Her new AHRC-DFG funded project [Networked through Sound: Listening to 20th Century Wildlife Sound Archives](#) is an international collaborative research project, which examines the history of European wildlife sound recording through seven archives located in Europe and South Africa.

Jonathan Prior is Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Cardiff University, with a broad research interest in nature-society relations. His work is interdisciplinary in approach, spanning cultural geography, sound studies, environmental philosophy, geohumanities, and landscape research.

For more information and registration, please contact Linda Kopitz (l.kopitz@uva.nl).

DECOLONIAL ECOLOGIES OF WATER: TRANSDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUES

Join us for a half-day symposium organized by Prof. Barnita Bagchi (Chair and Professor in World Literatures in English,

UvA) and RPA Decolonial Futures Scholar in Residence, Jenia Mukherjee (Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur). Registration required. | 27 May 2026, 10:00 - 13:00 [P.C. Hoofthuis](#) Room 005

Symposium Program

Session 1 | Chair: Sanjukta Sunderason (UvA)

10.10 -10.30- Paper 1, Jenia Mukherjee (Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur), 'Co-curating water (hi)stories: Augmented artefacts and agencies from a fluid terrain'

10: 30 - 10:35 - short Q&A

10:35 - 10:55 - Paper 2: Suze Zijlstra (UvA & Scheepvaartmuseum), 'Water carrying histories: curating decolonial perspectives on the maritime Atlantic'

10:55 - 11:00 - short Q&A

11:00 - 11:10 - coffee break

Session 2 | Chair: MARRIGIE PAAIJMANS (UvA)

11:10 - 11:30 - Emanuele Fantini (IHE Delft) and Roger Anis (Photographer and Visual Researcher), 'Transdisciplinary conversations between research and photography on socio-ecological relations in a Nile river island in Cairo, Egypt'

11:30 - 11:35 - short Q&A

11:35 - 11:55 - Barnita Bagchi (UvA), 'People of Water: Fictions of the Sundarbans as Sites for Imagining and Thinking through Decolonial Ecologies'

11:55 - 12 - short Q&A

12 to 12.20- Margreet Zwarteveen (IHE Delft & UvA), 'Tapping into the undercurrent? The transformative potential of feminist scholarship on care for doing water otherwise'

12.20 to 12.25- short Q and A

Chair: Barnita Bagchi

12.25 to 12.35- Response by Stefan Niklas (University of Amsterdam)

12.35-12.45- Response by Peter van Dam (UvA)

13.00-13.30 Lunch

Please register (obligatory) by emailing b.bagchi@uva.nl by 21 May 2026

SPEAKING MACHINE: 'DUTIES TO ONESELF' IN USING GENAI

Philosophie and Public Affairs Colloquium. 27 May: 15:30 - 17:00. Faculteitskamer 2 (room 1.17; Oude Turfmarkt 145). Zoom. Speakers: Marjolein Lanzing (UvA), Thomas Nys (UvA), Tijn Smits (UvA) Commentator: Sven Nyholm (LMU Munich) Contact Tijn Smits for paper & Zoom link - t.m.smits@uva.nl

With the rapid introduction of generative AI, people are outsourcing more of their intellectual labor to machines. Most ethical reflection is centred around the potentially harmful consequences of AI use on others. In this paper, we take Kant's duties to self, grounded in the required respect towards one's rational nature, as a starting point

to complement existing approaches. First, we analyse 'cheating' by claiming authorship over a product or choice produced by AI through the perfect duty not to lie. Second, we argue that the imperfect duty to develop one's capacities entails a moral reason to prevent 'deskilling'. Third, we propose that agents must honour their doxastic responsibility and the need to think for themselves while forming beliefs.

JAPANESE STUDIES RESEARCH SEMINAR

Seminar organized by Carolyn Birdsall and Bruno Luberti with presentations by Chang Wen-Hsuan, Balázs Boross and Rik Spanjers. 20 May 2026, 15:00-17:00 BG1-003.

Register: Carolyn Birdsall (c.j.birdsall@uva.nl) / Bruno Luberti (b.a.luberti@uva.nl)

Chang Wen-Hsuan, "Play with/in Double Bind: Unlecture Practices of the Taiwanese Cultural Association under Japanese Colonial Rule"

Chang Wen-Hsuan is an artist, writer, and educator, currently a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA), University of Amsterdam. Working at the intersection of contemporary art, historiography, and pedagogy, her practice interrogates the narrative structures of institutionalized history to expose the power dynamics embedded in dominant accounts. Through installations, moving images, and lecture-based formats, she constructs metafictional spaces where skewed documentation and first-person accounts activate history's unrealized potentials, allowing it to be re-read, re-written, and re-imagined. In 2018, she launched Writing FACTory, a virtual factory that manufactures tactical forms of publishing as political and pedagogical practices. She has presented projects at the Sydney Biennale (2026); Taiwan Biennial (2025); Busan Biennale (2024 and 2018); Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan; Asia Culture Center, Korea; and Times Art Center Berlin, Germany, among others.

Balázs Boross and Rik Spanjers, "After Tadzio: Visibility, Desire, and the Rebirth of Björn Andrésen's Celebrity"

Balázs Boross is Assistant Professor of Gender, Health and Cross-Media at the University of Amsterdam. Working at the intersection of critical cultural studies and media ethnography, his research and teaching revolve around the shifting visibility of marginalized identities in contemporary television and cross-media culture. His current research projects focus on the mediation of prenatal life, the rituals of parenting cultures and (queer) reconfigurations of childhood. Balázs's work has been published in *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Media, Culture & Society*, *Television & New Media*, *Critical Studies in Television*, and *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*.

Rik Spanjers is Assistant Professor of Cross-Media Culture at the University of Amsterdam. His research

focuses on comics, animation, and conflict representation. Currently, he is working on World War I newspaper comics and edgelord aesthetics, which involves an exploration of the cross-media canon of the online far-right.

LIBERATIONS: QUESTIONS FOR ART AND THEORY

Liberations: Questions for Art and Theory is being organised at the University of Amsterdam between 1-2 June 2026 as part of the ERC Consolidator Grant project - *Entangled Freedoms*, steered by Dr. Sanjukta Sunderason, and as groundwork for a Special Issue on *Liberation Aesthetics* with the journal [ARTMargins](#). Over a roundtable, workshop panels, exhibition visit, and film screenings, participants will work from the fraught and fragmented archives of 20th-century decolonization, using (visual) art and aesthetic thought as vantage points. Please find details on the workshop and full program in the downloadable PDF on the website (<https://entangledfreedoms.com/international-workshop-1-2-june-2026-university-of-amsterdam/>). Please register.

CALL FOR PAPERS AMERICAN PROTEST CULTURES:

Protest, Dissent, and the Cultural Politics of the United States | 2026 Annual Conference, 4–6 November 2026, Radboud University (Nijmegen) | Deadline for submissions: 8 May 2026.
<https://www.americanprotestcultures.com>

From the revolutionary rhetoric of the Declaration of Independence to contemporary mobilizations against democratic backsliding, protest has been central to the American experiment. The United States often understands itself as a nation born of dissent—its identity shaped not only by institutions of governance but also by those who challenge them. Across centuries, across borders, protest has functioned as a cultural engine: from abolitionists, suffragists and conscientious objectors to Black Lives Matter and climate justice activists; from Native and Indigenous sovereignty movements to digital grassroots campaigns; from countercultural art to the transformative power of music, satire, and performance.

How do protest movements produce meaning and mobilize feeling? How do they generate new political subjectivities and collective identities? How do they transcend borders and boundaries? What role do aesthetics and embodiment play in sustaining movements and shaping their legacies? And how might we understand protest not simply as a response to injustice, but as a generative force in American cultural life?

In an era marked by intensified polarization, environmental crises, renewed struggles over civil rights, and the rise of populist and authoritarian

tendencies, these questions feel especially urgent. This conference invites scholars across disciplines—history, sociology, literature, political science, media studies, art history, cultural studies, gender studies, environmental humanities, Indigenous studies, performance studies, and beyond—to examine the diverse forms, aesthetics, affects, and infrastructures of protest in the United States, and the ways the current moment has shaped protest within and between the United States, Canada and Mexico.

We welcome contributions that situate U.S. protest in hemispheric, transnational, or comparative perspectives, especially with neighboring Canada and Mexico.

We seek work that explores not only the practices of American protest but also how acts of dissent continually reshape cultural narratives, national mythologies, and competing visions of American identity, democracy, and futurity. We are interested in a wide spectrum of political positions and forms of protest, including movements that challenge, defend, or seek to reconfigure existing power structures, including national boundaries.

Keynote Speakers:

- Prof. Stefania Milan (University of Amsterdam)
 - Prof. Wilfried Raussert (Bielefeld University)
 - Prof. Stephen Tuck (London Interdisciplinary School)
- <https://www.americanprotestcultures.com/call-for-papers>.

NEW BOOK: MONIQUE ROELOFS, *STRANGE TASTES: AESTHETICS AND THE PUBLIC IN LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINX FEMINISMS*.

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/strange-tastes>

Strange Tastes is a philosophical excursion into aesthetic experience and the public through the works of contemporary Latin American and Latinx women writers and artists. In a careful study of this revelatory archive, Monique Roelofs shows how life lived aesthetically can embrace public space instead of surrendering it to the constrictive forces of gendering and racial capital. Joining notions of sensibility grounded in Enlightenment aesthetics with the creative capabilities of a decolonial aesthetics, Roelofs looks to practices that animate the public through intimate, social, and political registers, particularly by engaging the historical and critical potentialities of disinterested play and what she calls “strange tastes,” or the unusual, uncanny, and nonnormative desires and sensations of marginalized individuals. Through sustained attention to materiality and lived experience, Roelofs offers a feminist philosophy of aesthetics that takes seriously the role of the public, where strange tastes turn aesthetic imaginaries into powerful possibilities to remake self, city, nation, and world.