

**THE PERSONAL IS STILL POLITICAL:  
CHALLENGING MARGINALIZATION THROUGH THEORY, ANALYSIS, & PRACTIS**

*A Graduate Student Conference on Gender, Culture, Women & Sexuality  
March 31 & April 1, 2017*

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

In the late 1960s, the statement “the personal is political” emerged as a central rallying cry for feminist activists. While salient before, it has become all the more urgent in light of the 2016 United States election results. Given this, the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality (GCWS) is hosting a graduate student conference, *The Personal Is Still Political: Challenging Marginalization through Theory, Analysis, & Praxis*, to investigate how this slogan has been, can be, or is now being mobilized as a concept for resistance by marginalized groups - theoretically, analytically, and practically.

Thirty years ago, Audre Lorde remarked that “the absence of [race, sexuality, class, and age] weakens any feminist discussion of the personal and the political.” We build upon this inclusive declaration to examine the diverse reach of state oppressions, violence, hegemonic intervention, and marginality in the contemporary moment. We also aim to explore modes of resistance to such repression. Some of the questions this conference seeks to address include (but are not limited to):

- How have intersectional approaches to praxis reshaped this concept as a useful tool for counter-hegemonic struggles?
- How do repressed groups and individuals enact or challenge “the personal as political” in their daily, lived experiences?
- How is this concept relevant to linkages between academia, activism, and practice?

Topics to be explored in papers and presentations may include (but are not limited to):

- Activism (e.g., Black Lives Matter; the prison abolition movement; the Standing Rock Protective Actions; abortion ban protests in Poland; support for openly queer teenagers kicked out of their homes)
- Legal policies (e.g., transphobic bathroom laws; work and family policy; sexuality-based discrimination and policy; social welfare policies; labor rights; treaty rights; the “We are All Amina Filali” movement in Morocco)
- Nationhood, globalization, and immigration (e.g., refugees and displacement - Syrian refugee crisis; family and migration; persistent Islamophobia and anti-Semitism; nationalism)
- Environmental issues and justice (e.g., climate change; resource scarcity; pollution/toxic contamination - the Flint water crisis, the BP oil spill)
- Health issues (e.g., health care access; reproductive rights; (dis)ability and accessibility; food access; the U.S. opioid crisis; global health disparities)

- Theoretical interventions (e.g., intersectionality; queer theory; postcolonial feminism; feminist psychoanalysis; FemCrit; settler colonialism) as explored by scholars such as Butler (2009), Edelman (2004), Evans-Winters & Esposito (2010), hooks (1984), Moraga & Anzaldúa (1981), Spivak (1992), Wolfe (1999), among others

We welcome proposals for papers and/or projects (i.e. paintings, sculptures, film, performances, poetry/literature, songs) from graduate students of all disciplines that explore issues of marginality, repression, and resistance through the lenses of gender and/or sexuality.

**Academic Paper Submission:** Paper submissions should be for 15-minute presentations. Please submit a 250-300 word abstract to <http://tinyurl.com/GCWS2017> by January 6, 2017.

Submissions should also include your name, program, university affiliation, e-mail address, a short bio (3-5 sentences), three to six keywords, and any audio/visual requirements. Participants will be notified about the status of their proposal no later than February 6th. The conference itself will be held on March 31, 2017 and April 1, 2017.

**Projects:** Project proposals should include a 250-300 word abstract as well as your name, program, university affiliation, e-mail address, a short bio (3-5 sentences), three to six keywords, and any audio/visual requirements. Also include the scale and duration of your piece (if relevant), as well as space or presentation preferences. Lastly, please provide a web link to relevant visual, audio, portfolio, or support materials (no more than 5 images or 5 minutes of audio or video). Please submit this to <http://tinyurl.com/GCWS2017> by January 6, 2017.

Note: The conference will be held in an academic building at MIT that is not normally used or set up for some art displays or performative works. The building has outlets in the classrooms and common spaces. Video projectors and screens are in the classrooms. Individuals with projects that have tech requirements beyond this will need to bring their own materials. Accepted projects will be programmed into the conference schedule by the selection committee. If you have a specific vision for how you would like your project to be included please note that in your abstract. Those with accepted projects will be able to schedule site visits.

All participants will be notified about the status of their proposal no later than February 6th.

For more information contact the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality at [gcws@mit.edu](mailto:gcws@mit.edu) and <http://web.mit.edu/GCWS>.