Conference Schedule

Conference is free and open to the public. Arrive at the campus-side entrance of Columbia’s Butler Library, 535 W. 114th St. Security will direct you to the conference room.

Disability access to Butler Library: from College Walk, use ramp adjacent to Pulitzer (Journalism); from 115th Street and Broadway, use ramp adjacent to Lerner Hall. If you have any questions, please contact the Access Services Division liaison, Mayra Melendez, at (212) 854-3536 or mm57@columbia.edu.

8:30 - 9:00  Coffee and light breakfast

9:00 - 10:00  Keynote Address

Heather McGhee - President of Demos Public Policy Center

10:00 - 10:15  Coffee Break

10:15 - 11:45  Panel 1 - Utopian Thinking and Feminist Practice

Jenna Freedman - Zine Librarian, Barnard College
Ellie Hisama - Professor, Music Department and Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Columbia University
Jean Howard - George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, Columbia University

Moderator: Andrea Crow - PhD Candidate, English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Utopia has long been a central concept in feminist and queer thought, garnering a new surge of interest in recent years. How do we realize utopia on the ground? How do we navigate the tensions between utopian ideals and the practical realities of making change? How do we work towards making spaces in which those ideals can be realized, within or in opposition to the institutions that shape our lives?
11:45 - 12:30 - Lunch

12:30-2:00  **Panel 2: Utopia in the University**

**Brandee C. Blocker** - No Red Tape; JD candidate, Columbia Law  
**Barbara Bowen** - President, Professional Staff Congress, City University of New York  
**Maida Rosenstein** - President, United Auto Workers - Local 2110

**Moderator:** Zeinab Azarbadegan - PhD Student, History, Columbia University

The university is an institution with a particularly paradoxical relationship to utopianism. It offers room for the exploration and realization of utopian thought, and brings together people who want to make those changes. At the same time, it often does precisely the opposite, shutting down progressive energy and perpetuating structural injustice. How does this tension affect the various communities that make up the university? What are the strategies for organizing effectively across campus?

2:00 - 3:30  **Panel 3 - Claiming Spaces**

**Rachel S Blum Levy** - Bluestockings Bookstore; Co-Founder and Assistant Editor of *Hoax* feminist zine  
**Lindsey Dayton** - Labor Organizer; PhD Student, History, Columbia University  
**Karen D. Taylor** - Founder and Executive Director, While We Are Still Here: Preserving Harlem’s History

**Moderator:** Danielle Drees - PhD Student, Theater, Columbia University

The word “utopia” itself raises the question of where alternative communities can take shape. Community bookstores, oral archives, and historic preservation projects are some of the major means of pursuing these efforts. What are the particular challenges that this organizing work presents? What are the strategies for carving out these spaces and what social possibilities do they enable?

3:30 - 3:45 - Coffee Break
3:45 - 5:15  **Panel 4 - Writing Communities**

**Jennifer Finney Boylan** - Author of *She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders*; Anna Quindlen Writer-in-Residence, Barnard College  
**Andi Dixon** - The Center for Justice at Columbia University; Ph.D. Candidate, Communications, Columbia University  
**Megan Reid** - Senior Literary Scout, Greenburger Associates

**Moderator:** Alyssa Greene - PhD Candidate, Germanic Languages, Columbia University

Utopian thinking is a driving force behind many kinds of creative work. Writing in particular enables the construction of alternate worlds, which affect how we understand and shape the real world. Additionally, these communities put people, from authors to editors to educators, into conversation through shared creative pursuits. What kind of utopian possibilities can be enacted through writing? How can sharing creative work lead to transformative change?

5:15 - 6:00  **Wine & Appetizers**

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