

## AMS :: ATX

### Five Questions with First-Years: The Hartlyn Haynes Edition by American Studies

*We're back with our fourth installment of "Five Questions with First-Years!" Today, we bring you Hartlyn Haynes. Hartlyn joins UT AMS with a background in Women's and LGBTQ+ Studies and research interests in HIV/AIDS memorialization and quotidian surveillance. She's also a roller derby player with a truly aspirational plan to "support an array of dog-children." Read on to learn more about Hartlyn!*

#### **What is your background, academic or otherwise, and how does it motivate your research?**

I received my B.A. in English from UC Berkeley and my M.A. in Women's and LGBTQ+ Studies from San Diego State University (SDSU). While I pursued my M.A., I also worked at Lambda Archives, a grassroots archive that preserves and teaches San Diego's LGBTQ+ history. Materials I discovered at Lambda served as the basis for my master's thesis on quotidian surveillance and homonationalism and sparked an interest in HIV/AIDS memorialization on a broad scale, which I hope to interrogate in my dissertation.

These experiences also deeply inform my pedagogy. When teaching an introductory course on feminist theory at SDSU, I encouraged students' creative cultural production as a valuable mode of scholarship and attempted to trouble what constitutes "legitimized" forms of knowledge production. Accordingly, I collaborated with the university library's Special Collections and Archives to include my students' academic zines in their extensive Zines and Minicomics Collection; this collaborative project offered a way to disrupt historical gatekeeping about whose work can and should be included in the archive.

#### **Why did you decide to come to AMS at UT for your graduate work?**

I was struck by the interdisciplinarity of the faculty and the department's many impressive public-facing projects. To be frank, reading posts from this very blog humanized the department and made AMS at UT seem like a fruitful place to grow as a scholar—yay, AMS::ATX (<https://amstudies.wordpress.com/>)! I was also struck by UT's vast humanities archives, which have certainly not disappointed! I was excited to learn that scholars like Dr. Simone Browne and Dr. Alison Kafer were also working elsewhere on the UT campus.



I had also been to Austin before and fallen in love with it. As an avid roller derby player and fan, learning that Austin has oodles of roller derby (and that Austinites are really excited about it!) drew me to the city. The river, BBQ, fabulous vintage offerings, live music, and millions of other activities didn't hurt, either!

### **What projects or people have inspired your work?**

Dr. Simone Browne's *Dark Matters* has been endlessly inspiring and models the type of expansive and incisive scholarship that I hope to one day produce. Dr. Inderpal Grewal's *Saving the Security State* and Dr. Jasbir Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages* have been similarly influential. Dr. Amira Jarmakani—my beloved thesis advisor and mentor (and, honestly, life coach) at SDSU—has published incredible work at the intersections of transnational feminisms, Arab American studies, and cultural studies. I strive to emulate the intellectual rigor and deep empathy and kindness she exudes as a scholar, educator, and tireless student advocate.

### **What projects do you see yourself working on at UT?**

As I mentioned previously, my time at Lambda spurred an interest in HIV/AIDS memorialization, and I am curious specifically about AIDS memorials installed in parks and other public spaces, what sort of cultural work they do, and for whom. I am also curious about the fiscal sponsorship of such sites—thanks to Dr. Alex Beasley's wonderful *Capitalism and Culture* seminar last semester, I was able to investigate some of the ways in which globalization, corporatization, and HIV/AIDS memorialization intersect via the sponsorship of biomedical and oil companies, which is a line of inquiry I plan to continue exploring. Knowing that so much scholarship has grown out of serendipitous moments in the archives and elsewhere, I remain open-minded to the fact that this project may (and, surely, will!) grow in a lot of different directions.

### **What are your goals for graduate school? What do you see yourself doing after you graduate?**

My goals for graduate school are to do work I am proud of and be supportive and kind to those around me (and, I suppose, to myself—always working on that one!). While I have long dreamt of pursuing traditional academic tenure after graduation, my experience at Lambda and exposure to other potential archival and curatorial careers (and pragmatism about the current state of the job market!) have certainly piqued my interest, as well. In the same spirit of remaining open-minded, I'm going to say something that allows me to teach in some capacity, someday (maybe?) pay off my student loans, and support an array of dog-children is the general plan.

### **Bonus: In your own words, what is American Studies?**

A disciplinary home of interdisciplinarity, of that which refuses to be bounded categorically or theoretically, and of that which insists upon investigating the overlooked, the playful, and the quotidian—and, critically, puts these in conversation with (trans)national systems of power. I look forward to continuing to revise this definition in the years to come.

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