

**SARAELEN STRONGMAN**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Africana Studies  
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## **EDUCATION**

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2018 (anticipated) **University of Pennsylvania**, Philadelphia, PA  
Ph.D., Africana Studies  
Certificate in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies  
CTL Certificate in Teaching

2011 **Columbia University**, New York, NY  
A.B., Women's and Gender Studies  
Cum Laude

## **DISSERTATION**

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The Sisterhood: Black Women, Black Feminism, and the Women's Liberation Movement  
Committee: Herman Beavers (chair), Barbara Savage, Salamishah Tillet

This dissertation traces the development of Black feminism as an intellectual and activist tradition in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s as well as black women's simultaneous participation in the Women's Liberation Movement. I argue that a cohort of Black women novelists, poets, critics and academics built a distinct Black feminist movement while also working with second wave feminists and their organizations to reshape and expand the predominantly white feminist movement's political platform. Using an intersectional framework, I read published literary and academic works and an extensive body of archival materials to analyze the historical moment when Black women first named and claimed Black feminism as a movement separate from mainstream or "white" feminism. I take seriously these women's intellectual work, including their creative work, which built the field, complicating a narrative of the emergence of Black feminism that has become limited to several major voices by recovering networks and groups of women previously un- or under-studied. In doing so, I enrich the growing field of Black women's intellectual history and deliver a detailed accounting of how Black women continued to shape feminist and anti-racist politics in the post-Civil Rights era as activists, artists, and scholars who worked across genres and in a variety of spaces.

## **FELLOWSHIPS**

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AY 2017-2018 **Dissertation Completion Fellowship**  
University of Pennsylvania, School of Arts & Sciences

AY 2016-2017 **Center for Teaching and Learning Graduate Fellowship**

University of Pennsylvania, Center for Teaching and Learning

AY 2012-2017

**William Fontaine Graduate Fellowship**  
University of Pennsylvania, School of Arts & Sciences

AY 2014-2015

**Mainwaring Graduate Prize**  
University of Pennsylvania, School of Arts & Sciences

AY 2009-2011

**Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship**  
Columbia University

## **GRANTS**

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2017

**Rose Library Short Term Fellowship**  
Stuart A. Rose Library, Emory University

2017

**Joan Challinor Dissertation Grant**  
Schlesinger Library, Harvard University

2017

**Summer Dissertation Research Grant**  
Center for Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania

2017

**SAS Summer Dissertation Research Fellowship**  
School of Arts & Sciences, University of Pennsylvania

2017

**William Fontaine Summer Research Grant**  
William Fontaine Society, University of Pennsylvania

2017, 2016

**Graduate Student Research Grant**  
Alice Paul Center, University of Pennsylvania

2013, 2014, 2016, 2017

**SSRC/Mellon Mays Graduate Enhancement Grant**  
Social Science Research Council/Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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“Creating Justice Between Us’: Audre Lorde’s Theory of the Erotic as Coalitional Politics in the Women’s Movement.” *Feminist Theory*. (Forthcoming).

## **RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

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Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century African American Literature, Black Feminism, Twentieth-Century African American Cultural and Intellectual History, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Queer Theory

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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- Spring 2015 **Guest Lecturer**, Study Abroad Narratives  
“Nation and Identity in *We Need New Names* by Violet Bulawayo”
- Fall 2014 **Teaching Assistant**, Introduction to Africana Studies  
**Guest Lecture:** “Black Atlantic Literary Cultures: Equiano and Wheatley”
- Summer 2014 **Teaching Assistant**, Black Women Writers on New African Diasporas
- Spring 2014 **Guest Lecturer**, Satire, Race, Nation  
“The Gaze in *Misadventures of an Awkward Black Girl*”
- Spring 2014 **Teaching Assistant**, Introduction to Africana Studies
- Fall 2013 **Teaching Assistant**, African American History to 1877  
**Guest Lecturer:** “Gender and Sexuality on the Plantation”

## OTHER HONORS

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- 2017 **Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship**, Honorable Mention
- 2015 **Distinction in Qualifying Examinations**  
University of Pennsylvania, Africana Studies Department
- 2014 **Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellowship**, Alternate
- 2011 **Women’s Studies Paper Prize**  
Columbia University, Institute for Research on Women and Gender

## CONFERENCE PANELS ORGANIZED

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“Radical Black Women and Cultural Resistance in the 1970s and 1980s.” *National Women’s Studies Association*. Baltimore, MD. November 2017. (Forthcoming)

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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“Black Feminists and Radical, International Politics.” *American Studies Association Conference*. Chicago, IL. November 2017. (Forthcoming)

“Black Feminism and Women’s Studies: Barbara Smith’s Demands on the NWSA.” *National Women’s Studies Association Conference*. Baltimore, MD. November 2017. (Forthcoming)

“Feminism in Black and White: Antagonism and Alliances in the Work of Alice Walker.” *American Studies Association Conference*. Denver, CO. November 2016.

"The Struggle for Solidarity: Black and White Women in Alice Walker's *Meridian*." *GWS Graduate Research Colloquium*. University of Pennsylvania. March 2016.

"Labors of Love: Black Women, The Help, and the Work of Pleasure" *National Women's Studies Association Conference*, San Juan, PR. November 2014

"Janelle Monae's Erotic Ambiguity as Liberatory Politics." *Unleashing the Black Erotic: Gender & Sexuality—Passion, Power and Praxis*. Charleston, SC. September 2013.

"Black Humor in the 'Post-Racial' Era: The Radical, Anti-Racist Revisions of *Key & Peele*." *SSRC-Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives Annual Conference*. Bryn Mawr, PA. June, 2013.

"Queer Across the Color Line: Interracial Queerness as Sustaining Practice in ZZ Packer's 'Drinking Coffee Elsewhere.'" *Remapping the Black Atlantic: Diaspora (Re)Writings of Space and Place*. Chicago, IL. April 2013

"Selling Selves: Race, Identity, and Narratives of Kinship in Natural Hair Care Advertising." *The Politics of Black Women's Hair Symposium*. Philadelphia, PA March, 2013

"The New 'Magic Negros': Nonwhite Women as Transformational Agents in Disney Animated Films." *MMUF 2011 New York Regional Conference*. New York, NY. April 2011.

## **UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE**

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2014-2017	<b>University of Pennsylvania MMUF</b> , Graduate Coordinator
AY 2014-2016	<b>Africana Studies Graduate Colloquium Planning Committee</b> , Member
AY 2014-2015	<b>Center for Teaching and Learning</b> , TA Training Co-Coordinator
2014	<b>Center for Teaching and Learning</b> , TA Training Trainer
AY 2014-2015	<b>Center for Africana Studies Summer Institute</b> , Graduate Assistant

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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American Studies Association  
Modern Language Association  
National Women's Studies Association

## **REFERENCES**

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Herman Beavers, hbeavers@sas.upenn.edu  
Professor of English and Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania

Salamishah Tillet, stillet@sas.upenn.edu  
Associate Professor of English and Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania

Barbara D. Savage, bdsavage@sas.upenn.edu  
Geraldine R. Segal Professor of American Thought, University of Pennsylvania