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## Witnesses to Inspiration

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## Witnesses to Inspiration

By Eve Oishi with Jennifer Abod

### Note on the Authors

Eve Oishi (She/her/hers, They/them/theirs) is Associate Professor of Cultural Studies at Claremont Graduate University. Her primary research interests include Asian American cultural studies, independent and experimental film and video, transnational media, and gender and queer theory. They are the recipient of several postdoctoral fellowships, including a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship and Fellow-in-Residence at the Humanities Research Institute at UC Irvine. They are also an independent film and video curator. Oishi has published on numerous topics concerning gender studies and Asian American media and is currently working on a book-length project on the history of experimental Asian American film and video. For more information, please visit their faculty web page.

Holly A. Smith is the College Archivist at Spelman College. She received her B.A. in History and Black Studies from The College of William and Mary, an M.A. in History from Yale University, and an M.S. in Library and Information Science from Simmons College. She co-authored the article "This [Black] Woman's Work: Exploring Archival Projects that Embrace the Identity of the Memory Worker" (KULA Journal) and authored the piece "Radical Love: Documenting Underrepresented Communities Using Principles of Radical Empathy" (Journal for the Society of North Carolina Archivists). She is passionate about community archives and archival advocacy related to collections for historically under documented communities.

Jennifer Abod, Ph.D. is an American Jewish Lesbian Feminist, Filmmaker, Professor, Radio Host and Poet. Abod was the first woman in the state of Connecticut to have her own commercial talk radio show. In Connecticut, Boston and Philadelphia, she worked as a radio news host/reporter and producer on public radio. From 1970-1976, Abod was a singer/songwriter in the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band. Abod was Assistant Professor of Communications at Worcester State and at Hofstra University, where she chaired the Audio Radio Department. She has taught Women's Studies at University of Massachusetts Boston, and California State University Long Beach. As an award-winning documentarian, she envisioned and produced *The Edge of Each Other's Battles: The Vision of Audre Lorde*, *The Passionate Pursuits of Angela Bowen*, *Nice Chinese Girls Don't: A poetry memoir with Kitty Tsui* and *Look Us in the Eye: The Old Women's Project*. Her commitment to stories about women extends to her current project as she prepares Dr. Angela Bowen's archives for Spelman College and the Jerome Robbins Dance Library at the New York Public Library. Abod is creating an upcoming book which will be a collection of her own poems. More about Abod and her work can be found at [www.jenniferabod.com](http://www.jenniferabod.com).

Lore/tta LeMaster (she/they) lives, loves, and creates on unceded lands of the Akimel O'odham and Piipaash Peoples known currently as Arizona. She is assistant professor of critical/cultural communication and performance studies in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University. She is a critical pedagogue who also studies the discursive, material, and performative constitution of cultural difference with particular focus on trans and queer of color life, being, and becoming. Email: [benny.lemaster@asu.edu](mailto:benny.lemaster@asu.edu).

M. Jacqui Alexander's political, pedagogic, and scholarly engagements stand at the conjunction of transnational and women of color feminisms; queer politics which foreground critical understandings of racial capitalism, colonialism and political economy; and transcultural cosmologies and metaphysics. She is Professor Emerita, Women and Gender Studies, University of Toronto and Founder/Director of the Tobago Centre for the Study and Practice of Indigenous Spirituality: [www.latierraspirit.org](http://www.latierraspirit.org).

### **Abstract**

Introductory essays by Jennifer Abod, Eve Oishi, and Holly Smith, the editors of a Special Issue of the *Journal of International Women's Studies* dedicated to pioneering Black Lesbian Feminist scholar, activist, artist, teacher Angela Bowen, Ph.D. (1936-2018.) Also included is a piece by Lore/tta LeMaster, a former student of Bowen's and M. Jacqui Alexander, a close friend and co-conspirator. These essays describe the authors' personal and professional connections with Bowen and situate the special issue in relation to their fields of expertise, including International Women's and Gender Studies and Black Archival Feminist Practice.

*Keywords:* Angela Bowen, Eve Oishi, Jennifer Abod, Holly A. Smith, M. Jacqui Alexander, Lore/tta LeMaster, Benny LeMaster, Audre Lorde, Black feminism, Black lesbians, Black lesbian feminism, archive, queer archives, Black feminist archives, Black lesbian archives, lesbian motherhood, history of women's studies.

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[Photo: Bowen and Abod at Boston Gay Pride](#) Collection of J. Abod

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