

UCLA Division of Social Sciences

**CSW**  
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN

B A R B R A  
STREISAND  
CENTER

**Thinking Gender 2026**  
36th Annual Graduate Student Conference

# Feminist and Queer Ecologies

Featuring Keynote Speaker  
**Cutchá Risling Baldy**  
*(Cal Poly Humboldt)*

April 17, 2026  
James West Alumni  
Center, UCLA

# Important Information

**CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION:** Registration tables are located in the lobby on the 1st floor of James West Alumni Center right next to the Collins Conference Room. CSW|Streisand Center staff will be wearing gold name badges with the CSW|Streisand Center logo and will be available to provide assistance throughout the conference.

**FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS:** Complimentary refreshments are available in the morning and afternoon for registered guests. Guests may also purchase food, snacks, and coffee at nearby campus locations. Please see page 13 for a list and map of nearby eateries.

**INTERNET ACCESS:** Guests can access Wi-Fi through the network “UCLA\_WEB.” No password is required. The “eduroam” network is also accessible to guests from other campuses that participate in “eduroam.” You may log in using your own campus credentials.

**NOTICE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND MEDIA RECORDING:** Photography, audio, and video recording may occur at this event. By entering the event premises, you consent to interviews, photography, audio recording, video recording, and their release, publication, exhibition, or reproduction to be used for news, webcasts, promotional purposes, telecasts, advertising, inclusion on websites, or any other purpose by the UCLA Center for the Study of Women|Barbra Streisand Center.

The UCLA Center for the Study of Women|Streisand Center acknowledges the Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands) and are grateful to have the opportunity to work for the taraaxatom (indigenous peoples) in this place. As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to Honuukvetam (Ancestors), Ahihirom (Elders), and eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

# Thinking Gender 2026

## “Feminist and Queer Ecologies”

April 17, 2026 (In Person)

*All panels and the keynote will take place in the  
Collins Conference Room*

### Conference Overview (All times in Pacific Daylight Time)

8:30 AM - 9:15 AM *Registration*

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM *Welcome*

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM *Panel 1*  
*Embodied Knowledge Systems*

11:15 AM - 12:45 PM *Panel 2*  
*Water Relationality*

12:45 PM - 2:00 PM *Lunch Break*

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM *Panel 3*  
*Queer Kinship*

3:45 PM - 5:15 PM *Keynote Address by*  
*Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy*  
*(Cal Poly Humboldt)*

*"Indigenous Women Know How to Save  
the World: Framing a California Indigenous  
Ecofeminist Ethic," followed by a conversation  
with Dr. Jessica Cattelino.*

# Panel & Presenter Details

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

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## PANEL 1

# Embodied Knowledge Systems

MODERATOR: **Bharat Venkat** (Anthropology, History, Institute of Society and Genetics, UCLA)

### **Sonya Brooks, Education, UCLA**

*We Are Our Mothers' Garden: Black Feminist Ecologies of Care, Healing, and Resistance*

### **Robert Dellinger, Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, UCLA**

*Where Do We Go from Here? Harnessing Queer Perspectives to Advance Practice in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology*

### **Nohely Guzmán, Geography, UCLA**

*"Lo Que Nos Dejaron los Antiguos": Healing Terrains and Ancestral Knowledges of Co-Becoming with Caring Plants in the Bolivian Amazon*

**11:15 AM - 12:45 PM**

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**PANEL 2**

# Water Relationality

MODERATOR: **Alesia Montgomery** (Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, UCLA)

**Laine Barriga, English, UCLA**

*Brackish Waters: Queer Temporalities and Utopia in Michelle Cliff's No Telephone to Heaven*

**Gina Hsu, Women's and Gender Studies, English, University of Michigan**

*Ecology of Resistance: Salmon, Migration, and the Politics of Memory*

**Didem Ozan, Anthropology, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

*Gendered Relationships with the Infrastructural Environment in Adana, Turkey*

**Jordan Packer, Geography, UCLA**

*The East River is Not a River: Streams of Abjection, Collectivism, and Hydrofeminism*

# Panel & Presenter Details (cont)

**2:00 PM - 3:30 PM**

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**PANEL 3**

## Queer Kinship

MODERATOR: **Sean Metzger** (Theatre, Film and Television, UCLA)

**Alexandra Boesel, Geography, UCLA**

*Viral Kinship: Mustelid and Human Relatedness Created through Science*

**Sujin Jung, Art History, Indiana University Bloomington**

*Humid Sexuality within Hormonal Ecology*

**Cindy (Hong) Liu, Doctoral College (Queer Visual Culture), University for the Creative Arts**

*Queer Ecologies of Belonging: Chinese Queer Artistic Practice and Community Spaces in London*

**3:45 PM - 5:15 PM**

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# Keynote Address

**PRESENTER: Cutcha Risling Baldy**

*"Indigenous Women Know How to Save the World: Framing a California Indigenous Ecofeminist Ethic"*

This talk builds a California Indigenous ecofeminist ethic grounded in place, fugitivity, resistance, and humor. It asks what it means to rethink how we talk about climate change and to recognize how land, water, and more than human relatives model resilience, refusal, and justice. By examining examples from California such as the damming, diversion, and even paving over of rivers, this talk argues that environmental devastation is not a future fear but an ongoing history that Indigenous peoples have survived and theorized for generations. Green colonialism, conservation land grabs, and the expectation that Indigenous communities must solve climate change while contributing the least to it exposes the absurdity and gaslighting in contemporary environmental discourse and policy. At the same time, Indigenous women who have long been leaders in ecological knowledge and restoration are kept busy navigating patriarchal structures rather than being supported as the scientific and cultural leaders they already are. Ultimately, this talk explores how the world around us is already feminist, already resistant, and already offering models for collective thriving beyond capitalism, patriarchy, and extraction. Indigenous peoples carry structures and methodologies that are sustainable, relational, and deeply grounded in place. We have lived them. And we are still building these futures now.

**Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy** is an Associate Professor of Native American Studies at Cal Poly Humboldt who researches Indigenous feminisms, California Indians, Environmental Justice, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and decolonization. She is the Co-Director of the NAS Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab & Traditional Ecological Knowledges Institute where she leads several research projects focused on the resurgence of Indigenous Science and place-based learning. In 2025 Dr. Risling Baldy along with Co-Director Dr. Kaitlin Reed were awarded the James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award for their work with the lab. Dr. Risling Baldy is the Principal Investigator for the “Food for Indigenous Futures Project” which looks at connections between food justice, food sovereignty, mental health, and substance abuse prevention for Native American Youth. She has also helped organize several community-facing events like the Northern California #LandBack Symposium, the Water Advocacy & Water Protectors Certificate Program, the Humboldt Indigenous Foods Festival, and the California Indian Conference. Dr. Risling Baldy is also the Program Coordinator for the Master of Social Science in Environment & Community. Her book: *We Are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and the Revitalization of Women’s Coming-of-Age Ceremonies* received “Best First Book in Native American and Indigenous Studies” at the 2019 Native American Indigenous Studies Association Conference. The book uses a framework of Native Feminisms to locate revitalization within a broad context of decolonizing praxis and considers how this renaissance of women’s coming-of-age ceremonies confounds ethnographic depictions of Native women; challenges anthropological theories about menstruation, gender, and coming-of-age; and addresses gender inequality and gender violence within Native communities. The book is available with the University of Washington Press. She received her PhD in Native American Studies at UC Davis; her MFA in Creative Writing from San Diego State University; and her BA in Psychology with a Specialization in Health and Development from Stanford University. In 2007, Dr. Risling Baldy co-founded the *Native Women’s Collective*, a nonprofit organization that supports the continued revitalization of Native American arts and culture. She is Hupa, Karuk, and Yurok and enrolled in the Hoopa Valley Tribe.

# Acknowledgements

Thinking Gender 2026: “Feminist and Queer Ecologies” would not have been possible without the valuable input and contributions of our generous co-sponsors, faculty moderators, participating scholars, and the Thinking Gender 2026 Planning Committee.

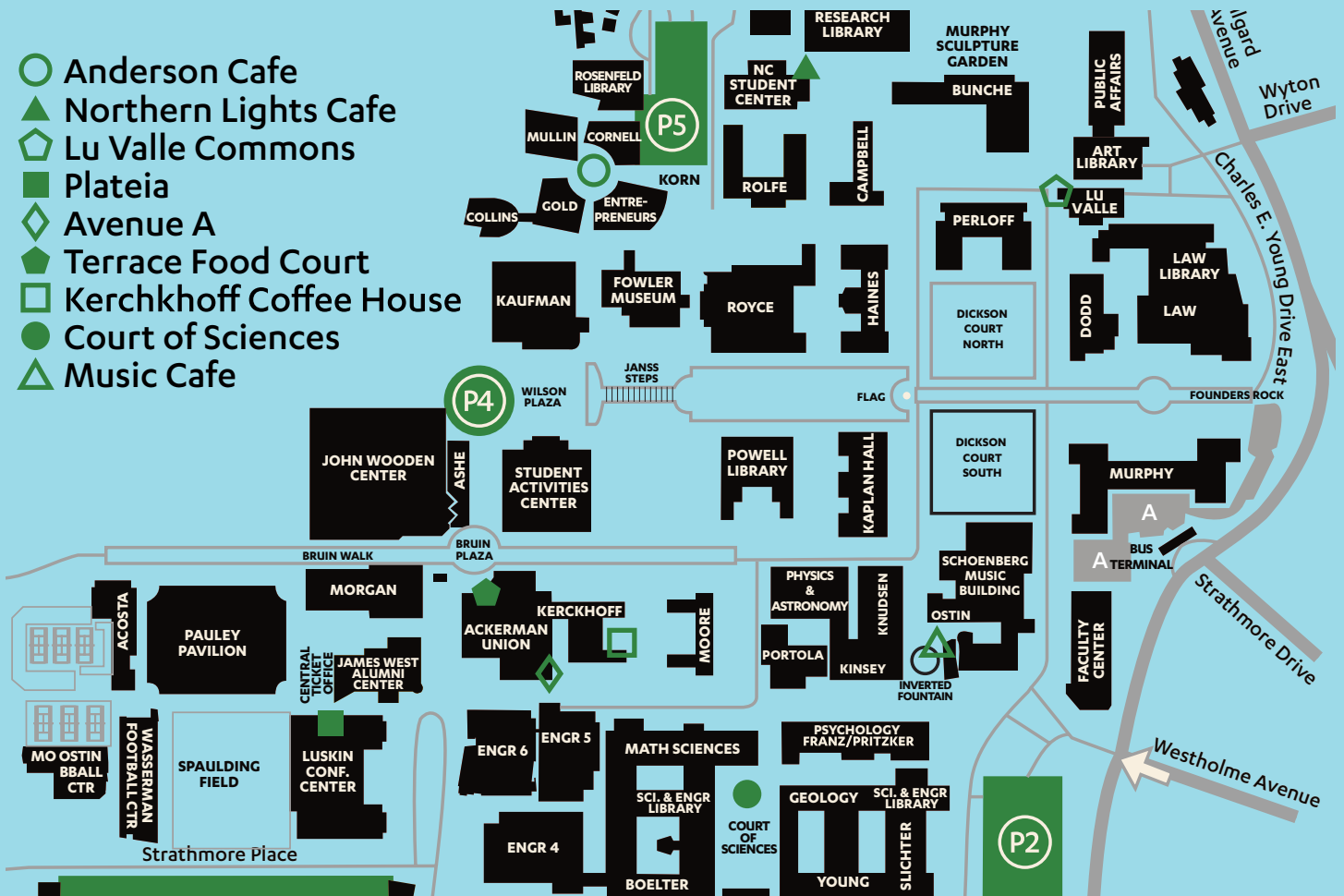
This year, the conference is held in a hybrid mode. Hybrid graduate student works-in-progress workshops and in-person panels are led by faculty moderators from our UCLA community. We’d like to thank the Friday 4/17 in-person panel moderators Sean Metzger, Alesia Montgomery, and Bharat Venkat.

We are grateful to Nhan Nguyen for designing the fabulous conference graphics.

Finally, we are fortunate to have had a creative and hardworking planning committee for the conference. We thank CSW|Streisand Center Director Jessica Cattelino; Thinking Gender 2026 Coordinator Tavi Lorelle Carpenter; Management Services Officer Rosa Chung; Program and Research Developer Katja Antoine; Administrative Specialist Eva Amarillas Diaz; and Outreach and Marketing Manager Rosie Grant. We are grateful for the contributions of our CSW|Streisand Center student assistants and researchers.

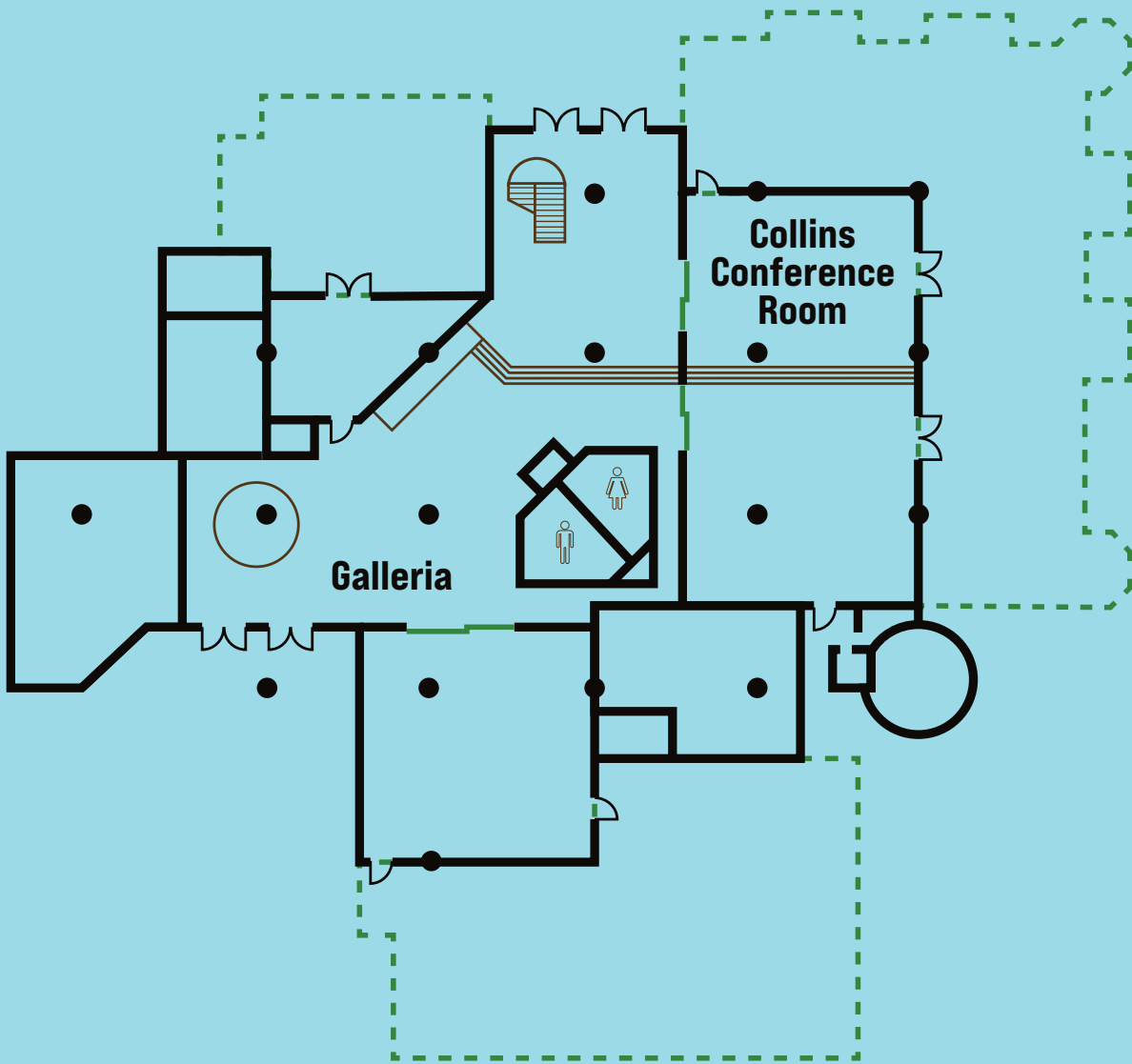
# Eateries

- Anderson Cafe
- ▲ Northern Lights Cafe
- ◊ Lu Valle Commons
- Plateia
- ◇ Avenue A
- ◆ Terrace Food Court
- Kerckhoff Coffee House
- Court of Sciences
- ▲ Music Cafe



For more information, visit [asucla.ucla.edu/locations](https://asucla.ucla.edu/locations)

# James West Alumni Center



Gender neutral restrooms are located on the second floor of the James West Alumni Center. The second floor is accessible through a staircase located at the entrance of the center or by elevator located next to the bathrooms in the Galleria.

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The UCLA Center for the Study of Women|Barbra Streisand Center would like to thank our generous co-sponsors for contributing to the success of Thinking Gender 2026:

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