

## Jessica Friedman

### EDUCATION

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- 2023 PhD, Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Theatre and Drama, Northwestern University  
Critical Theory Cluster  
Dissertation: “Hidden in Plain Sight: Women Choreographers of 1940s American Modern Dance”  
Committee: Dr. Susan Manning (chair), Dr. Nadine George-Graves, Dr. Ramón Rivera-Servera, Dr. Elizabeth Son
- 2021 MA, Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Theatre and Drama, Northwestern University
- 2017-2019 Graduate Coursework in the Joint PhD Program in Drama and Theatre, University of California, San Diego/University of California, Irvine
- 2017 BA, Ethnic and Racial Studies (specialization in Race in Performance), Columbia University in the City of New York, Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, Departmental Honors  
Significant Research: “Who is Alright in a Rhythm Nation?: Performance as a Vehicle for Decoloniality” selected for funding by Columbia University and awarded Outstanding Thesis Award, advised by Dr. Deborah Paredez, 2016-2017.

### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

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- 2025- Lecturer, School of Music and Dance, San Diego State University
- 2024- Lecturer, Department of Theatre and Dance, California State University, Fullerton
- 2023-2024 Lecturer, Department of Theater and Dance, University of California, Santa Barbara
- 2022- Co-Curator and Digital Exhibit Curator, *Dance to Belong: A History of Dance at 92NY*, 92nd Street Y, New York

### FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

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- 2024 American Society for Theatre Research Cambridge University Press Prize Honorable Mention.  
*Award for best plenary presentation at ASTR the previous year.*
- 2024 American Theatre and Drama Society Contingent Faculty Research and Travel Grant Award Runner Up  
*Award for excellence in research in American theatre and drama*

- 2023 University of California, Santa Barbara, Non-Senate Faculty Professional Development Grant  
*Competitively awarded grant for integrating research into teaching and mentorship*
- 2023 American Society for Theatre Research Jessica Berson Dance Research Assistance Fund Grant  
*International award for excellence in research in dance-based work in theater.*
- 2023 American Society for Theatre Research David Keller Travel Grant Award.  
*International award for travel and theatre research support.*
- 2022 American Society for Theatre Research Selma Jeanne Cohen Presentation Award.  
*International award for excellence in research at the intersection of dance and theatre.*
- 2022 International Federation for Theatre Research New Scholar Award Runner Up  
*International award for excellence in performance scholarship among emerging scholars.*
- 2022 Northwestern University Fellowship in Leadership  
*Competitively awarded fellowship provides leadership training and financial support.*
- 2021 PEO Scholar Award Regional Nominee  
*Competitively awarded regional nomination for PEO Scholar Award dissertation completion fellowship and financial support.*
- 2021 Renate Voris Fellowship  
*Competitively awarded fellowship and financial support for excellence in doctoral research in the Arts and Humanities.*
- 2019 New York Public Library Short-Term Research Fellowship  
*Competitively awarded fellowship provides archival and financial support for dissertation research conducted at New York Public Library.*
- 2019 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YM-YWHA Archival Research Fellowship  
*Competitively awarded fellowship provides archival and financial support for dissertation research conducted at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YM-YWHA's archives.*
- 2018 Dance Studies Association Selma Jeanne Cohen Award  
*International award for excellence in dance scholarship among graduate students.*

2017-2019 University of California, San Diego, The San Diego Fellowship  
*Competitively awarded fellowship for graduate students.*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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### **Double-Blind Peer Review Journal Articles:**

- 2024 “Recruiting Places: Pearl Primus’s Plans for Global Activism through Community-Engaged Dance Theatre.” *Theatre Survey* 65, no. 3: 208-26.
- 2022 “Universalizing the Specific: Janet Collins’s Spirituals and Genesis.” *Dance Chronicle* 45, no. 3: 187–206.

### **Commissioned Article:**

- 2024 Co-Written with Elizabeth W. Son. “Teaching Public Humanities in Practice.” In *Preparing Publicly Engaged Scholars: A Guide for Innovation in Graduate Education*. New York: American Council for Learned Societies, 2024.

### **Commissioned Book Chapters:**

- Forthcoming 2025 “Modern Dance at the Arts Club: Merce Cunningham, Jean Erdman, and the Chicago Avant-Garde.” In *Dancing on the Third Coast*, edited by Susan Manning and Lizzie Leopold. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, Expected 2025.
- 2023 “Dancing Sharecroppers: Jane Dudley’s and Pearl Primus’s Border Crossing Blues.” In *Border Crossings: Exile and American Dance, 1900 - 1955*, edited by Ninotchka Bennahum and Rena Heinrich. New York: New York Public Library Press, 2023.

### **Public Scholarship and Book Reviews:**

- 2024 Commissioned Book Review: Jacqueline Shea Murphy’s *Dancing Indigenous Worlds: Choreographies of Relation*. *Great Plains Quarterly*, 44.1 (Winter 2024): 106-7.
- 2021 Book Review: Carrie Noland’s *Merce Cunningham: After the Arbitrary*. *Dance Research Journal*. 53, no. 1 (April 2021): 79–81
- 2020 “Reconstructing 1940s Dances of Sophie Maslow and Pearl Primus from the Archives.” *The New York Public Library* (blog).  
<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2020/02/18/reconstructing-1940s-dances-sophie-maslow-and-pearl-primus-archives>.

## **INVITED LECTURES AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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### **Invited Lectures:**

- 2024 “Embodied Dance History: Pedagogy, Praxis, and Performance,” *DEL Dance to Belong: An Embodied Dance History of 92NY Workshop*, Dance Education Laboratory, 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y, July 15.
- 2023 “Prospectus to Defense: Dissertation Completion Strategies,” Theatre and Drama 205 Graduate Seminar: “Research Design and Prospectus Writing,” Northwestern University, January 11.
- 2021 “Race, Cold War Aesthetics, and Modern Dance: The Neutralization of Janet Collins’s Modern Dances, 1947-1949,” Theater 255 Graduate Seminar: “Race, Immigration, and the Cold War Politics of Contemporary American Dance,” University of California, Santa Barbara, March 1.
- 2021 “Moving and Sounding American: Sophie Maslow’s Staging of Contradictions in *Folksay*,” Dance 145g Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar: “Race, Immigration, and Contemporary American Dance,” University of California, Santa Barbara, February 1.
- 2020 “Introduction to Dance Theatre: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Urban Bush Women.” Theatre 140-1 Lower Division Undergraduate Course: “Theatre in Context,” Northwestern University, September 21.

#### **Conference Papers and Presentations:**

- 2024 “Corporeal Interventions in World War II USO Performances: Eve Gentry and Pearl Primus, Dancing Women in the Face of Empire,” presenter, and “Changing Ecologies of the Body: Critical Corporeality in Dance, Sport, and Embodied Practice,” group co-convenor, American Society for Theatre Research Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington, November 14-17.
- 2024 “Revisioning Queer Performance Histories: Sybil Shearer’s Modern Dances during the Lavender Scare,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, August 1-4.
- 2024 “Publicly Engaged Scholars,” invited session, ACLS Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland, May 3-4.
- 2024 “Dancing Sharecroppers and the Borders of Leftism: Jane Dudley’s and Pearl Primus’s Border Crossing Blues,” *Border Crossings* Symposium, Santa Barbara, California, January 26-27.
- 2023 “An Unrealized Hope: Pearl Primus’s Border Crossing Dance Theatre Troupe” plenary presentation, American Society for Theatre Research Annual Conference, Providence, Rhode Island, November 9-12.
- 2023 “Making Pathways Meet: Promising Directions for Publicly Engaged Doctoral Training” roundtable, National Humanities Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 25-29.

- 2023 “Women and Theatre Program: An Oral History Project,” interviewer, Women and Theatre Program Pre-Conference for Association for Theatre in Higher Education Annual Conference, August 2.
- 2022 “Dancing a Transcultural Activism: Janet Collins’s Biblical Dances,” National Women’s Studies Association Annual Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 10-13.
- 2022 “Dancing and Concealing: Sybil Shearer’s Modern Dance Response to the Lavender Scare,” American Society for Theatre Research Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 3-6.
- 2022 “Universalizing the Specific: Janet Collins’s Biblical Dances,” Dance Studies Association Annual Conference, Vancouver, Canada, October 13-16.
- 2022 “Modern Dance for Transnational Social Change: Global Echoes in Jane Dudley’s and Pearl Primus’s Danced Activism,” Theatre and Social Change Focus Group Debut Panel, Association for Theatre in Higher Education Annual Conference, Detroit, Michigan, July 28-31.
- 2022 “Modern Dance, Race, and the Unfinished History of Cold War Aesthetics: Janet Collins’s Modern Dances, 1947-1949,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education Annual Conference, Detroit, Michigan, July 28-31.
- 2022 “Dancing Sharecroppers: Jane Dudley’s and Pearl Primus’s Border Crossing Blues,” International Federation for Theatre Research World Congress, Reykjavík, Iceland, June 20-24.
- 2022 “Choreographing Blackness, Jewishness, and Questions of Universality: Janet Collins’s Biblical Modern Dances,” Conney Conference on Jewish Arts, Madison, Wisconsin, March 27-30.
- 2021 “Local Histories, Urban Geographies” Gathering, Dance Studies Association Annual Conference, New Brunswick, New Jersey, October 14-17.
- 2021 “Recovering the Work of Female Choreographers and Rewriting the Shift from Theatricalism to Formalism in Mid-Century Modern Dance,” Association for Theatre in Higher Education Annual Conference, Virtual, August 5-8.
- 2019 “Building a Space for One’s Body in an American Cultural and Economic Commons,” American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Honolulu, Hawai’i, November 7-10.
- 2019 “Dancing a Demand for Space: The Interventions of Sophie Maslow and Pearl Primus in the American Cultural and Economic Commons,” Dance Studies Association Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois, August 8-11.

- 2019 “Dancing a Demand for Space: The Interventions of Sophie Maslow and Pearl Primus in the American Cultural and Economic Commons at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YM-YWHA,” 92Y Fellow Presentation, *Conney Conference on Jewish Arts*, New York, New York, March 31-April 3.
- 2018 “Dancing a Decolonizing Technique,” invited presenter, Frantz Fanon Foundation Rencontres, New Brunswick, New Jersey, November 17-18.
- 2018 “Josephine Baker’s Decolonial Corporeal Borderland,” Dance Studies Association Annual Conference, Valletta, Malta, July 5-8.
- 2018 “Witnessing in Pearl Primus’s Strange Fruit,” Biennial International Dance Conference, Barbados, West Indies, May 23-26.
- 2018 “Josephine Baker’s Decolonial Mimesis,” InMotion: Performance and Unsettling Borders Conference, Chicago, Illinois, April 27-29.

## **TEACHING**

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### **San Diego State University:**

2025 Spring Dance 481W: “Performance Writing: Dance Analysis and Criticism”

### **California State University, Fullerton:**

2024-2025 Fall Theatre 275: “World Theatre History”  
and Spring

### **University of California, Santa Barbara:**

2023-2024 Dance 45: “Dance History and Appreciation”  
Fall, Winter,  
and Spring

### **Northwestern University:**

2022 Instructor of Record, Dance 101-2: “Introduction to Dance Experience-  
Dance in Context: Decolonizing Dance Canons”

2022 Winter Instructor of Record, Theatre 140-2: “Introduction to Theatre Research and  
and Spring Analysis: Adaptations”

2020 Teaching Assistant, Theatre 140-1: “Theatre in Context”

### **University of California, San Diego:**

2018 Teaching Assistant, Theatre History and Theory 23: “Twentieth Century  
Drama”

2018 Teaching Assistant, Theatre History and Theory 22: “Theatre 1500-1900”

2017 Teaching Assistant, Theatre History and Theory 21: “Ancient and Medieval Theatre”

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### **EDITORIAL, RESEARCH ASSISTANT, AND DRAMATURGY EXPERIENCE**

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2022- Editorial Assistant for *Women’s Innovations in Theatre, Dance, and Performance*, Bloomsbury Publishing, series edited by Dr. Elizabeth Son, Dr. Melissa Blanco-Borelli, and Dr. Wendy Arons

2022-2023 Tenure Dossier Assistant for Professor Shoshana Ela Cooper, Northwestern University

2022 Research Assistant for Dr. Nina Spiegel, Portland State University

2021 Interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama Graduate Assistant for Dr. Elizabeth Son, Northwestern University

2020-2023 Research Assistant for Dr. Susan Manning, Dr. Melissa Blanco Borelli, Dr. Elizabeth W. Son, and Dr. Masi Asare, Northwestern University

2018 Graduate Student Researcher for Dr. Nadine George-Graves, University of California, San Diego

2017-2018 *TheatreForum*, an international journal of theatre and dance, Editorial Staff

2017-2018 Native Film and Storytelling Institute, Dramaturg and Mentor, University of California, San Diego

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### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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2024 American Theatre and Drama Society Publication Development Forum  
*Competitively selected forum to workshop book proposal*

2021-2022 Searle Teaching Certificate Program, Northwestern University

2019 The Newberry Library and The Andrew Mellon Foundation “The Archive: Form, Theory, Practice,” Chicago, Illinois, October-December 2019.  
*Competitively awarded Mellon-funded seminar for doctoral students that instructs and supports in archival research and processing.*

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### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

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2025- American Society for Theatre Research, Jessica Berson Dance Research Assistance Fund Grant, Award Selection Committee, Appointed Member

2025 *Theatre Survey*, Peer Reviewer

2024 Women and Theatre Program, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Reader for Student Jane Chambers Feminist Playwriting Award, Appointed Position

- 2023- Women and Theatre Program+: Allied Feminist Coalition, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Co-Conference Planner, Elected Position
- 2022-2024 Chicago Dance Studies Working Group, Steering Committee, Appointed Member
- 2021 Research Assistant for Dance Studies Association under supervision of DSA President, Dr. Melissa Blanco Borelli  
*Assisted in logistical and administrative tasks for 2021 annual conference.*
- 2019 Conference Volunteer, *Dancing in Common* Dance Studies Association Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois, August 8-11.

### **UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

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- 2023-2024 Carol M. Press & Nicholas Tingle Award for Promising Dance Scholar Selection Committee, Appointed Member, University of California, Santa Barbara
- 2022-2023 Mary Poole Undergraduate Theatre Essay Award Committee, Appointed Member, Northwestern University
- 2022 New Works Lecture by Dr. María Regina Firmino-Castillo (Assistant Professor at University of California, Riverside), Appointed Moderator, Interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama, Northwestern University
- 2020 Splash at Northwestern, Appointed Moderator, Northwestern University  
*Program to provide a university experience for students from low-income high schools in Chicago.*
- 2020 Decolonizing the Classroom Student Working Group, Member, Interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama, Northwestern University
- 2017-2019 Theatre and Dance Department Graduate Student Association Representative, University of California, San Diego

### **SELECTED DANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE**

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- 2011- Instructor and Choreographer in ballet, pointe, repertoire, dance theatre, composition, and conditioning in community and pre-professional dance instruction settings
- 2014-2017 Leaping Leaders, Manassas, Virginia, Founder and Choreographer
- 2013-2014 First State Ballet Theatre, Wilmington, Delaware, Dancer
- 2013 Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance, Asheville, North Carolina, Dancer
- 2012-2013 North Carolina Dance Theatre, Charlotte, North Carolina, Trainee Dancer and Choreographer
- 2010-2013 Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Dancer and Instructor



2010 Dance Theatre of Harlem Pre-Professional Residency, Washington, D.C.,  
Dancer

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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2024-present Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas  
2021-present National Women's Studies Association  
2021-present International Federation for Theatre Research  
2021-present American Society for Theatre Research  
2019-present Association for Theatre in Higher Education  
2018-present American Studies Association  
2017-present Dance Studies Association