**A Girls’ Studies approach to Phillis Wheatley Peters**

**Ariane M. Balizet**

Despite the affinity between Girls’ Studies and humanities disciplines such as literary studies, history, philosophy, religion, and rhetoric, girls have been largely excluded from the imagined human subject of the humanities. The political subject that emerged as a result of Renaissance Humanism—around which our modern *humanities* have revolved—is legible only in contrast to the subjectivities of age, gender, race, ability, and class associated with girlhood. These intertwined conceptual histories of *girl* and *human*, furthermore, are rooted colonialist ideologies and the material experiences of enslavement. Drawing upon the work of Sylvia Wynter, I read the poetry of Phillis Wheatley Peters from a Girls’ Studies perspective to show how we might reimagine humanities disciplines to prioritize girls in our understanding of human experience.