

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies

A program of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Fall 2010 Newsletter

208 Bartlett Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003



We usher in our 36th year nourished by our wonderful celebrations last year. We took the opportunity of our 35th anniversary to reflect on the field, our history, current questions, and speculations about the future. We began this exploration in the fall with the Feminist Foundations Series. Banu Subramaniam focused the four panels on famous questions asked by feminists: Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?", Tina Turner's "What's Love Got to Do With it?", Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?", and Audre Lorde's "Can the Master's Tools Dismantle the Master's House?". The panelists included long established and junior colleagues from our campus and the Five Colleges as well as graduate students. They addressed feminism and identity politics; feminism, desire, and sexuality; feminism and (post) colonialism; and feminism and activism. The quality of these panels and the discussion they generated reminded me again how this vibrant community of feminist scholars nurtures us both as a program and as individuals. Special thanks to all the panelists for their generous contributions to this very stimulating dialogue. You can view the list of speakers on our new history page: www.umass.edu/wost/history.html

In February, we had our long awaited birthday party which included a symposium of nationally known speakers who reflected on the development of the field, current trends, and questions about the future. The more than 100 attendees engaged in lively discussion about the history of women's studies at UMass as well as larger questions about the field. And we all had birthday cake. Pictures can be viewed on our web site, and soon we hope to add video clips and other material. Thanks to all who made this celebration as wonderfully festive as it was and to our donors who helped to make the symposium possible by contributing gifts from \$3.50 to \$350.

Last year was also one of mostly **terrific news about our faculty**. **Dayo Gore** and **Miliann Kang's** tenure and promotion cases flew through the hoops with ease giving us more reason to celebrate. Associate Professors Gore and Kang will be taking their well deserved sabbaticals this year; both are working on fascinating new projects. We wish them a productive -- and restful -- time. Thanks to our stalwart personnel committee, co-chairs **Marta Calas** and **Sara Lennox**, **Joya Misra** and **Alice Nash** who wrote amazing letters and organized the files with exactitude. We also congratulate our newly promoted associate professors on the publications of their books: Miliann's [Managed Hand: Race, Gender and the Body in Beauty Service Work](#) was awarded the Sara A. Whaley book prize by the National Women's Studies Association. Dayo's co-edited collection, [Want to Start a Revolution: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle](#) was just published and there is also the soon to be released, [Radicalism at the Crossroads: African American Women Activists in the Cold War](#). **Svati Shah** also made us proud when she won a Lilly fellowship on her first application. She will be working on developing an approach to teaching sexuality studies. Unfortunately for us, **Sarah Richardson**, our Five College Feminist Science Studies faculty, was made an offer she couldn't refuse by Harvard's women, gender, and sexuality studies and science studies programs. We wish her well, but will miss her. Happily, we will be able to search to fill this position. **Banu Subramaniam** is heading the search committee which will include members from Hampshire and Mount Holyoke College. (See the WGSS web site for the position announcement).

In addition to the celebration and two tenure cases program faculty and staff were busy with **2009-2010 events**. With the support of our Mellon Mutual Mentoring Grant, most of us went to the National Women's Studies Association Conference in Atlanta in November where Alex, Dayo and I, along with three colleagues from Bennett College for Women, led a workshop on our collaboration. As always, our faculty were also presenting as well as moderating in a variety of sessions. In April, we had a fabulous career event "Making Connections: Life After

...Director's Message continued...

UMass A Student/Alumni/ae Networking Event" in conjunction with Afro-American Studies, The Labor Center and STPEC (Social Thought and Political Economy.) Thank you to our wonderful alums Ellen Church, Melanie DeSilva, Sarah Dunton, Erika Loper, Susan Manatt, Sandra Mandel, and Jaime Michaels for taking the time to come to the event and share work information and enthusiasm with students. (See the wonderful article by Sarah Dunton (01) and Janet Aalfs (79) on page 10 of this newsletter.) Our Community College/UMass collaboration also was a great success with three meetings over the year attended by faculty from all of the four area institutions. (See below for more details)

This fall begins another year of thought provoking events. Svati and Banu have organized the Feminist Foundations series around Critical Sexuality Studies. In addition to a September panel of UMass and Five College faculty who are leaders in the field, we are very excited to host Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, Distinguished Visiting Global Professor and Professor of English at NYU, one of the world's foremost feminist scholars of postcolonial studies, in October. In November we will host Afsaneh Najmabadi, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History and of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Harvard University whose work on sexuality and Iranian modernity is foundational for contemporary studies of sexuality in the region. See the next page for more information, and watch for announcements with details. Mark your calendars so you don't miss these great speakers.

This series also supports the celebration of the Stonewall Center's 25th Anniversary. **Genny Beemyn**, Stonewall Center director, has planned some really exciting events for the year, including talks by Cheri Morega, Cleve Jones, and a broad array of thinkers and activists. See the news section of this newsletter for a listing. We have arranged for students to get credit for the series. Contact the Stonewall Center or our office for more information.

The coming year is full of uncertainties on both the national and local scene. Close to home we will most probably be dealing with the merger of our college with the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and all of the opportunities and challenges that brings and, of course, the threat of budget cuts is always looming over us. We face these possibilities knowing that we have an excellent program with outstanding and dedicated faculty and staff, terrific students, and an amazing community of feminist scholars. We love to hear from you. Stay in touch.



...More highlights from last year...

Editor's Note

Last year we had tons of great events. We had the provocative and enjoyable Feminist Foundations series and birthday symposium that Arlene described in her director's message. You can relive the memories, or if weren't able to join us, find out more and see the terrific posters and programs on our web page (see e-news for more.) As always, our wonderful alums stepped up and joined us for our annual career event and I echo Arlene in her thanks to them. Here are more highlights from last year.

Community Colleges and Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies

Thanks to a visioning grant from the College of Humanities and Fine Arts Dean's office, during the school year 2009-2010 we were able to host several meetings with faculty and deans from Western Massachusetts Community Colleges. In addition to our own faculty and staff, and friends in our transfer admissions office, we hosted people from Berkshire Community College, Springfield Technical Community College, Greenfield Community College and Holyoke Community College. At the meetings we shared food and lively discussions about curriculum, easing transfer processes, and more. We had mini trainings on admissions and the new transfer rules and requirements, and one on career planning for women's studies students. All the faculty from the different schools brought syllabi and shared them, discussing different approaches to introductory courses and more. We look forward to having a community college day here at UMass where potential transfer students can find out more about interdisciplinary programs.

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Graduate Student Presentations

The following students summarized their final research projects on April 20, 2010. Final projects can be a master's or doctoral dissertation, a book chapter, or a publishable paper but it must focus on the intersection of race, class, gender, sexuality and, if relevant, transnational issues.

The following students presented: **Kabria Baumgartner**, Afro-Am Studies, **Lynda Pickbourn**, Economics, **Jillian Crocker**, Sociology, **Smita Ramnarain**, Economics, **Daphne Berry**, School of Management, **Alyssa Schneebaum**, Economics, **Rani Varghese**, **Social Justice Education**. For a listing of presentation titles and pictures, see the "Faces of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies" on our website.



Congratulations to all our grads! As always we had a festive send off to our graduates. There was an ample and celebratory breakfast, presentation of T-shirts and the proud carrying of our new banner to undergraduate commencement. See our photo page for proof! As always, without the support of our alums and friends, the ceremony would be without food, flowers, T-shirts or a new banner. Congratulations to all the majors, minors and graduate certificate students who completed their programs.

...What's happening this year...

Critical Sexualities Series Fall 2010

The Critical Sexuality Series this fall will both introduce and explore the field of Sexuality Studies for both UMass and the Five Colleges. While sexuality has been defined as a distinct object of interest for scholars since the late nineteenth century, Sexuality Studies has more recently emerged within the American academy as a subfield of Gender and Sexuality Studies. This speakers series will endeavor to capture both the breadth and depth of topics, regions, and theoretical concerns that Sexuality Studies aims to study, by covering both specifically sexuality-related topics (such as LGBT movements in the U.S. and abroad), as well as discussing histories, discourses, and legislation (such as the Child Marriage Restraint Act in India) that serve to both document and structure the politics of sexuality in particular contexts. Speakers will address the relationship between sexuality studies and postcolonial studies, American social and political movements, and the politics of translating terms, categories, and priorities across borders.

Framing Sexuality Studies

Thursday, September 30, Herter 601, 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Speakers:

Genny Beemyn, Director, Stonewall Center, UMass

Mitch Boucher, Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies/English, UMass

Andrea King, Program for the Study of Women and Gender, Smith College

Svati Shah, Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, UMass

From Antagonism to Agonism: Shifting Paradigms of Women's Opposition to the State **Rajeswari Sunder Rajan**

Distinguished Visiting Global Professor and Professor of English, New York University

Thursday, October 7, 5:00-7:00 p.m., Five College Women's Research Center

83 College Street, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley

Author's Abstract: Judith Butler's perception of a shift in feminism's relationship to the state serves as a useful starting-point for my reflections in this essay. The familiar feminist representation of Antigone's "defiance" that she describes and questions in her book *Antigone's Claim* (2000), leads me into an exploration of the political and historical reasons for the turn from the "antagonistic" model of opposition to the state that this literary icon has long represented, towards a modality of struggle that might be described as instead "agonistic." I examine the

...continued from previous page

classical Tamil epic Silappadikaram whose heroine Kannaki is a comparable figure, for its political resonances. In my reading of these two literary texts, I highlight the intriguing fact that when Antigone and Kannaki confront the state they do so as subjects of mourning. That mourning, a gendered, private, and emotionally fraught social function, should become the explosive site of women's opposition to the state into our own times is an indication of its political volatility. But this fact hints at the same time at the limited forms available for women's political agency. I conclude the paper with a discussion of the implications of an agonistic feminist politics, especially as it was played out in the circumstances surrounding the mobilisation of Indian women around the passage of the Child Marriage Restraint Act in colonial India in 1929, a historical case that is extensively analysed by Mrinalini Sinha in her landmark recent work, Specters of Mother India (2006).

Bio: Rajeswari Sunder Rajan's is one of the world's foremost feminist scholars of postcolonial studies. Her books include Real and Imagined Women (1993) and Scandal of the State (2003), the edited volumes The Lie of the Land (1992), Signposts (1997), Postcolonial Jane Austen (2000, with You-Me Park) and Crisis of Secularism in India (2006, with Anuradha Needham). She is currently completing a book on the Indian novel in English after Rushdie. Sunder Rajan is a Joint Editor of "Interventions", an international journal of postcolonial studies. Her chief research interests are in feminist theory, South Asian gender issues, postcolonial studies, the Anglophone Indian novel and the British nineteenth and twentieth century novel.

Sex in Change: Configurations of Sexuality and Gender in Contemporary Iran

Afsaneh Najmabadi

Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History and of Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Harvard

Thursday, November 4, 4:00-6:00 p.m., Bartlett 316

Professor Najmabadi will discuss a precirculated paper from her current book project. Please be in touch with the program if you would like to receive a copy of the paper.

Author's Abstract: Drawing on her forthcoming book, Sex-in-Change: Configurations of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Iran, this chapter entitled "Changing the Terms: Playing "snakes and ladders" with the State" maps out how contemporary procedures for transexuality came about in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution, focusing on transexual activism that all too often falls out of this story. It understands trans-activism not as a state-driven project that at most has some policy benefits for transexuals, but rather, like other domains and forms of engagement with governmental institutions, as part of the process of state-formation itself. As such, it is an ongoing fracturous and volatile process that more than three decades later continues to shape and re-shape, fracture and re-fracture, order and re-order what we name "the state." In addition to contributing to the overall analysis of transexualism as a state-sanctioned category that bears the mark of an array of social and political or governmental discourses, this attention to trans-activism shows how the state and society are marked by transpeople as well.

Bio: Afsaneh Najmabadi's work on sexuality and Iranian modernity is foundational for contemporary studies of sexuality in the region. Her last book, Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), received the 2005 Joan Kelly Memorial Prize from the American Historical Association. She is currently working on Sex in Change: Configurations of Sexuality and Gender in Contemporary Iran, and on Genus of Sex: How Jins Became Sex in Iran. Her other publications include: Islamicate Sexualities: Translations across Temporal Geographies of Desire. Co-edited with Kathryn Babayan. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Middle Eastern Monographs (2008); "Beyond the Americas: Are Gender and Sexuality Useful Categories of Historical Analysis?" in Journal of Women's History 18: 1 (spring 2006): 11-21; Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures Associate Editor, a multi-volume project, E. J. Brill (2003-); The Story of Daughters of Quchan: Gender and National Memory in Iranian History Syracuse: Syracuse University Press (1998).

We look forward to a rich and rigorous set of talks!

“LGBT Life Over the Past 25 Years”

This fall marks the 25th anniversary of the UMass Amherst Stonewall Center. To celebrate the occasion, the center is bringing leading LGBT scholars, artists, and activists from throughout the U.S. for a weekly series of lectures, performances, and panel discussions on “LGBT Life over the Past 25 Years.” The topics that will be addressed are politics, law, history, religion, athletics, literature, music, bisexual rights, transgender rights, and AIDS. The events will be held at UMass and at the other Five Colleges. A detailed schedule is available at <http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/25th/> and posters are available on campus. Don't miss this extensive series!

These events are sponsored by the UMass Stonewall Center, the UMass Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Program, and The Rainbow Times. Made possible in part by funding from the Five Colleges, Inc. and an ECSA grant from the UMass Center for Student Development.

Some of the highlights:

The series began with “An Evening with Cleve Jones: Four Decades of Activism” on September 15.

-Cherríe Moraga, “Still Loving in the Still War Years: On Keeping Queer Queer”
October 5, 8 p.m., 65 Bartlett Hall, UMass

-Eileen Myles reading from *Inferno: A Poet's Novel*
October 6, 8 p.m., Food for Thought Books, Amherst

-Robyn Ochs, “Beyond Binaries: Identity and the Sexuality Spectrum”
October 13, 7:30-9 p.m., Gamble Auditorium, Mount Holyoke College

-Jennifer Baumgardner, “When ‘Straight’ Girls Date Girls: Feminism and Bisexuality”
October 13, 8 p.m., Pruyne Lecture Hall (Room 115), Fayerweather Hall, Amherst College

-Opening reception for the UMass library's exhibit
“From Gay Liberation to UPride and Queerfest: Four Decades of LGBT Activism and Visibility at UMass Amherst”
October 20, 5 p.m., W. E. B. DuBois Library

-Irene Monroe, “Race, Gender, Sex, and Religion: Identity, Politics, and the Sacred”
November 3, 8 p.m., Faculty Lounge, Franklin Patterson Hall, Hampshire College

-Zoë Lewis and Amy Ray concert
November 17, 8 p.m., Student Union Ballroom, UMass

-Paisley Currah, “Sex Is as Sex Does”
December 8 p.m., Pruyne Lecture Hall (Room 115), Fayerweather Hall, Amherst College

Five-College students can receive one credit through WGSS for attending weekly panel discussions with the above presenters and Five-College faculty. The course will meet Wednesdays from 4-6 p.m. in Room 119 of the Agricultural Engineering Building at the University of Massachusetts (except for the October 20 panel) and are open to the public. There are a series of panel discussions as well as events. Individuals not taking the course for credit are also welcome to attend the panel discussions. For complete details, about the schedule or registration: www.umass.edu/stonewall or email: stonewall@stuaf.umass.edu.



ART & POWER IN MOVEMENT

W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst presents An International Conference Rethinking the Black Power and Black Arts Movements Black Power <<http://www.umass.edu/blackartspower/index.htm>> The conference takes place November 18-20, 2010 here at UMass. For information: [http://www.umass.edu/afroam/news and events](http://www.umass.edu/afroam/news_and_events).

Our students do us proud! Here is a quick round up of awards (these are just the ones we know about!) Congratulations to all.

The 2010 Glennie L. Jones Awards:

Dr. Dale M. Jones, alumna of our program 1986, and 2004 of the graduate school, has funded prizes in honor of her late mother Glennie L. Jones. The undergraduate awards are given to students who are committed to ending violence against women. Congratulations to **Stefana Soitos** and **Melody Glen**, winners of the undergraduate prize. Stefana is a double major who graduated this past spring. She worked as a Rape Crisis Counselor at Everywoman's Center (EWC) for the past two years, and was active in a number of organizing projects on campus and in the community. Melody is entering her senior year as a minor in the program. She is an Educator Advocate at EWC, and has assisted with psychology department research on how people perceive women and men and the career and parenting choices they make. The 2010 Glennie L. Jones Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Feminist Scholarship was shared by **Lynda Pickbourn** and **Jillian Crocker**. See page 8 for details on their research.

Ann Ferguson Feminist Social Activist Award:

Ann Ferguson gave two special social activism awards to honor the Thirty-Fifth Anniversary of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies. Congratulations to winners **Alyx Akers** (undergraduate major) and **Katherine Jones**, (graduate certificate student).

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies gives a **book award** to a local high school student each year for feminist activism or scholarship. Congratulations to **Irene Soulos** of Amherst Regional High School, winner for 2010.

And Even More Award Winners. . .

Lynda Pickbourn, graduate certificate student, was awarded one of seven 2010 Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Dissertation Fellowships. This award is the only national fellowship for doctoral work on issues of women and gender and supports the final year of dissertation writing for Ph.D. candidates in the humanities and social sciences doing interdisciplinary and original work. Lynda's current research and teaching interests focus on gender, migration and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa.

Kabria Baumgartner has been awarded a Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship. These fellowships "support individuals whose dissertations show potential for bringing fresh and constructive perspectives to the history, theory, or practice of formal or informal education anywhere in the world."

Daphne Berry, Allia Matta and **Rani Varghese** have all been awarded Diversity Assistantships for 2010-2011 from the Graduate School. The Diversity Assistantship is part of an initiative created by the Office of Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention to assist departments in their efforts to enhance the graduate student experience.

Daphne Berry received the "Best Student Paper" award from the Critical Management Studies Division of the Academy of Management in the spring of 2009 for a paper she wrote on "Expatriates, Migrants, Gender, Race, and Class". The paper was published in the Academy's 2009 Best Paper Proceedings.

Smita Ramnarain was awarded the Political Economy Research Institute Dissertation Writing Fellowship.

Graciela Monteagudo, who completed the Certificate last year, has been awarded a 2010-2011 University Fellowship for Returning Students from the UMass Graduate School.

Stefana Soitos and **Kerry Chenausky**, both graduated (double!) majors won Senior Leadership Awards.

Congrats to **Alyx Akers** for winning the Maureen Flanagan Scholarship. Alyx will moderate a panel entitled "Coalition Politics and Activism: History, Theory, Praxis" at the upcoming National Women's Studies Association Conference in November.

Alyx Akers, Zurima Cisneros, Gesibela Sousa and **Anissa Sukkar** have all had their writing chosen for The Student Writing Anthology: 2010-2011. These writings were submitted by Mitch Boucher, instructor of the Junior Year Writing class for our majors in Fall 2009. We are very proud that so many of our wonderful students' work was selected. The anthology is the textbook for College Writing classes here at UMass and is available for use elsewhere.

To see the press release, check out the "past news" link on the front page of our website.

In Memorium:

Julie Graham 1945-2010

The WGSS community lost an important friend and ally (and many of us lost a good friend) when Julie Graham, Professor of Geosciences, died on April 4, 2010. She had been suffering for several years from the effects of neck cancer but her death was sudden. Julie Graham was a loyal supporter of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies. In the 1990s she was instrumental in the start up of the graduate Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies program and she continued to serve for many years on our Certificate Graduate Studies Committee. Julie was always ready to engage with students and mentored a number of our graduate certificate students.

Julie worked tirelessly for social change. Her latest funded project focused on the alternative economies operating in the Pioneer Valley: *Rethinking Economy: Envisioning Alternative Regional Futures*. Julie Graham's publishing career included, among others, more than fifty publications with coauthor Katherine Gibson under the blended pen name J.K. Gibson-Graham. They published two major books: *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew it)* (1996), which challenged the conventional understanding of capitalism as necessarily and naturally dominant, and *A Postcapitalist Politics* (2006) which reports on efforts to perform alternative economies through action research in Massachusetts, Australia, and the Philippines. Their contribution *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew it): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy* was named a "Classic in Human Geography" by the journal *Progress in Human Geography*.

The WGSS community mourns the loss of Julie Graham. She was a loving friend and intellectual colleague that helped to make the world a better place.

Jennifer Fasulo 1962-2010

We are sad to report the loss of Jennifer Fasulo who was a passionate champion for social justice, constantly advocating for human rights and striving for fundamental social and economic change. Jennifer taught in our program years ago, and in addition her career involved numerous positions, including housing advocate and educator for the Hampshire Community Action Commission in Northampton, Mass; workshop

facilitator for the Adult Basic Education to College Program at Holyoke Community College; ESOL teacher for the Center for New Americans in Amherst; and most recently as the coordinator for the SEEK Program at Lehman College in New York City. Among her greatest accomplishments, as vice president of the Graduate Employee Organization, Jennifer fought for and helped create a free day-care center at UMass Amherst. She also successfully fought to create an Affirmative Action Fund for low-income and minority students at the University. She will be missed.



NEWS FOR STUDENTS

Undergraduate Student News (and Advice)

Get your major and minor paperwork done and be official! We are accepting major applications (signed by a faculty sponsor) on a rolling basis. We are in the process of changing the name of the minor to reflect the name change of the program. Stay tuned.

Curious about the new gen eds? Students entering UMass this fall (Fall 2010) or later have a different set of requirements than students who entered earlier. When you talk with your friends about requirements, be aware of this fact. For all the specifics:

<http://www.umass.edu/gened/forStudents/fulfillingRequirements.html>

Think about your future on October 27!

Graduate & Professional Schools Info Day

October 27, 2010

11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Student Union

Majors Fair

October 27, 2010

5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Campus Center Auditorium



Graduate Student news

The Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies is accepting admissions applications this fall until **September 30, 2010**. We have extended admissions into the fall semester because we are in an unusual situation of having the feminist theory and research

...NEWS...

methods classes both offered only in the spring. If you or someone you know is interested in applying for the Certificate contact Nancy Patteson, Graduate Program Coordinator for further information or check out our website. The spring semester application deadline is **March 10, 2011**.

Welcome to the new admits of 2010!

Erika Arthur, History
Christie Barcelos, Public Health
Swati Birla, Sociology
Claire Brault, Political Science
Emily Gibson, History
Elizabeth Hanssen, American Studies
Amanda Molina, History
Josefa Scherer, Public Health
Elise Swinford, English
Ananda Timpane, Social Justice Education

The following students completed the Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies in May 2010:

Daphne Berry, PhD candidate, School of Management
Expatriates, Migrants, Gender, Race, and Class

Elizabeth Cahn, PhD candidate Regional Planning
An Online Course on Feminism and Design

Jillian Crocker, PhD candidate, Sociology
Buying Time: The Importance of Gender in Union Contracts

Christine Maksimowicz, PhD candidate, English
*Toward an Ethics of Life Values in the Working Class
Escape Narrative: Nurture and Imagination's Place in the
Movement from Instrumentalized Relations to Reciprocity
and Recognition*

Judith Obiero, EdD candidate
Center for International Education
*Achieving Gender Equity in Education for All: An
Examination of Social Exclusion, Gender and Education in
Kenya*

Lynda Pickbourn, PhD candidate, Economics
*Gendered Social Norms, Migration Preferences and
Bargaining Power: A Study of Female Migration in
Northern Ghana*

Smita Ramnarain, PhD candidate, Economics
*Applying a Feminist Standpoint to Reconstruction and
Development Policies in War-to-Peace Transitions*

Alyssa Schneebaum, PhD candidate, Economics
The Division of Labor in Same-Sex Households

LIBRARY NEWS

Welcome to the W.E.B. Du Bois Library and Learning Commons! Over the summer, the new Circulation/Reserves Desk has opened on the Lower Level. This single desk combines the traditional services of the Circulation Desk (formerly located on the entrance level) with those of the Reserve Desk (formerly located on the 3rd floor). This new service point, which will be staffed whenever the building is open, is the place to go to check out and return materials, pick-up Five College and Interlibrary Loan items, pick-up print reserve readings, and check-out laptops and digital cameras.

The popular Procrastination Station Library Café remains in the Entrance Lobby and will soon be expanding into the former location of the Circulation Office. Also, take a look at the new and improved Library website: <http://www.library.umass.edu/>

Have questions about the library or need help with research projects and assignments? Please contact Beth Lang, your Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Reference Librarian, weekdays, 9-5, with an office in the Learning Commons. Contact Beth at bwlang@library.umass.edu phone: 413 545-6890.

ENEWS

There are a few things in the works for our website. We have created a page entitled, "Looking Back. . . A Program History." At this point in time we have added PDFs of event flyers back to 2004 and will do the best we can to go back as far as we can in our 35+ years. Alums of the program are welcome to send us their thoughts, testimonials, pictures and memories for this page.

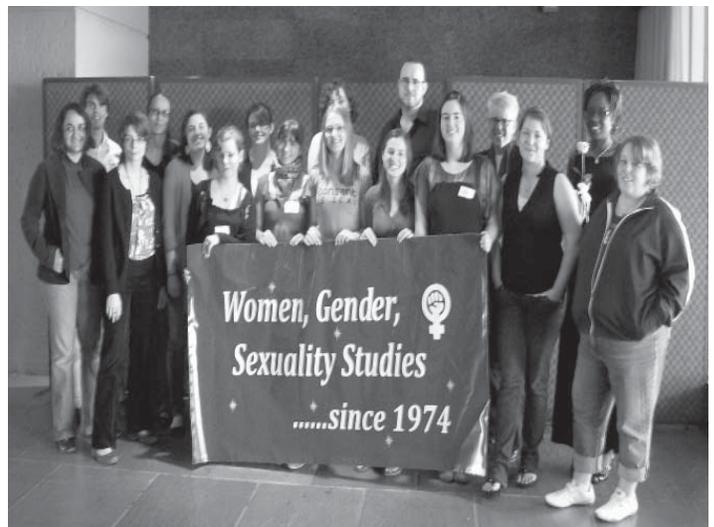
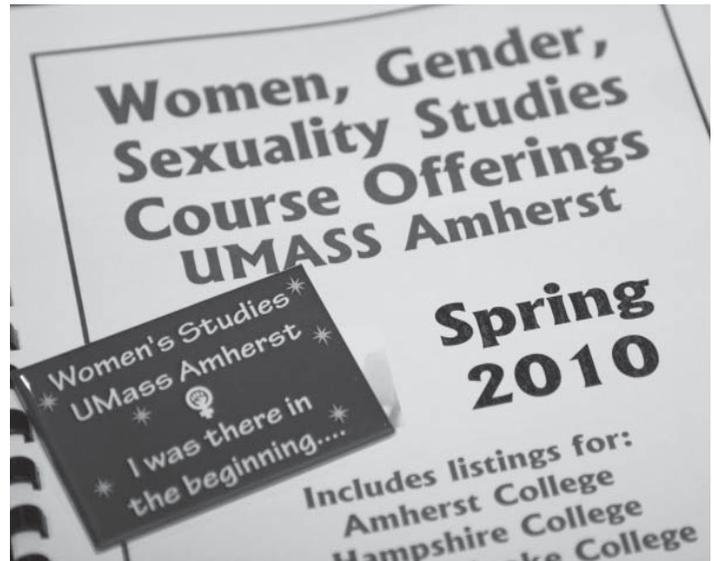
Pictures of our 35th anniversary celebration, our brunch to celebrate graduates, graduate student presentations and commencement are all on the "Faces of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies" button.

DONORS

Our Donors Come Through Once Again!

Special thanks to regular donors and those who responded to our special 35th anniversary appeal and the University's match challenge with donations from \$3.50 to \$350. All our supporters helped make the event special.

M.C.Z. Abrahamsen	Lauren Mahoney
Nancy Arienti	Katherine Maich
Nancy Arnold	Sandy Mandel
Robyn Bagley	Nora Maroulis
Elizabeth Bennett	Dale Melcher
Patricia Berky	Mecke Nagel
Kristina Bourne	Alice Nash
Maren Brown	Katy Noone
Melinda Chateauvert	Eileen O'Neill
Laurie Churchill	Angela Quitadamo
Tina Cincotti	Jan Passion
Kathleen Cote	Andrea Price
Diane Lynch Curley	Andrea Ramlow
Margo Culley	Lynley Rappaport
Judy Davis	Janice Rayner
Suzanne Delbou	Tinker Greene Ready
Melanie Desilva	Mary Ellen Reilly
Arlyn Diamond	Leon Rockwood
Jessica Diamondstone	Deobrah Rose
Rebecca Dobkins	Hank Sabel
Sarah Dunton	Karen Shack
Hildy Fentin	Inez Sieben
Ann Ferguson	Stefana Soitos
Andrea Fox	Catherine Stewart
Joanne Gangi-Wellman	Ilona Sturm
Timothy and Kathy Gebhart	Jill Tregor
Nellie Goodman	Annie Tummino
Tyran Grillo	Cynthia Warren
Debra Grywacz	Lakenya Webster
Abbie Hatton	Mary Werowinski
Mary Hawkesworth	Eliza White
Erin Jackson	Wendy Wilde
Elise Jakobhazy	Anne Wiley
Jackson Katz	Ann Williams
Patricia Kenny	Christine Willis
Donna Kerner	Alita Woodcock-Parody
Dale LaBonte	
Karen Lederer	
Linda Leslie	
Jacqueline Levin	
Patricia Lee Lewis	
Jane Lindhorst	
Susan Macchia	
Birdie MacLennan	



POST-GRAD REFLECTIONS

Keep The Fire Burning: Women's Studies Connections Inform Collaboration

by Janet Aalfs ('79) and Sarah Dunton ('01)

Keep the fire burning! Keep the wheel turning! Malika Ndlovu, artist, Cape Town, South Africa

Survival has a body big as the sun. Janet Aalfs, artist, Northampton, MA

We Are Earth – We Are One Cape Town teens & Girls Inc. teens

Unity Strengthens/ Diversity Transforms

We are from two organizations that offer empowerment and leadership opportunities for women and girls through education, creativity, courage, compassion, and community activism. Janet Aalfs is the Director of Valley Women's Martial Arts: Institute for Healing and Violence-Prevention Strategies in Easthampton. Sarah Dunton is the Director of Youth Development Programs at Girls Incorporated of Holyoke.

Our roots are entwined in UMass Women's Studies where we both received our undergraduate degrees. Our current work is woven in offering teen girls a place to express themselves through poetry, movement skills, and social justice advocacy. While our paths to this work may have been very different, our commonalities have brought us together in this incredible collaboration.

Some background: In the spring of 2008, Sarah Dunton received a phone call from a staff member at the Institute for Training and Development (ITD) who was interested in offering a series of workshops for Girls Inc. of Holyoke. Being familiar with both the work of ITD and Janet Aalfs, Sarah was quick to jump at the opportunity. The seeds of a powerful collaboration had been planted.

Working with girls in the urban setting of Holyoke offers challenges regarding the goal of the organization which is to inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold. Girls Inc. is always looking for ways to expand the organization's programmatic 'horizons'. So when the opportunity arose to collaborate internationally, we knew we'd figure out a way to make it happen.

Through a South Africa/U.S. performing artist teaching exchange (sponsored by ITD of Amherst), Janet and Malika Ndlovu from Cape Town began teaching poetry & movement workshops at Girls Inc. and invited the Girls Inc. members to be in the Izandi final performance in Springfield. The following year Janet traveled to Cape Town to work with teens in the townships. She brought their poetry and intrepid spirits to self-defense classes at Girls Inc., which led to involvement with a poetry/spoken word peer leadership group, a First Night Northampton debut with VWMA/HAVPS, and ongoing writing/ movement work at the Girls Inc. teen center. The beat goes on!

Through this ongoing work, Janet and Sarah, along with Girls Inc. staff members and a dedicated cadre of adolescent girls, have created a program that has inspired the girls who are participating, and enlightened the many audiences who have witnessed their work first-hand. It is rare that a collaboration is so seamless and fruitful so early in its development. We've consistently commented on how quickly the girls integrate new material, accept leadership roles, and share their wisdom in all directions.

Janet: Audre Lorde (1934-1992) was my first teacher of poetry and peaceful warriorship. I was introduced to her work through UMass Women's Studies in the mid-late 1970's. She inspired me to break through enforced silences and cultural barriers of all kinds, not because I thought I could, but because she helped me to realize that I must. At Girls Inc. I find kindred spirits of all ages, girls and women who value what it means to be "Strong, Smart, and Bold" in this world. As Audre Lorde has said:

*...and when we speak we are afraid/ our words will not be heard/
nor welcomed/ but when we are silent/ we are still afraid //
So it is better to speak/ remembering/ we were never meant to survive.**

While I was in Women's Studies, I began practicing martial arts and received academic credit for my studies which included research on women's history in the arts. I am infinitely grateful to staff, students, and professors alike in
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supporting me to explore pathways that would lead further into my life's work.

Sarah: My first connection to Women's Studies was through my mother. She used to teach me critical thinking skills during after-school cartoon hour. She broke stereotypes by working outside the home, and played on a community volleyball team while dad did the laundry. While these may have been very simplistic examples of feminism, it is proof that a simple teachable moment, a moment outside the norm, can change the life of a girl. The UMass Women's Studies program allowed me to expand my own horizons in regard to feminism, and the "matrix of power relations including race, class, sexuality and nationality."

I now work in a field that allows me to fully incorporate all that I was taught in my undergraduate classes. Weekly I find myself channeling Alex and Arlene, and I have been out of school for ten years. My greatest lesson has been that of awareness. Working in Holyoke it is very easy to fall into the trap of only seeing the challenges that our girls face. Holyoke has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the state, one of the highest rates of school drop-out, and extreme poverty. The needs of the girls we serve are endless, but when we focus on the gifts that each girl brings, then we can truly inspire her to reach her goals. The collaboration between Valley Women's Martial Arts and Girls Inc. does just that by focusing on the special strengths of each girl through her writing and her capacity to move the world. I have no doubt that we will be talking about these connections and this program five years from now. The girls have already begun to take on the leadership and the coordination that will insure its success.

We appreciate Women's Studies for nurturing the seedlings that continue to sprout, blossom, and bear fruit in this joyous work-in-progress called Life.

The function of freedom is to free someone else.
Toni Morrison

*Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives.
It lays the foundations for a future of change,
a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.*
Audre Lorde

Post Grad Reflections By Beverly Weber

Just this morning I had an early morning phone call with my UMass Women's Studies colleague and friend Kirsten Isgro. We repeated something I often hear from graduates from the certificate program: we deeply miss the tremendous community provided by the certificate program.

I think that when many of us enter the program, we are well aware of the benefits of a feminist community. They will support and challenge us as we face the intellectual challenges posed by research on gender and sexuality, and by our everyday political interventions, whatever form they may take. Equally important to me, however, is the fundamental importance of this program for gaining the tools and theoretical framework necessary for truly interdisciplinary work, as well as for thinking about race, ethnicity, nationality, and the many other forms of difference that inflect gender. The program forced me to speak to people from all disciplines in an intelligible way, gave me the opportunity to learn from them, and enabled me to begin working across disciplines myself. Those conversations happened everywhere – in the office with the staff, in classrooms, in TA meetings. And, quite frankly, the program gave me a good kick in the pants to start facing the REALLY hard questions. Right now, for me, as a scholar of European studies, this happens to be thinking and writing about how to talk about Islam in Europe – how to develop a feminist perspective that is simultaneously anti-racist and anti-violence, and how to think about religion in the context of intersectionality.

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As a teacher, this further means productively bringing these discussions into the classroom. The course on gender, race, and immigration that I taught for Women's Studies at UMass has become my most frequently taught and most successful course. By far my most difficult, and by far my favorite. Working with the gifted teacher-scholars, both professors and grad students, at UMass taught me an immense amount: about feminist pedagogy; about handling – and VALUING, contentious arguments in the classroom; about learning from my students; about letting go of the “expert” persona future scholars are told we must take on to become successful academics.

On Facebook, on the phone, via email, through collaborative projects, and when our physical paths cross, my Women's Studies colleagues continue to challenge and support me. They form an indispensable part of my daily work as a scholar and teacher. I miss you all – but am grateful that in so many ways, you are still part of my life!

Beverly Weber is an Assistant Professor of German at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and affiliate faculty in Women and Gender Studies, Film Studies, and Comparative Literature. She is working on a book on gender, violence, and Islam in contemporary Germany. She can be contacted at beverlyweber.com.

ALUMNI NEWS

The listing is roughly alphabetical by decade, but as you know from experience, names can change and paths through school can meander and then return. Keep us up to date with your activities; we love to brag about current students and past ones too!

When we feel a bit glum about the world, reading about what our alums are doing gives us hope. Read on for some inspiration—

News from Graduates of the Graduate Certificate Program:

Jana Braziel has been awarded the 2010 University of Cincinnati Rieveschl Award for Creative and/or Scholarly Works. She has previously won the English Department's Boyce Award for Outstanding Teaching. Jana's contributions to the University of Cincinnati are as multifaceted as she is herself. She's an associate professor of English and comparative literature and — since fall 2008 — the faculty chair of the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center. Since arriving at University of Cincinnati in 2003, she has published three edited collections and four single-authored books on Caribbean and African diasporic literature with respected academic presses. She is a prolific writer, her newest work is [Duvalier's Ghosts: Race, Diaspora, and U.S. Imperialism in Haitian Literature](#), which has just been released by University of Florida Press. Jana graduated from the Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies in 2000.

Kirsten Isgro is an Assistant Professor in the Center for

Communication and Journalism at SUNY Plattsburgh. She writes: “I spent a day at the Gender and Women's Studies retreat yesterday and am hoping to become an associate faculty soon. But boy, do I miss the familiar faces of UMass' WOST!”

Pierre Orelus' book [The Agony of Masculinity: Race, Gender, and Education in the Age of "New" Racism and Patriarchy](#) (Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education) was published by Peter Lang publishing last fall. He is an Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, New Mexico State University. He graduated from the Certificate in 2008.

Beverly Weber is Assistant Professor of German at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and affiliate faculty in women and gender studies. See her “Post Grad Reflections” starting on page 11.

News from Graduates of our Undergraduate Programs:

From the 1980's and earlier:

Susan Crane is International Health Research Programme Director for University College London's Institute for Global Health in March, managing large grants and “corralling academics.” Susan has traveled extensively in the U.S. and elsewhere with her family this year.

Jasmine L. Eleftherakis started as a music major

ALUMNI NEWS

after serving three years in the U.S. Army as a French horn player, before switching to Women's Studies and minoring in Modern Greek. "After college, I worked for Pacific Gas & Electric as a lineman, then a construction engineer. In 1989, I fell 12 feet off a utility pole, injuring myself somewhat, then went back to school at the University of San Francisco, earning a Paralegal Certificate in 1992." After working as a paralegal in California then New England she began working in Intellectual Property law (patent prosecution and litigation) for the law firm Nixon Peabody LLP. In 2001, she began to work for the pharmaceutical industry, then earning a Master of Science degree in Program & Project Management from Brandeis University. Currently, Jasmine works for Pfizer in Cambridge. She added "I made a documentary film in 2008-2009, featuring older women and their lives, that was aired on Somerville Community Access Television and elsewhere."

Suzanne Gardinier wrote from Manhattan that she has a new book coming out from Sheep Meadow Press this fall, called Iridium & Selected Poems, with work from the past twenty-five years. Her essay "Two Cities: The Iliad" won the Kenyon Review Award for Literary Excellence in the Essay and the Pushcart Prize; her most recent essay, "Present Absentee: Mahmoud Darwish," appears in *The Manhattan Review*. In 2003 she participated in Connecticut College's Klagsbrun Symposium, "On Writing and Moral Vision," with Adrienne Rich; that year she was on a panel at the American Studies Association annual meeting: "American Jews, Israel, and the Palestinian Question." A recipient of grants from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Lannan Foundation, she teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and lives in Manhattan.

Robin Marion has been working at Hampshire College for going on 3 years as the Educational Outreach Coordinator for the Childhood, Youth, & Learning program.

Jan Passion lives in a CoHousing Community in the Bay Area of California with his partner Ellen, and dog Artemus. He continues to work for the Nonviolent Peaceforce in the Human Resource department (www.nvpf.org), an organization which sends trained civilians to conflict zones (Sri Lanka, Philippines, Sudan, etc) to provide protection to human rights defenders and vulnerable communities. Sailing and paragliding are his hobbies of choice these days. He added: "For any WOST folks out this way - feel free to connect,

Jan@JanPassion.org - perhaps we can go for a sail under the Golden Gate Bridge and share stories of our time at UMass."

Andrea Price still lives in Washington, DC, and has been a consultant since 1994 in public health mostly, despite a master's in education. She wrote a knitting reference book that was published in 2007 called Knitspeak: An A-Z Guide to the Language of Knitting Patterns. She works at a small association as a consultant--*The American Association of Suicidology*, which takes interns (unpaid) all year round; if there are graduate or undergraduate students who are looking for social science research or public health internship they can contact her (info available in the office.)

Jill Tregor writes "I'm finally doing the work I've wanted to do for a very long time--I'm faculty at City College of San Francisco, teaching Women and Health and other health education courses. Also, I've been invited to present some of my Masters Degree research on access to health care for fat women at a conference this August and am very excited about that. Nearly 30 years after graduating, my life is still informed by having majored in Women's Studies at UMass!"

From the 1990's:

Elena Azzoni is currently at work on her memoir A Year Straight, in which she humorously chronicles her first year of dating men after identifying as a lesbian for over a decade. Her book will be published by Seal Press in Fall 2011.

Jenn Brandel writes that she is working as a clinical social worker in the Emerson College Counseling Center and parenting her 6 year old daughter.

AnnMarie (Peavey) Duchon, earned an M.Ed. in SJE 2001 and in 2009, became the Associate Director of Accommodation Services at Disability Services here at UMass Amherst.

Cheri Ehrlich continues to work at the Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn, New York as a Senior Museum Educator and Teen Programs Coordinator. This summer she worked with the art education staff from Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pennsylvania to host K-12 teachers in the museum's Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art who were participating in "The Dinner Party Institute", an intensive workshop sponsored

by *Through the Flower*, the nonprofit Feminist art organization founded by artist Judy Chicago. Cheri recently completed her Ed.M. at Teachers College Columbia University in Art and Art Education. Her research focused on adolescent development, aesthetic education, and feminist art.

Gina Govoni became the Chairman of the Board of the Natick Housing Authority in April after a year of service as a gubernatorial appointee. She continues to enjoy her work as the Homeownership Director at Mass Housing Partnership. Gina is a professional, a parent, and a volunteer and she added, "I would like others in the WOST community to know that local service is important, particularly for parents who are interested in making sure that other parents in their community are treated respectfully in the pursuit of housing despite their income level."

Michelle A. Roberts is the Business Development Leader: Health and Energy Efficient Homes and Buildings for Owens Corning. Michelle was a Building Systems Designer and consultant, and the Principal and CEO of Chatham Hill Residential Design and Build, LLC. Michelle is a Governor of the National Association of Home Builders and the Northeast Area Trustee for the NAHB Professional Women in Building Council. Michelle is interested in starting a chapter of the NAHB Women in Building here at UMass.

From 2000 on:

Elisha Adey '10, Stefana Soitos '10 and Maria Guecke '12 have created a website for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, incest, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment or any other violation of one's body. The site's goal is for survivors to connect, validate and empower each other. Either anonymously or by name, survivors are encouraged to submit stories, poetry, artwork or social commentary concerning their experiences. The site is designed to be a healing, empowering and inspiring space for survivors of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, nationalities, cultural and social identities.

Soulspeakout.org was born out of the need for a safe space for survivors to tell their stories. Their original intent was to start a zine to distribute at local women's shelters and support centers. However, the website has the potential to reach many more. The courses and phenomenal professors in the Women, Gender, Sexuality

Studies department as well as the Everywoman's Center inspired and encouraged them to create this resource.

Nashira Baril is the Director of the REACH US New England Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities and Co-Director of the Center for Health Equity and Social Justice at the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHS). BPHS aims to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities and build health equity through community, policy and systems change. In addition to being a member of several local and national advisory boards, Nashira was selected as one of 20 emerging leaders in community health for the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. She was honored by the Boston Celtics as "A Hero Among Us" for leadership work on community health. She is Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Hyde Square Task Force, a community-based youth empowerment organization in Jamaica Plain, and volunteers as a mentor to college-bound high school students.

Lauren Brannon joined Soapbox, Inc. and Gloria Steinem's office in Spring 2006, shortly after graduating from UMass, Amherst. Since then, she has earned her Masters' from the Draper Program of Humanities and Social Thought at NYU focusing on gender politics and science studies. Lauren also currently works as a Birth Assistant at the Brooklyn Birthing Center and hopes to become a midwife in the near future.

Cloe Cooper is working on an initiative to build networks within immigrant and civil rights circles to counter nativism and racism in the anti-immigrant movements. She is a national field organizer with Center for New Community - a small national civil rights organization based in Chicago.

Ellen Church has started volunteer consulting for the Newton-Tanzania Collaborative, on fundraising and management. This all-volunteer organization, based in Newton, Massachusetts, is currently working hard to use literacy programming and individual scholarships to build leadership skills amongst secondary school girls in Kwala, Tanzania. "I've been using resources of alumna Tina Cincotti's business 'Funding Change Training and Consulting' to get started." Ellen and her husband Jason are also celebrating their 5 year wedding anniversary and their 3 year old son Marley's first day at preschool.

ALUMNI NEWS

Shannon Farrington writes that she is teaching in the Boston Public Schools--she has taught high school English as well as first grade. Budget constraints have meant that she has taught at different levels and in different schools. After recently buying a condo she is currently planning to wed her partner of 6 years.

Jessica Kinckman is working as a Residential Counselor at Wayside Youth and Family Support Network. She works with adolescent females diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders. She writes: "The position closely parallels some of the work I did with the Everywoman's Center and allows me the opportunity to support resilient young women. I find myself working heavily with a young trans population as well as many youth diagnosed with STI's and some pregnant youth. I feel like my experiences at UMass within the Public Health Department, Education, and Women's Studies set me up to be very successful in my current role."

Christina Knowles, Statewide Manager of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Organization for Women, has been in the news a great deal. Recently Campaigns and Elections Politics Magazine (a national magazine on politics and policy) named her as one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Massachusetts.

Dru Levasseur wrote "In November 2009, I took a position as Lambda Legal's Transgender Rights Attorney. I focus my work on impact litigation, advocacy and community education to advance the civil rights of transgender people nationwide. I am also working hard on our first year of grant-giving as the Co-founder and Vice President of the Jim Collins Foundation, an organization that raises money to fund gender-confirming surgeries for transgender people. <http://www.lambdalegal.org/about-us/staff/m-dru-levasseur.html>"

Lauren Mahoney is doing development work at the National Consumer Law Center and she co-coordinates the Consumer Rights for Domestic Violence Survivors Initiative, a national project that trains DV advocates on how to help survivors achieve economic independence.

Nicole Manganelli writes "I just left my position as Assistant Director at the Center for Preventing Hate in Portland, Maine (preventinghate.org) and will be starting an Ed.M in Risk and Prevention at the Harvard Graduate School of Education at the end of August. I'm really excited for the change."

Rebecca Norman wrote that she is working as a fundraiser and programme manager for an NGO based in Cape Town, South Africa, called Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa. She has also been accepted to the University of Copenhagen M.A. of International Health, 2011-2012.

Jya Plavin is starting the M.P.H. at UC Berkeley in Health and Social Behavior. Her focus is community-based participatory study, particularly homelessness and gender, looking at mental illness and access to health resources. Jya thanked members of the faculty for "seeing her through the application process."

Annie Tummino writes: "I serve as Coordinator of National Women's Liberation www.womensliberation.org, a feminist group for women who want to fight back against male supremacy and win more freedom for women. I am a semester away from getting my degree in library science and archives at Queens College and serving as an assistant for the newly formed Civil Rights Archive, which is part of the Queens College Libraries Special Collections Department."

Keep sending us your news, press releases, careers moves, and of course up to date contact information. As you can see from this newsletter, some of our grads have made productive professional connections to other alums of the programs. Expand your network by joining our groups on LinkedIn (UMass Amherst Women's Studies Grads) and Facebook (Umass Women's Studies Graduates) and find one another.



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Editor's note: Once again we didn't publish a spring newsletter, but it wasn't because we weren't thinking about our readers. Instead we sent information and invitations to everyone on our list to the symposium/35th anniversary last February. We would like to keep publishing the newsletter in paper as well as electronic form. We are considering a switch to an annual format. Let us know your thoughts.

30 years ago (December 1980) in this newsletter.

"The Women's Studies Union Council sponsored a forum entitled: "My Father asks: What Is This Women's Studies Stuff?" in November (1980) for the Women's Studies Community. Over forty women came to listen to students, faculty, staff workers and alumnae share their experience, ideas and reflections within that great expanse called Women's Studies. The forum was successful in bringing together staff, students, and faculty to talk Women's Studies talk "i.e. our lives and our work". .in an informal, relaxed atmosphere. It was inspiring and energizing to hear about perseverances, dreams and victories. . . especially the report that [a grad] was hired for jobs BECAUSE she had a Women's Studies degree."

Now the parents of college bound students often come up to our table at admissions events and share their fond memories of and involvement in women's studies. Sometimes they even say--"My daughter is really into this—I'll be sure to tell her (or my son) to take these classes!"

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