

# Women's Studies Newsletter

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



Spring 2008 ➤ 208 Bartlett Hall ➤ 413-545-1922 ➤ [www.umass.edu/wost](http://www.umass.edu/wost)

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The newsletter is starting differently this semester. We're jumping right into the exciting news of the two searches that we have been working on this academic year. We hope that the two new faculty we hire will bring inspirational research, innovative classes and exciting events for the women's studies community.

## GENDER AND SEXUALITY SEARCH

We are searching for an Assistant Professor in Women's Studies with a focus on gender and sexuality. Listed below were the candidates with the title of their presentations.

Mitch Boucher  
English Department, UMass Amherst  
*Re-Mapping the Body: Transgender Narratives, Intersectional Feminism, and the U.S. National Identity*

Anissa Helie  
Political Science, Amherst College  
*Beyond "Persian Vice" or "Western Disease": Asserting Sexual Diversity in Muslim Contexts*

Rosamond King  
English Department, Long Island University  
*Reading the Matrix: Race, Sexuality, and Gender in the case of "Bumsters" and "Jamettes"*

Svati Shah  
Women's Studies, Wellesley College  
*Urban Spectacles of Sexual Commerce: Caste, Class, and Mumbai's Informal Labor Markets*

Siobhan King Brooks  
Sociology Department, New School University  
*Desire and the Reproduction of Race: Exchange, Erotic Capital and Violence*

Margot Weiss  
Program in Women's Studies  
College of William and Mary  
*Sex Play and Social Power: Race, Gender and the Politics of SM*

## FIVE COLLEGE FEMINIST SCIENCE STUDIES SEARCH

The following were public lectures of the candidates for the Five College Feminist Science Studies Assistant Professor position which will have as its home department UMass Amherst Women's Studies and include responsibilities at Mount Holyoke College and Hampshire College. This search is for a faculty member who specializes in race, gender and science. Listed below were the candidates and their presentation titles.

Sarah Richardson  
Modern Thought and Literature Program  
Stanford University  
*Are Men and Women as Different as Humans and Chimpanzees?: Quantifying Sex Differences in the Human Genome*

Christine Labuski  
Anthropology Department  
University of Texas at Austin  
*"I'm not too aware down there": Incorporating the Vulva into the Female Body Image*

Sameena Mulla  
Anthropology Department  
Johns Hopkins University  
*Understanding Sexual Assault Intervention: An Anthropology of Forensic Examination*

Mary Elizabeth Strunk  
Women's Studies, UMass Amherst  
*Nature Makes You Nurture: The Muddled Sexual Politics of the "Cuddle Hormone" and Why Oxytocin is the New Estrogen*

# Comings & Goings



Thanks to the people who taught in the fall—we'll miss you: Stacey Carvalho, Kirsten Isgro, Alix Paschkowiak, and Allia Matta. Ann Ferguson will finally actually be retired this spring (after she finishes searches and wraps up committees—all in inimitable Ann style) and won't be teaching.

Welcome to new instructors for the spring: Lori Bindig graduate certificate student, and Ph.D. candidate in Communication will be teaching a section of 201. We are fortunate to have Zetta Elliott with us, she is teaching Women's Studies 291B, Black Women Writers: Feminist Visions from the African Diaspora. Zetta Elliott is a Visiting Assistant Professor of African American and African Studies at Mount Holyoke College.

We hope to have a full complement of faculty next fall, including our two new faculty members!

## ***In Memoriam***

Women's Studies is saddened by the sudden loss of our student, Jennifer Morganson. Jennifer was a bright and engaged student and she will be missed. Women's studies sends condolences to her family and friends. Memorial contributions may be made to ***Medical Ministry International, P.O. Box 1339, Allen, TX 75013.***

Our thoughts are with Arlene Avakian and Martha Ayres who are mourning the loss of their son Neal Ryan. Neal died suddenly in January. Donations may be made in Neal's name to the youth educational programs, ***Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at 1100 Rock and Roll Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.*** Arlene, Martha and friends wrote a touching tribute to Neal which is available on the women's studies website (see the newspaper). Arlene will be in New York much of the spring to be with her daughter Leah Ryan who is fighting leukemia with grit and humor.

## NEWS FOR STUDENTS

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### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Don't hesitate to come in and see an advisor. Even though lots of information on requirements is online, nothing replaces a face to face conversation. Call, email, or stop by 208 Bartlett to make an appointment.

We are again having rolling admissions for new majors. Bring in your signed application to Karen and get a signed change of major form in return. Minor applications are accepted at all times.

In addition to women's studies own Glennie L. Jones Memorial Award, (we encourage you to apply!) there are other scholarships available for UMass Amherst students. Scholarships are available from Commonwealth College, the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, the Alumni Association and more.



### GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

The Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies will miss one of its biggest advocates with the retirement of Professor Ann Ferguson. Ann was a founding member of the graduate program and she has been active in creating and developing the program as the Graduate Certificate Program Director for many years. Nancy Patteson, graduate program coordinator, commented that "Ann's contribution to developing the graduate program in Women's Studies is beyond measure. We would not have the fine program we have today if it weren't for Ann's hard work and dedication."

**The application deadline for admissions into the Certificate is March 7, 2008.** Students interested in finding out more about the Certificate should contact Nancy Patteson in the Women's Studies office.

The Certificate Program Director for this spring is Miliann Kang. Linda Smircich from Management will be working on graduate admissions. They will be joined on the Graduate Studies Committee by Ximena Zuniga from Education, Laura Doyle from English, Marta Calas in Management, Daphne Berry, graduate student representative from Management, and Nancy Campbell Patteson, Women's Studies Graduate Program Coordinator. The committee is looking closely at programmatic goals and is actively engaged in evaluating curriculum and policy this year and will be submitting structural revisions to the Women's Studies Executive Committee in March for approval.

## Thanks to our donors

Thanks to the many donors who responded to our appeal. We can't do the things we do without your donations. We use gifts to fund events, awards, and provide refreshments at celebrations. Keep remembering women's studies when you are contacted by the University. If you donate to UMass online you can earmark donations for your favorite program (hint, hint.)

Janet Aalfs  
M.C.Z. Abrahamsen  
Nancy Arnold  
Erika Arthur  
Robyn Bagley  
Kristina Bourne  
Judith Branzburg  
Victoria Brigham  
Nancy Buffone  
Susan Cayleff  
Kathleen Cote  
Chrystalynn  
Tina Cincotti  
Karen & Daniel Corveleyn  
Nina Dabek  
Heather Edwards  
Mary E. Hawkesworth  
Erin Jackson  
Donna Kerner  
Dale LaBonte  
Aliina Laine  
Paul Lederer  
Sue Lee  
Jacqueline Levin  
Sandy Mandel  
Wendy Matys  
Birdie MacLennan  
Dale Melcher  
Katy Noone  
David Patteson  
Victoria Pillard  
Andrea Berman Price  
Ann Ready  
Leslie Rockwell-Dean  
Mary Ellen Reilly  
Deborah Rose  
Karen Shack  
Inez Sieben  
Kristin Jo Siess  
Lynn Simonds  
Cheryl Smith  
Marilyn Stampa  
Gustav Szlosek  
Mitchell Tannenbaum  
Elizabeth Welch  
Anne Wiley



## Ann Ferguson Women and Gender Studies Scholarship

This fund was established in honor of Ann Ferguson and in memory of Ann's mother, Elizabeth Chaney Ferguson, who died in 2006. The goal is to support University of Massachusetts Amherst undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degrees or certificates in women and gender studies. Donations can be made online at [www.communityfoundation.org](http://www.communityfoundation.org) or you can contact women's studies for more information. Be certain to specify that the donation is for the Ann Ferguson Women and Gender Studies Scholarship Fund. If you have been meaning to respond to the recent fundraising letter for the scholarship fund, don't forget to do it: every little bit helps toward the goal of amassing \$100,000 so grants can begin to be awarded.

Thank you to the recent donors to the Ann Ferguson Women and Gender Studies Scholarship:

Susan F. Crane  
Julia L. Demmin  
Ann Ferguson  
Carole J. Lee  
Christina Platt  
Millie Thayer

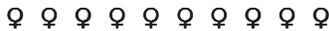
## E-NEWS

**Keeping up with the webpage has been a challenge with the searches, but this semester many new pictures will be added to the website. Look for more slide shows and other visual differences. Even if the site looks the same the information is constantly updated, so don't miss out. There is more than enough information on the site to click for a whole afternoon!**

# L E V E N T S L

**14th Annual Undergraduate Research Conference**  
Commonwealth College  
May 2, 2008, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Campus Center

This conference is an excellent opportunity for undergraduate students to showcase their work in a professional setting before their peers, faculty, and the public. Deadline for submissions is March 3, 2008.  
<http://www.comcol.umass.edu/index.html>



**Career Events Abound This Spring!!!**  
Take advantage of these many opportunities.

*Making Connections:*  
*Life After UMass*  
*Women's Studies/STPEC/Labor Center Networking event*

We are reprising the very successful career event we had last spring. Over 25 alums from these programs will come to meet current students, give information on internships and other opportunities and share experiences. There will be food and lots of conversations. Last year we were spilling out at the seams. These are UMass Amherst graduates who WANT to meet current students and help them think about life plans. We anticipate that we will have a wide range of work represented from education and law to medicine and social services and much more. Save the date: Thursday, April 3, 4:30 in the Cape Cod Lounge. Co-sponsored by Career Services.  
*If you are an alum and are interested in joining us please contact Karen.*

The College of Humanities and Fine Arts Career Event will take place April 24, 3:00-6:00 in the New Studio Arts building. Stay tuned for more information.

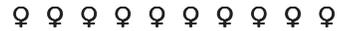


**Campus-wide Career Fair**  
**Life Sciences & Natural Resources Career Fair**  
February 13, 2008  
Campus Center 10 am to 3 pm

**ALANA Career Fair - 2008**  
February 13, 2008  
Campus Center 5 pm to 8 pm

**Summer, Co-op & Internship Fair - 2008**  
February 14, 2008  
Campus Center 10 am to 3 pm

For information about these fairs:  
[www.umass.edu/careers](http://www.umass.edu/careers)



Check out exciting upcoming events:

The **Women of Color Leadership Network** has events including a biweekly leadership circle, a weekly social hour, speakers and more. **Body Politics** performance will be April 26 & 27. Save the date! For info email: [wocln@stuaf.umass.edu](mailto:wocln@stuaf.umass.edu) 545-1671 or website (coming soon): <http://www.umass.edu/wocln/>



**Women's Resource Fair** sponsored by the **Graduate Women Network** will take place on March 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Student Union Ballroom. For information [www.umass.edu/gss](http://www.umass.edu/gss).



As always, our friends and colleagues on campus are doing great events. For information:

Everywoman's Center  
[www.umass.edu/ewc](http://www.umass.edu/ewc), 545-0883

Stonewall Center  
[www.umass.edu/stonewall](http://www.umass.edu/stonewall)

Fine Arts Center  
[www.umass.edu/fac](http://www.umass.edu/fac)

Five College Women's Studies Research Center  
[www.fivecolleges.edu/sites/fcwsrc](http://www.fivecolleges.edu/sites/fcwsrc)

And of course our website has tons of great links!

# .... AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS ....

## **The Glennie L. Jones Memorial Awards Women's Studies University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Once again we are offering the Glennie L. Jones Awards, funded by Dr. Dale M. Jones, alumna of women's studies 1986, 2004 (G) in honor of her late mother Glennie L. Jones.

The Glennie L. Jones Memorial Award for undergraduates will be given to students who are committed to ending violence against women and have financial need. Many women's studies students work directly to end violence or serve survivors, however, direct work in the field is not required to be eligible for this award. Students may demonstrate their theoretical understanding of the issues, tell us about their work or other projects in the area, and/or submit a creative piece.

Interested students should submit a letter to the award selection committee discussing violence against women and their financial need. Creative works, such as poetry, accompanied by a statement are welcome. Applications should not exceed 3 pages. Applicants must have taken at least one class in women's studies at the University of Massachusetts and be a junior or senior. Please include information about your women's studies background in your application. University of Massachusetts Amherst Women's Studies majors and minors will be given preference, but all Five College students are eligible. The applications will be judged by a committee which includes the donor, faculty and staff. The letters are due in the Women's Studies office by 4:00 p.m. April 4, 2008.

There will be two winning undergraduates, with awards of up to two and three hundred dollars. This prize program will continue through 2010.

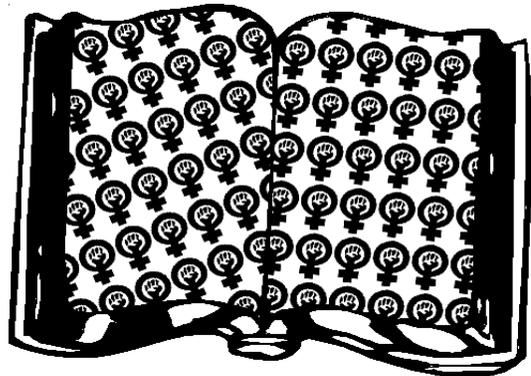
The Glennie L. Jones Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Feminist Scholarship will be given annually to a graduate student who is completing requirements and graduating this year from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies.

The winning student will be awarded up to five hundred dollars and will be asked to give a brief presentation to the graduate certificate community. Applications will be judged by members of the Graduate Studies Committee. Students graduating from the certificate program in 2007-2008 should send in a paper (not to exceed 30 pages, including footnotes and citations) that they completed as part of their work for the certificate. The paper can be a revised, edited or expanded version of earlier work, such as course papers or final projects. The paper must include a feminist integrative analysis. In addition, the application must include a detailed abstract (not to exceed 800 words).

Please send applications by Friday, April 25, 2008, 4:00 p.m. to the Women's Studies office.

## **The UMass Amherst Women's Studies Program Book Award**

Women's Studies has established a book award at the local high school Amherst Pelham Regional High School. The gift certificate will be awarded to a student who is active on feminist issues or has done outstanding academic work in the area of women's studies. There is a large women's rights club at this high school and we want to encourage youthful activism and scholarship!



# Spring 2008 Newsletter Post Grad Reflections

*Editor's Note: When space permits in the spring newsletter, we track down a couple of our illustrious grads and ask them to write a reflection. This year we have two stellar alums tell their stories. Thank you to Cara Bedick and Stephanie Evans.*

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When I came to UMass Amherst in the Fall of 2000, I knew that I was going to major in Journalism. But it was Alex Deschamps's Introduction to Women's studies course that had me on my way to Whitmore to sign up for a double major.

I spent the next four years immersing myself in my classes and all of the extracurricular activities in which I was inspired to participate. I remember coming home from a Washington D.C march at 2 a.m. on a Monday and dragging myself to a women's studies class hours later. In one of those classes, I remember the moment I learned the term "praxis." It's the moment when a women's studies student realizes they are going to do something with the rest of their life.

I think it was that moment that inspired me to revive Take Back the Night at UMass Amherst. Putting together that event—with all of the amazing people who committed their time and energy, with the support of the department—is one of my fondest college memories.

In my final semester, I took Karen Lederer's Career and Life Choices class, and was set on getting a job in publishing, or doing PR for a non-profit. The exercises in Karen's class allowed me to make contacts, and to explore other options. (In one group exercise, I was told that I would make a good wedding planner.)

At graduation, we marched into the ceremony holding our women's studies banner high, I think, because we all felt so well-prepared for the next step. My first job out of college, doing marketing for a non-profit, came through someone I had met while organizing Take Back the Night. When I realized it wasn't for me, I thought back to Karen's class, where we learned that the average person changes careers four times, and I went back to my women's studies toolbox to plan my next step.

When a job in publishing came around, it turned out to be the perfect fit. Within Simon Spotlight Entertainment, an imprint at Simon & Schuster that publishes all kinds of cool non-fiction and some fiction, I found something similar to what I found in 208 Bartlett—a strong team that is supportive, constantly growing, and that gives me leeway to try new things. The first book I assisted on was *In Their Shoes*, a career guide for teen girls that actually features an interview with women's studies' own Karen. And it shouldn't be that surprising that the first book I acquired, *Cooking and Screaming* by Adrienne Kane, that I will be editing this year and will be published in Spring 2009, is a biomythography—also known as a memoir. I found a career where I can help attract attention to diverse voices.

Visiting UMass Amherst last spring to take part in the career fair was an important reminder for me that because of departments like women's studies, the praxis continues, and the toolboxes continue to be filled. I'm just glad that I found women's studies when I did. This department gives so much to its students. As a post-grad, my next step? Give back.

Cara Bedick  
January 2008



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Going to UMass Amherst was the best decision that I have made in my career. Since entering college as a first-generation student in 1994, I knew I wanted to become a professor. Being paid to read, write, and discuss ideas in a college classroom seemed to be the most luxurious and yet most challenging profession. Producing knowledge on demand and creating thought paradigms that stand the test of time was a thrill for me. Redefining the world in a way that diminishes oppression of race hatred, gender domination, and marginalization by class, ability, religion, or any number of variances was an imperative. Academe can be a tough nut to crack, but UMass Amherst gave me the training, skills, and tools to be effective in my chosen profession.

I completed the Graduate Certificate Program in Advanced Feminist Studies in Spring 2002 and graduated with the Ph.D. in African-American Studies the following year. I was very fortunate to get a job in both interdisciplinary fields! I started an assistant professor position at the University of Florida in Fall 2003 and this year (2008), I am putting together my packet for tenure and promotion. Time certainly flies.

The classes in the Certificate program were outstanding. I took classes in feminist research from Ann Ferguson and women of color feminist theory with Alex Deschamps among other classes. However, one of the most valuable experiences that women's studies provided was the training that I received while a Teaching Assistant in the Introduction to women's studies class. The combination of teaching and learning was invaluable: watching the master-teacher Dr. Deschamps, meeting with her once a week, teaching my own sections on Friday, and learning an immense amount from my four colleagues who were also TAs for the class. I learned to teach in a collaborative environment and that experience made me more comfortable in the classroom and prepared to deal with the challenges that come from teaching in a marginalized field.

On the research side, revising the dissertation took up a major part of my first 3-4 years as a professor. I spent my energy conducting additional research, learning the protocol for publishing, and ensuring that the manuscript was of publishable quality. I also had to go round-n-round in the academic journal publishing game and the "revise and resubmit" provisional acceptance became a major hurdle to overcome. My book, Black Women in the Ivory Tower, 1850-1954: An Intellectual History was published by University Press of Florida in February 2007 and it will be released in paperback May 2008. It has garnered a series of positive reviews which, with my other published articles, can be accessed through the book website: <http://www.professorevans.com/bwit.asp> — in short, though graduate school prepares you for the workload, only going through the publishing process gives you an appreciation for the process of critical review.

Beyond teaching and research, I have definitely remained involved in local community work. Teaching community service learning classes has been one way to cover three areas at once: it enhances my teaching while allowing me to contribute in real ways to increasing higher education access to marginalized students, and I can write about my research and teaching via journal article submissions. Building partnerships over the years has allowed me to see value in my academic research beyond the walls of academe.

I have created a resource web page that chronicles my philosophical and theoretical evolution and where scholars from all fields can access useful information relevant to race, gender, and higher education: [www.ProfessorEvans.com](http://www.ProfessorEvans.com)

I owe a great debt to UMass Amherst and I have shown my gratitude by trying to pass on the support that I received in my home department of Afro-American Studies and the blessing of mentoring that I received from the faculty AND staff of the women's studies department.

Stephanie Y. Evans  
January 2008

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***Inside this issue.....***

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***20 years ago in this newsletter....***

In the Fall of 1988 we had an item: "WOST's New Look"

*"Due to a special allocation of equipment money the Women's Studies office has made several long needed improvements. We have rearranged the offices so that we now have a "real" reception area (with nice furniture) and a little more privacy for Karen and Arlene to talk to students."*

The newsletter goes on to trumpet the switch from our Decmate system (the one computer-like machine we all shared) to our "new IBM" and to encourage people to "stop by--you won't believe your eyes."

I'm glad to remark that we all have our own PC's now (no longer yelling "who needs to use the computer?") as well as our own phone lines. The reception area, alas, has only changed a bit, but we did eventually update the chairs and purchase literature racks. For more walks down memory lane, check out the past newsletters on our website.



This newsletter is published twice a year, funds permitting. It is written and edited by Karen Lederer. Design, production and distribution by Linda Hillenbrand. Thanks to Arlene Avakian, Alex Deschamps, Ann Ferguson, Linda Hillenbrand and Nancy Patteson for their contributions. *Alumni news will appear in the fall newsletter. Graduates: send your news and updates to us and see your name in print!* This newsletter and past newsletters are online at [www.umass.edu/wost](http://www.umass.edu/wost).