

WOMEN, GENDER, SEXUALITY STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

208 Bartlett Hall - www.umass.edu/wost

A department in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Spring 2015



Growth and More Growth--People/Space/ Plans and more!

It has been a busy fall—the department is growing in every way with **three** new faculty members: Abigail Boggs, Kirsten Leng, and Mecca Jamilah Sullivan. I hear great things about their courses, and the major is growing. Next fall we will welcome Kiran Asher, another new faculty member to the department! Banu's and Svati's books came out (*Ghost Stories for Darwin* and *Street Corner Secrets*), and every single faculty member has new articles out, pushing forward important conversations in critical university studies, studies of sexology, LGBTQ politics in India, autism, transnational feminism, the racial politics of monogamy research in neurology, and more. Tanisha Ford's book, *Liberated Threads: Black Women and the Politics of Adornment*, will be out next fall, and she is off doing important research on her new book, *The Glamorous Life: Black Socialites and Progressive Politics from Jim Crow to the Obama Age*.

We are growing in other ways too. It was gratifying to see the packed open house at our welcome back reception in our new conference room in Bartlett! That long-awaited space is used as an event, meeting and seminar room. Ground is about to be broken for the new South College Academic Facility, where we will be housed along with other College of Humanities and Fine Arts departments including the Dean's office and CHFA Advising. We can't wait to all be together on the same floor and the plans—including an atrium—look beautiful.

We have increased our general education offerings too. Svati Shah's new class "Transnational Approaches to Queer and Sexuality Studies" WGSS 290B has just been approved as a new general education course with SB G (Social and Behavioral and Global Diversity) designations—*please help us spread the word!* With Angie Willey's *History of Race and Sexuality* and Kiran Asher's feminist environmental justice courses slated to be offered over the next two years, we hope to offer a rotation of courses with different general education designations.

Editor's note: The brevity of this newsletter in no way reflects all that the department is doing! We are giving you the highlights but there will be a more detailed newsletter in the fall. Alums, send us your news by early August so we can celebrate all that you do in the fall newsletter!

Karen Lederer

You'll find news for graduate students and undergraduates plus information on our conference in February, *The Politics of Migration: Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship* inside!

In addition to new people and space we continue to work with our feminist scholar colleagues to develop a Five College Ph.D. This could bring exciting opportunities--our graduate students teaching at other colleges, Five College faculty working with graduate students, and more. The strength of feminist scholarship in the Valley is formidable, and this would be a unique partnership in graduate education in Women and Gender and Sexuality Studies. (Every single department in the Valley has a different name.....the most challenging part may be naming it!)

We are also growing virtually! In addition to our other digital feminisms initiatives—from our team-based learning course to Tanisha Ford and Mecca Sullivan’s editorships at *The Feminist Wire*, our website will have a new look this spring. The College of Humanities and Fine Arts is redesigning all websites using a new design and logo. Take a look around when the new website is live and bear with us as we expand out in the new design.

Thanks to our excellent, hard working, programming committee—Abbie Boggs, Kirsten Leng, and Priyanka Srivastava. Read on about the very exciting conference on migration in February, which promises to bring together scholarship on sexuality, mothers and children, and migration from Asia to Europe to the Americas. We’re also looking forward to a visit from Professor Margot Weiss (Wesleyan University) who will be giving a talk on Thursday April 2 in relation to her work on queer activism in a time of economic precarity. This fall we had another standing room only talk by Professors Lisa Lowe (Tufts) and Jack Halberstam (USC) on their edited “Perverse Modernities” series with Duke University Press.

This series has been hugely important in complicating and advancing both queer and critical race studies scholarship and bringing together the study of sexuality, race, colonialism, and political economy.

It has been a tough year politically so far, with sharp reminders about the necessity of the continuing struggle for racial justice—from racist graffiti here at UMass to the issues of police killings of unarmed African-Americans in the United States. Our ongoing conversations about reproductive justice have been focused on the question of mothers of color being able to raise their children safely. Yet, I am heartened by the response of the community, who have been in the streets, on social media, and in print protesting these cases and demanding a just system. I know that our students and colleagues are in those movements locally and nationally, and I’m lucky to work in this environment, with lively debates and spirited activism.

Our wonderful donors also give me hope. Without you, events and special touches that celebrate our students wouldn't be possible. Thanks for your steadfast support.



Spring is scholarship season! We encourage you to apply for the **Ann Ferguson Women and Gender Studies Scholarship** for undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degrees or certificates in Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Applications are accepted until March 31 through the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

<http://communityfoundation.org/scholarships/application.html>

SPRING 2015 CONFERENCE

The Politics of Migration: Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship

The conference seeks to create awareness, share analyses and research, and inspire future work that thinks critically about the intersections of gender, sexuality, migration and citizenship. In bringing together faculty, administrators, staff, students, and the general public affiliated with UMass and the Five Colleges to discuss these issues, we hope that this conference will serve the larger project of informing citizens and activists who can think, speak, and act in informed ways regarding the gendered dynamics of cross-border movements.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

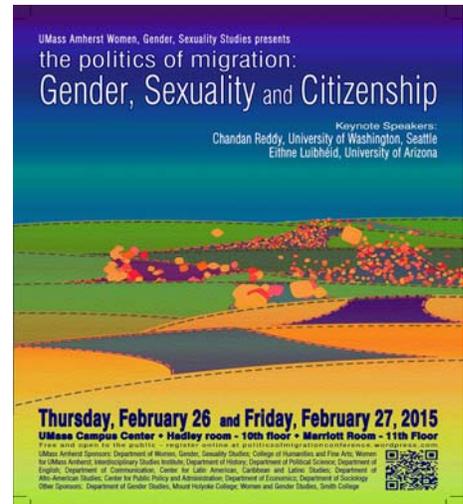
Thursday 2/26/2015, 4:15 – 7:00 p.m. Hadley Room, UMass Amherst Campus Center

- 4:15 Opening remarks
- 4:30 Keynote I - **Chandan Reddy**, Associate Professor, English Department
University of Washington Seattle
"Failures of Citizenship: Queer of Color Critique and the Politics of Migration"
Respondent: Falguni A Sheth, Associate Professor, Philosophy and Political Theory,
Hampshire College
- 6:00 Reception & book party for **Svati Shah's** *Street Corner Secrets:
Sex, Work, and Migration in the City of Mumbai*

Friday 2/27/2015, 9:30-5:00 p.m. Marriott Room, UMass Amherst Campus Center

- 9:30 Meet and greet/continental breakfast/Opening Remarks
- 10:00 Panel I - Social Reproduction, Citizenship, and Transnational Entanglements
Chair: Kirsten Leng, Assistant Professor Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, UMass Amherst
Presenters: Asha Nadkarni, Assistant Professor - English, UMass Amherst
Cassandra Rodriguez, Doctoral Candidate, Sociology - UMass Amherst
Laura Briggs, Professor and Chair - Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, UMass Amherst
Megan Kludt, Immigration Attorney - Curran & Berger LLP, Immigration Law Offices
- 1:00 Panel II - Street Corner Secrets: A Conversation
Chair: Abigail Boggs, Lecturer and Associate Director of Graduate Studies
Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, UMass Amherst
Presenters: Svati Shah, Assistant Professor - Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies
UMass Amherst
Aziza Ahmed, Associate Professor - Northeastern University School of Law
Barbara Cruikshank, Associate Professor - Political Science, UMass Amherst
Elizabeth Krause, Professor - Anthropology, UMass Amherst
- 3:30 Keynote II – **Eithne Luibhéid**, Professor Gender and Women's Studies, University of Arizona
"Nationalist Heterosexuality, Migrant (II)Legality, and Citizenship Norms"
Respondent: Julio Capó, Assistant Professor History, UMass Amherst

Please register for this conference at politicsofmigrationconference.wordpress.com



Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies
208 Bartlett Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
A105185

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2
Amherst, MA 01002

Address service requested

News for Undergraduates

This is the time to think ahead about internships, major, minors, honors, certificates and careers. Come see us and take advantage of these UMass career events and resources (open to all majors and levels):

Diversity Fair 2015, Tuesday, February 24, 2015, 1-5:00 Student Union Ballroom
For employers who wish to diversify their employment pools, ALANA, LGBTGQ students.

Career Blast 2015: Campus-wide Job & Internship Fair, Wed, 2/25/15, 10-3:00

Non-profit, government, education and camps, Tues, 3/3/15 1-3:00
Student Union Ballroom

News for Graduate Students

The deadline for applications to the WGSS Graduate Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies is **March 1, 2015**. Please visit the WGSS website to download the fillable application form and for full details on the certificate curriculum. Now would be a great time to request letters of reference and get started on the application! You're welcome to send any questions to Abigail Boggs, the Associate Graduate Program Director, at aboggs@umass.edu, drop into her office hours on Mondays from 1-3 in Bartlett 208, or make an appointment to talk.

Plans are also underway for the presentation of work by this year's certificate completing cohort, which will be held in the afternoon on **April 10 in the Hadley Room** in the Campus Center. Be on the look out for more information coming soon!