

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies

University of Massachusetts Amherst

A Department in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Fall 2016
Newsletter

◆◆ DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE ◆◆

What a long, strange, polarized year this has been, in the United States and outside it. Some journalists have alarmingly called Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump a “fascist,” or “populist nationalist,” or someone who is mobilizing racism, sexism, and anti-immigrant fervor. As scholars and because of our academic networks, we’ve been riveted by the fact that however we understand Trump, there are populist-nationalist, anti-immigrant movements sweeping the globe that have had conspicuous effects on academic freedom.

We’ve been actively following events in Europe, Turkey, and India, where university-based intellectuals (and journalists) are being arrested in apparently democratic countries for speaking out. In Turkey, first the signers of a peace petition (including most feminist scholars there) were charged with “terrorism,” risking losing their jobs or jailing. Then all academic deans and tens of thousands of private school teachers were fired. In India, student leaders were arrested by plainclothes police and charged with “sedition and conspiracy” following a demonstration against the death penalty in a controversial court case against a Kashmiri separatist. Faculty protested non-uniformed officers pulling students from hostels where they lived, and throwing them in jail on trumped up charges, labeled disloyal to India, not just opponents of the ruling BJP or Prime Minister Modi. Like in Turkey, this use of charges of “terrorism” or “sedition” to arrest dissenting intellectuals sparked protest around the world, including in the Valley. Far right candidates are gaining ground in Europe. Even the Brexit campaign, apparently won on anti-immigrant rhetoric, will affect those of us whose work with British universities has relied on the generous EU funding for research.

Because we’re at a university, we are always in the crosswinds of whatever is happening—especially in an election year. Through the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center, ably led by **Banu Subramaniam**, we have had roundtables and discussions first about the possibility and now the reality of the first major-party female nominee. Last spring, we were caught up in the quite moving hopefulness our students brought to the presidential primaries, whether they were supporting Bernie Sanders (who came to UMass twice), working with Black Lives Matter to hold both parties’ feet to the fire on racism, or supporting someone else. Since the summer of 2014, the mobilization of #BLM has left a substantial footprint in our curriculum, whether in the teaching of the long Black Freedom tradition or as a reproductive justice movement—of how people mobilize on behalf of children to build livable communities. In fact, students are quite interested in all things reproductive politics—with the new **Five College Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice Certificate** enrolling more than 100 students across the Valley, with two graduating last year who were UMass WGSS majors. In addition to the Hampshire College CLPP conference—in which many of our students participated—others also attended **Dagmar Herzog’s** talk on

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disability and the eugenic argument in abortion and anti-abortion politics. And speaking of eugenics, **Banu Subramaniam** was honored this year as part of the Chancellor's Distinguished Faculty Lecture series, where she gave a talk entitled "Interdisciplinary Hauntings: The Ghostly Worlds of Naturecultures," which explored things as different as morning glories and eugenics to trace the genealogies of ecology and evolutionary biology to demonstrate how foundational ideas of "variation" in biology are inextricably connected to ideas of "diversity" and "difference" in the humanities.



The department's programming last year also brought together feminist writers and scholars whose work was encouraging, hopeful, and made us think. The **Feminist Poetics: Legacies of June Jordan** symposium, co-sponsored with the W.E.B. DuBois Department of Afro-American Studies was spectacular in this regard, and brought together scholars, artists and activists whose work spoke to multiple generations of Black feminism, including the first-ever reunion of the **Combahee River Collective**, **Alicia Garza** of #BLM, **Kai Green** and **Che Gossett**, **Lisa Moore** (founder of Redbone Press), and many from around the Five College area who get together too rarely. (Fortunately, *Meridians* is sponsoring another event in Fall 2016, about which there is more below.) In a separate event, **LaMonda Horton-Stallings**, author of the new *Funk the Erotic: Transaesthetics and Black Sexual Cultures*, spoke about how black sexual cultures produce radical ideologies about labor, community, art, and sexuality. Others, too, explored the intersections of labor, poverty, and sexuality—including **Margot Weiss**, with *Visions of Sexual Justice*, and **Amber Hollibaugh** and **Yana Calou**. A group working on feminism and comedy (including **Kirsten Leng**) brought a number of speakers under an Institute for Teaching Excellence & Faculty Development's Mutual Mentoring Initiative grant.

Looking forward, we have the opportunity to respond to bathroom bills and the shooting in Orlando with **new courses in LGBT and Trans Studies**, and a **Trans* speaker series**, sponsored by the office of Provost Katherine Newman, and organized in part by an important new student group, **Gender Liberation UMass**. As we stumble through days of climate denialism, we can be inspired by our students and our university, which have gotten out front and led the way on **divestment from fossil fuel companies**, and look to our new course in the spring, **Gender, the Global Environment, and Sustainability**.

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.....first-ever reunion of the Combahee River Collective....

One of the things that's less visible to some people about the work of our department, but nevertheless bedrock to what we do, is our work as a "research institute" (a phrase I've started using when people ask if I am enjoying my summer off—to explain that I've never had a summer off, and I don't know any faculty that do). All year round, we are working on a whole raft of books and articles designed in one way or another to challenge the status quo.

Svati Shah is returning from a Fulbright year of studying queer politics in India. In conjunction with her current book project, **Miliann Kang** has been doing significant public intellectual work on Asian American parenting—including for *Newsweek*—and is beginning a new project on work and motherhood in Korea. She will also be the Director for Diversity Advancement for the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, working with departments and individuals for the recruitment, hiring, and retention of a

diverse faculty. **Banu Subramaniam** has been engaged in prolific writing and speaking on naturecultures, reproductive politics, gender, race, and science, and won the prestigious Ludwik Fleck prize of the Society for Social Studies of Science (joining a distinguished list of winners that include feminist scholars Donna Haraway

and Londa Schiebinger). **Angela Willey**'s book, *Undoing Monogamy: The Politics of Monogamy and the Possibilities of Biology* came out in April, a radically interdisciplinary exploration of the concept of monogamy in U.S. science and culture that examines colonial sexual science, monogamous voles, polyamory, and the work of Alison Bechdel and Audre Lorde. **Mecca Sullivan** is at Duke University this year working on her second book on queer poetics and arts on a postdoctoral fellowship in Black Feminisms with additional support from a grant from the American Association of University Women. **Alex Deschamps** is continuing her work as the Associate Dean of the Honors College while working overtime to teach WGSS students. I'm starting a new project on the history of Puerto Rico's human and debt crisis, focusing on how conservatives use it to mobilize ideologies about reproductive labor, from cutting benefits to impoverished mothers to lowering minimum wage (in mostly female labor sectors). I'm also finishing another book about the history of the use of racially divisive politics—from welfare to immigration “reform” to subprime mortgages—to minimize support for households that include dependents (children, elders, people with disabilities), from multiple sectors (government, privatized medicine, business, banking), and pushing more and more people into the labor force, often with long hours and low pay, creating crises of time, money, and health. Our faculty are winning more prizes; **Kirsten Leng** won a Research Intensive Semester from the dean's office and was also selected for Inaugural Innovate@Symposia. **Kiran Asher** will be an Interdisciplinary Studies Institute Fellow.

We are marking a lot of comings and goings among the faculty, too. **Abbie Boggs** has moved down the street, as it were, for a tenure track job in the Sociology Department at Wesleyan University, and **Tanisha Ford** is going to a job at the University of Delaware. We are sad to see them go, learned a lot from having them here, and wish them well. We have hired a new Associate Graduate Director, **Lezlie Frye**, a disability studies scholar who received her Ph.D. from New York University's American Studies Department. We are also welcoming two scholars as short-term (alas!) lecturers: **Jeanine Ruhsam**, a scholar of trans and queer politics, and **Stina Soderling**, who writes about rural and queer politics. Brazilian feminist scholar **Sandra Acevedo** has joined us and the Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies as a visiting scholar through CLACLS's Fulbright program.

Of course, our days are also marked by the rhythms of student milestones and the academic calendar—in 2015-16 we had a welcome back reception, a pre-registration reception for students to talk to faculty about upcoming courses, a fabulous graduate conference, where certificate students presented their work (often inaugural dissertation chapters), and a graduation breakfast. At graduation, we got to give our first (and hopefully annual) distinguished alum award to **Julia Becker Collins** for her enthusiastic support of the department. Julia established a scholarship for transfer WGSS majors, and gave an inspiring speech at our send off.

Finally, we will be spending some time this year in sprucing up our look, in order to serve students, staff, and faculty better. First, we will be getting a new website to update us to a new, more contemporary look that we hope will enable people to find information more easily. Second, we will be leaving Bartlett behind in January (we'll see if our winter move goes smoothly!) and relocating to the new South College Academic Facility, which will finally put all the faculty, staff, visiting scholars, TAs, and graduate employees in one place, with some room too for undergraduates to drop in. We are very excited about the forms of collaboration and informal sociability this kind of space will make possible.

It doesn't quite all add up to building a peaceful, just, feminist world, but still, we count ourselves lucky to have work that matters and resources to do it in these hard days.



Lauren Briggs

◆◆ *EVENTS* ◆◆

Sign up for our events listserv (details on our website) to get all the info. We are planning large events, small events, and we co-sponsor events around the area. Here is info to get you started. Stay tuned!

WGSS joined in a book party at Amherst Books on September 23, to celebrate the publication of *Undoing Monogamy* by Angie Willey with Duke University Press. Congratulations!

This year WGSS will be hosting a series of lunchtime brown bag meetings geared toward faculty and graduate students, featuring discussions of pre-circulated papers by faculty members. Meetings this fall are on September 21 and October 19. If interested, please contact Kirsten Leng, kleng@umass.edu.

In the works: WGSS aims to host a visit by Brigitte Baptiste, biologist and head of Columbia's Biodiversity research institute, currently in residence at Columbia University. Baptiste will present on "Queer Ecologies." Keep an eye out for further dates and details!

Trans* Studies Speaker Series 2016-2017

In conjunction with Gender Liberation UMass, the Office of the Provost, the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, the Five College Women's Studies Research Center, Gender Studies at Mount Holyoke College and others, WGSS is organizing a Trans* Studies Speaker Series over this academic year.

The Speaker Series aims to share research and analyses that speak to the richness of trans* studies scholarship and its importance across the WGSS curriculum. Residencies will include a public lecture at UMass, class visits, and gatherings with students and faculty for informal discussions over meals. Confirmed speakers are:

Ryka Aoki

What Dare I Say? -- Writing as a Queer, Trans, Woman of Color who lost friends to suicide, murder and AIDS, yet still dreams of warp drive, a great relationship, and playing a perfect Chopin Ballade

Thursday, October 20, 5:00 p.m. - Campus Center 162-75

C. Riley Snorton

DeVine's Cut

Thursday, December 1, 5:00 p.m. - Campus Center 162-175

Talia Bettcher

Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 5:00 p.m. - Campus Center 804-808

Micha Cardenas

Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 5:00 p.m. - Campus Center 165-69

For further details about any of the department's events, please contact Kirsten Leng at kleng@umass.edu.

Additionally, WGSS is cosponsoring a number of exciting talks and events:

A talk by Human Rights lawyer Flint Taylor on "Racist and Systemic Police Violence, Chicago Style."
Wednesday, October 5, 4:30 p.m., Herter Hall 601

This talk is part of the History Department's Feinberg Lecture Series. The theme this year is the U.S. in the Age of Mass Incarceration.

<http://www.umass.edu/history/about/feinbergseries.html>

◆◆ *EVENTS* ◆◆

Five College Women's Studies Research Center—Celebrating 25 years!

The Center is holding a roundtable on the U.S. presidential election entitled

Madame President! Feminist Work in the Public Sphere

A Roundtable on the U.S. Presidential Election. Tuesday, October 18, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Academic Feminism At Work: A Year Long Conversation

The Five College Women's Studies Research Center (FCWSRC) is also embarking on a yearlong conversation on the topic of "work" in the academy today as part of a focused theme on "Working Feminism" for the FCWSRC's 25th year celebration (2016-2017).

New Work/Slow Work: Whither the 40-Hour Work-Week? A Panel Discussion

Friday, September 30, 2-4 p.m.

Counting Work/Work that Counts: Revaluing Academic Life, A Roundtable Discussion

Friday, December 9, 2-4 p.m.

Slow Work: How to Institutionalize a 40-Hour Work Week?

February 3, 2017

We Were Feminists Once? Cross Generational Dialogue on Feminism

April 19, 2017

Academic Feminism At Work — The Year in Review Concluding Panel and Reception

May 5, 2017

This is just a sample of the great events at The Center this year! For a complete list:

<https://www.fivecolleges.edu/fcwsrc/events>

Meridians Symposium

Please mark your calendars and save the date for an exciting symposium sponsored by *Meridians: feminism, race transnationalism*: "When and Where I Enter: Celebrating Legacies, Envisioning Futures," on Friday, October 14, 2016 at Smith College, Northampton, MA, with a welcome reception the night before.

The goal is to honor Paula Giddings' 1984 groundbreaking book, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, and reflect on the rich women of color feminist scholarship of the 1980s, and to imagine new directions for scholarship, art and activism at the intersections of feminisms, race and transnationalism. The keynote address will be delivered by Black Lives Matters organizers [Opal Tometi](#) and [Janaya Khan](#), who will speak on October 14, at 8:00 p.m. in John M. Green Hall, Smith College, Northampton. The symposium includes comments by Ruth Simmons, three roundtable discussions and a performance in the afternoon by [Monica Palacios](#).

Sponsored by [Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism](#) at Smith College.

Coming up in Spring 2017!

Graduate Certificate Student Final Research Presentations will take place on **March 31, 2017**. Save the date!

This spring pre-reg event is tentatively set for **March 29, 2017**—come hear about new classes in our new building!

◆◆ *Comings and Goings* ◆◆

Farewell to **Abbie Boggs** and **Tanisha Ford**, both were sought after teachers, great scholars and colleagues. Best of luck to you both. **Cora Fernandez-Anderson** finished out her appointment and has a new faculty position at Mount Holyoke College, congrats all around!

Welcome back to **Alix Olson** who will be a TA for 187 this fall. Welcome also to new TA's, **Juyeon Park** and **Joy Hayward-Jansen**. Welcome also to **Mahala Stewart** who will be working with Miliann Kang this semester, as will **Sonny Nordmarken**. **Rachel Briggs** is back and teaching WGSS 293P "*Performing Utopia: Power, Praxis, and Enacting Social Change*"; **Elise Swinford** is once again teaching WGSS 310 "*Writing for WGSS Majors*" the junior writing class, and Elise is available to work with students on writing; **Adina Giannelli** is back teaching WGSS 395G "*Gender, Sexuality, Race, and the Law: Critical Interventions*."



We are pleased to welcome **Lezlie Frye**! Lezlie is the associate director of the graduate certificate program. **Jeanine Ruhsam** will be joining us to teach this year, and we also welcome **Isabel Espinal** in a new role for the department, and welcome to **Stina Soldering** and **Sandra Azeredo** who will be teaching this fall. Read on for more.

Welcome Lezlie Frye and Jeanine Ruhsam

Lezlie Frye Bio

Associate Graduate Program Director, Lezlie Frye's work takes an interdisciplinary approach to the historical production of disability, race, gender, and sexuality in the United States. Her scholarship focuses on histories of state violence, changing forms of citizenship, and social movements between the 1970s and the present. Lezlie completed her Ph.D. in the American Studies Program, Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, from New York University and her B.A. in Women and Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, and History from the University of Oregon. She was the 2014-15 Predoctoral Research Fellow in the Fisher Center for Gender Studies at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and brings a strong record of teaching in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies for the last five years. Lezlie is currently working on a manuscript based on her dissertation entitled *Enabling Genealogies: Post-Civil Rights Racial Disenfranchisement and the Birth of the Disabled Citizen*, which traces how disability has fundamentally enabled the expansion of the law-and-order state, the privatization of home and health care, the disintegration of welfare, and the deregulation of labor since the 1970s. Lezlie's academic work is preceded by over a decade of popular education, activism, and organizing work that coheres around disability, racial, and economic justice. She has spent much of the last decade in Brooklyn, where she has been a working artist, dancer, yoga and meditation teacher, and fellow activist to domestic worker organizers, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, Third Root Community Health Center, and more!



In Her Own Words...

Dear friends of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies,

I'm thrilled to be joining this vibrant community of scholar-activists and to be of service to graduate and undergraduate students in the department. I will be teaching WGSS 201, Gender and Difference: Critical Analysis, in both the fall and spring. I will also be teaching a new course for undergraduates this fall that

◆◆ *Comings and Goings* ◆◆

focuses on my research: WGSS 395, Introduction to Feminist Disability Studies. I look forward to offering a critical disability studies course for graduate students next year as well. It is an honor to join to this department not only for its rich history of feminist scholarship and activism, but also to participate in the development of the PhD program at such an opportune moment. I am looking forward to meeting current and new certificate students and to supporting you all in exploring your purpose as feminist scholars, finding your path in pursuing careers both within and outside academia, and navigating the job market in particular. I will be holding office hours on Tuesday from 12-2 p.m. in Bartlett 261 (this fall) and by appointment. Please reach out to introduce yourself, tell me about your work, and discuss how I might assist you this year!

Best,

Lezlie

lfrye@umass.edu



Welcome also to Jeanine Ruhsam who will be teaching for us this year. Jeanine Ruhsam comes to UMass Amherst from the Five College Women's Studies Research Center at Mt. Holyoke College. While there, she worked on her recently completed doctoral dissertation, "The Great Maine Bathroom Case: Gender Identity and the Policing of Sex-Segregated Spaces," Pennsylvania State University. While a graduate student at Penn State she chaired the Transgender Concerns Committee on the President's Commission for LGBT Equity for the past three years; conducted "Safe Space" training for faculty and staff to assure the ongoing inclusion and support of LGBT students; acted as faculty adviser to the "Rainbow Alliance" LGBT student club; and took part in a production of "The Vagina Monologues." Jeanine was awarded the student Diversity Award at Penn State Harrisburg in 2016 and the Kathryn Towns Award for heightening the awareness of issues and concerns having an impact on women there in 2015. Off campus, she was the seven-year President of TransCentralPA, Pennsylvania's largest transgender advocacy and support non-profit organization; founded and co-chairs the annual Keystone Conference, America's second largest transgender conference; served on the State of Pennsylvania's Committee to Develop a Comprehensive Transgender Inmate Policy; campaigned with Equality PA for the passage of a state-wide non-discrimination bill; and currently serves on the Gender Review Committee for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. She's also been a professional athlete, had a career on the Thoroughbred race track, and built and sailed a wooden boat off to another career designing and building houses in the Caribbean. When not in the Amherst area, Jeanine lives with her spouse Alexandra and their dog Ruby on a farm in rural New Hampshire. Jeanine is teaching several courses including WGSS 293L "Intro to LGBT Studies"; WGSS 297TC "Intro to Trans* Studies" and WGSS 298TP "Trans Identities, Issues and Public Policies". Welcome!



Farewell also to **Beth Lang**, who has been our terrific WGSS library liaison for many years. Enjoy retirement Beth! We are fortunate to have a new liaison who volunteered to add WGSS to a full plate of work. Welcome Isabel Espinal!

◆◆ *Comings and Goings* ◆◆

Hi! I'm Isabel Espinal and I am the new librarian for WGSS. After Beth Lang announced that she was retiring, I volunteered for this liaison role, hoping this will be an enjoyable assignment since I have a lot of enthusiasm for Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies as academic and life pursuits. I've been at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library since 1998 and have been a librarian since 1991. I am also working on finishing up a PhD in American Studies, via the English department here at UMass, with a dissertation in progress that looks at seven contemporary Dominican women writers who live and write in the United States. In addition to being librarian for WGSS, I am also librarian for Afro American Studies, Native and American & Indigenous Studies, and Anthropology. My hope is that this will



be a refreshing assignment and that I will be able to work well with you and be of useful service... What I can do for you: teach library research to your classes; make sure books you need for research are ordered or let you know how to get them; meet with you one-on-one regarding your research projects; help you navigate library services. Whether you're teaching a class, or writing a term paper, dissertation, journal article or book, or working on some other project in WGSS, do not hesitate to contact me if you think I can help.

You can reach me by email at iespinal@library.umass.edu, or by phone at 413 545-6971. For more information about WGSS materials and how to reach Isabel: <http://guides.library.umass.edu/wost>

Isabel isn't the only great resource person at the library. **Anne Moore** is Special Collections Librarian and LGBTQ liaison. She is also available to assist you—contact her at amoore@umass.edu.

Thanks and we look forward to working with you!



Welcome to Stina Soderling

Stina Soderling holds a PhD in Women's and Gender Studies from Rutgers University. Her research and teaching interests include queer theory, environmental justice and ecofeminism, and critical perspectives on the prison system. More specifically, she has researched access to land among queer communities in the rural US South, and is currently asking how histories of land tenure, sexuality, and religion have been intertwined in the expansion of the US nation-state.

As a teacher, Stina is particularly interested in feminist pedagogy and student involvement both in and outside of the classroom. She has taught Gender and Sexuality Studies at Rutgers and Mount Holyoke, and at Rikers Island through the Prison Education Initiative. Stina will be teaching 201 this fall and 201 and Queer Ecologies in the spring.



Welcome also to visiting scholar **Sandra Azeredo** who will be teaching a graduate class on Gender and Race in Brazil. Sandra is a Fulbright Scholar from Brazil.

We were very sad to see the obituary of **Deborah Carlin**, a professor in the English Department. Deborah was active with the department for a long time, wrote and taught queer theory, and was a lively participant at events and meetings.

<https://www.umass.edu/newsoffice/article/obituary-deborah-carlin-professor>

CLASS OF 2016

Last year as always we graduated a wonderful bunch of students who are scholars and activists and much, much more. We have award winners amongst our undergrads and our grad students.

In addition, in April, we were able to hear the original research of our completing Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies graduate students. We look forward to the new work these scholars will produce in the years to come. Look at the wide range of topics and methods:

Faune Albert: “Mapping the Landscape of a Miscegenated History: The Embodied Feminist Poetics of Natasha Trethewey”

Nneka Dennie: “Black Male Feminism and the Evolution of Du Boisian Thought, 1903-1920”

Madalina Meirosu: “Subversive Femininity: Dissection, Dismemberment, and Female Agency in Villiers de l’Isle Adam’s Tomorrow’s Eve”

Woori Han: “From Iban to Sexual Minority: Sexual Identity Construction in the Changing Civil Society of Korea 1993-2007”

Juyeon Park: “Gendered Global Elite Parenting: The Case of Korean Students at US Ivy League College”

Seda Saluk: “Monitored Pregnancy in the Age of Pronatalism: Health Information Technologies and Reproductive Governance in Contemporary Turkey”

Crystal Webster: “Mourning Children Not Yet Dead: Antebellum Black Motherhood and the Emotional Value of the Child”.

AWARDS

Ann Ferguson Women and Gender Studies scholarship--Ann created this fund through the Community Foundation of Western MA (www.communityfoundation.org) when she retired. Graduate Certificate Student **Katelyn Litterer** is the 2016 winner, and will finish coursework for her PhD in Composition and Rhetoric this Fall and is preparing for comprehensive exams on mid-20th century lesbian history in the U.S. and on feminist research methods. Her first book of poetry, *Ghosty Boo*, was published by A-Minor Press in March 2016.

The **Joyce Berkman Award for Outstanding Graduate Feminist Scholarship**, established by Joyce upon retirement, is awarded to graduate students completing requirements and the Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies that year. We had a group of truly excellent papers so awarded the prize in three parts: one overall winner and two honorable mentions. The overall winner was Seda Saluk, a fourth year anthropology student. Seda’s paper worked through her dissertation prospectus on the impact of neoliberal pro-natalist policy and the practices and subjectivity of nurses in Turkey based on her field work. Honorable mention went to Nneka Dennie who wrote on W.E.B. Dubois and Juyeon Park who wrote about overseas parenting of Ivy league Korean students.

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies gives a book award at Amherst Regional High School to a junior who is active in feminist issues or has done outstanding work in the area of women, gender, sexuality studies. The 2016 winner is Melanie Barrows. Congratulations!

WGSS is now our official rubric on spire. So, instead of classes being WOMENSST 187 (which for those of us who were around in the 1970s and remember high speed planes, I always thought of as “Women, Super Sonic Transport”), we are now, sensibly, WGSS, so classes are labeled WGSS 187.

As a small department, some classes are only offered one time, so grab those interesting classes while you can!



UNDERGRAD STUDENT NEWS

Students, our faculty are here to help! If your sponsor isn't here (away doing research, moved to another institution) don't hesitate to reach out to our faculty for a new sponsor. See Karen for assistance. Come to our events including our welcome back reception! And stay tuned for news of our big move in the South College Academic Facility.

Arts Internship fair, **Thursday, October 13, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Fine Arts Center Atrium. This is focused on local organizations encompassing Performing Arts, Studio Arts, Art History and Arts Management. All students interested in arts, culture and museums are welcome. For info: <http://www.umass.edu/careers/>

UMass is making the change of major process simpler. Get your paperwork done! Karen should be able to change your major while you wait--assuming your application signed by a faculty sponsor is turned in and SPIRE cooperates.

We have great new faculty and great new classes! **Lezlie Frye**--teaching 201 and *Introduction to Feminist Disability Studies* this fall, and **Jeanine Rusham**--teaching *Intro to Trans* Studies*, *Intro to LGBT Studies*, and *Trans Identities, Issues and Public Policies* this fall. There are feature articles on our new people on pages 6-8. We are lucky to have these scholars with us! Take their courses! Go to their office hours!



GRAD STUDENT NEWS

Welcome back! We are looking forward to another vibrant year in our certificate program, as we welcome Lezlie Frye as our new Associate Graduate Program Director. The Spring 2016 Symposium with Certificate Final Projects showcased our students and their cutting-edge feminist scholarship. Many of our students have won prestigious fellowships and awards.

Certificate Advising

This fall, Professor **Miliann Kang** will be returning to the position of Graduate Program Director for WGSS and **Lezlie Frye** will begin her position as Associate Graduate Program Director. Both Miliann and Lezlie are available to meet with prospective, continuing, and completed certificate students to discuss the certificate program, individual student work, strategies for approaching WGSS conferencing, the job market, and more! Please feel free to reach out to either or both of them.

Course Offerings

This fall, WGSS is offering a wide array of courses including our core course in Feminist Theory and new topical classes such as “*Gender and Race in Brazil*” and “*Transnational Asian and Asian American Feminisms.*” Be sure to check the course guide for a full list of course offerings.

◆◆ *Student News* ◆◆

Upcoming Meetings and this Year's Deadlines

Students planning to complete the certificate this academic year met on September 15. Students will enroll in 793A next spring but writing groups will be formed and regular meetings will be held this fall.

Thursday, September 29, 2016 5:30 p.m.

Welcome to Lezlie and Welcome Back Gathering for all Certificate Students

March 1, 2017: Deadline to apply for acceptance into the certificate

March 10, 2017: Deadline to apply for graduate student employment with WGSS

To keep abreast of WGSS graduate student news please ask to be added to our graduate student mailing list.

Job Market and Fellowships

Be on the lookout for an email from Lezlie with some WGSS focused funding opportunities for graduate students from AAUW, and the Ford, Woodrow Wilson, and Mellon Foundations. This email will also detail helpful websites for funding and job information. If you are planning to go on the job market or applying for funding this fall, you should be sure to request letters of recommendation from your advisors as soon as possible. Be sure to include all pertinent information about the position or fellowship and a draft of your application materials along with the request.



Graduate Students Win Recognition

Our certificate students continue to excel, winning various awards and fellowships. Here is a partial list (these are only the ones we know about, so please share with us other accomplishments so we can post them!)

Martha Balaguera, Political Science, Grassroots Development Fellowship from the Inter-American Foundation, 'We Are All Migrants': Citizenship in Transit, and the Perils and Promises of Crossing Mexico."

Celeste Currington, Sociology, 2016-2017 Sociologists for Women in Society Minority Fellow from the American Sociological Association, "Negotiating Race, Work & Family: Cape Verdean Eldercare Workers in Lisbon, Portugal."

Cassandra Rodriguez, Sociology, Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Scholarship, the Eastern Sociological Association (ESS) Rose Laub Coser Dissertation Proposal Award, and a UMass Graduate School Summer Dissertation Fellowship. "Contested Citizenship and Social Belonging? Latino Mixed-Status Families in California."

Seda Saluk, Anthropology, Social Science Research Council, Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship. "Monitoring Reproduction in the Age of Pronatalism: Ethics, Politics, and Informatics in Contemporary Turkey."

Mahala Stewart, Sociology, 2016-2017 Dissertation Fellowship Award for Research on Families, through the Center for Research on Families. "Mothering in an Era of School Choice: Race, Class, and Gender in Schooling Decisions."

As the sun sets on our time here in Bartlett, we are sharing pics that will make you chuckle, smile or just wax nostalgic.



http://scua.library.umass.edu/youmass/doku.php?id=b:bartlett_hall

Bartlett Hall, constructed 1959-1960:

“The first building on campus to draw on modernist (sic) design, Bartlett Hall was built on the site of the former [Drill Hall](#) in the heart of west campus. A classroom and office building, Bartlett was designed by Shepley, Bulfinch, a renowned Boston firm, and drew loosely upon Bauhaus elements of style. The areas between the vertical brick piers of the south wing are divided into smaller and smaller panels, some glazed and others painted a flat blue. The more traditional west wing, containing offices, presents a relatively plain brick front, tying it in visually to adjacent buildings. The building is currently scheduled for demolition.”

...Moving...

We've been dreaming about moving, advocating for it and finally planning for it, and we will finally be moving for the spring semester. The South College Academic Facility has been going up quickly and looking more finished (and more beautiful) each day. We've heard many things from people who study and work here, ranging from "I can't wait!" to "You know, I'm actually going to miss Bartlett" to "At least I'll have one semester in the new building before graduating." There will be air conditioning! And window screens! And a conference room! And most importantly, all our staff and faculty will be on the same hallway instead of scattered on every floor and wing as we are now.

So, here is what to expect: This fall we will be packing. We have to be all packed by the end of finals, so expect some delays or disruption as we prepare everything. The move will be in early January, once again, there may be some times people are unavailable while moving offices, phones, computers, files, etc.

Come see us in 2017! We will host an open house once we are settled, but prior to that, we will let people know when the new offices are open for business.



HERE ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM GRADUATION AND OUR END OF YEAR CELEBRATION!

THANKS TO JULIA BECKER COLLINS (bottom right) FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFT AND ESTABLISHING THE NEW SCHOLARSHIP FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS!



Alum News

Our grads are doing wonderful things! Thanks to the people who sent pictures for our career brochure, and for grads who volunteered for the UMass Gives campaign.

Lauren Brannon is an RN in medical-surgical and labor and delivery units. She is currently a Doctor of Nursing Practice student in the Family Nurse Practitioner program at Frontier Nursing University. She lives with her partner and two-year-old daughter in Davidson, North Carolina.

Morganne Ray Crouser graduated from UVM with an MSW in 2011 and is now a LICSW at the Justice Resource Institute as the program director of two Community Based Services programs in Lowell and Holyoke. There are often internships or jobs available for people interested in families/mental health.

Maddie Drake is a Women's Health Writer at Ovuline, a women's health technology company located in Boston. Maddie's articles are about everything that is women's health-related, especially in regards to fertility and pregnancy. These articles get published in their app, "Ovia".

Cheri Ehrlich co-taught at two summer institutes on art and pedagogy, one focusing on "Encounters with Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females" with artist Linda Stein. The other on Judy Chicago's "The Dinner Party". She also works at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, managing school, youth and family programs.

Megan Murphy Flood wrote about being a pediatric and maternal health nurse in Lawrence, MA and added that "I use A LOT of my women's studies education in this field!"

Lauren Mahoney began a new job at Destination Partners, a New England event planning group. She is planning bigger events and learning event design, and is currently studying for her CMP (Certified Meeting Professional) which is one of the highest designations in event planning. Lauren is engaged to be married next summer and is still active on the board of the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinsons' Research Boston Chapter.

Laura Merwin wrote about finishing up the M.Ed. graduate program at UMass Boston to be a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments. Laura is currently working as a teacher at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts, teaching home and personal management skills to students with visual impairments and multiple disabilities.

Jan Passion sent us pictures from a training last year in South Sudan. Jan was training new staff for the Nonviolent Peaceforce engaged in Unarmed Civilian Protections, including training "Women's Peace Teams" (women working with women to increase security and reduce gender based violence). In January 2015, Jan was in Rwanda working with Conflict Transformation Across Cultures, a program of World Learning in Brattleboro.

Paula Sayword wrote "I am retired, after working 26 years at the Amherst Housing Authority. . .I have written two volumes of poetry, *What Sleeps Inside*, published by Slate Roof Press in 2020 and *Canticle of Light and Dark*, published by The Synthesis Center Press in 2014. I live in Leyden with my partner, Karen, of 31 years. I still have my red WOST t-shirt, although you can pretty much see right through it!"

***editor's note: If you still have your t-shirt after 35+ years, and it is worn out, contact us and we will send you a new one!*

Cynthia Warren is currently working as an attorney in the state appellate court in New Orleans. Cynthia's past employment includes working as a family planning counselor, being a counselor and a founder of a Louisiana domestic violence center, a civil rights lawyer (employment discrimination and class actions), and a federal and state lawyer for the courts particularly in areas of criminal law and prisoner litigation. "My present work also has me heavily involved in campaigning against human trafficking and I am a member of the Louisiana Supreme Court's Human Trafficking Committee, a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency effort to combat the

Alum News

human trafficking trade in New Orleans.” Cynthia goes on to say, “I want to send a few words of encouragement to students majoring or minoring in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (formerly Women Studies) and suggest to you that there are many different careers to pursue where your background in Women, Gender and Sexuality will provide you with the tools and knowledge to grow and create your own career path. I have never regretted my decision to get a degree in Women Studies. So proud to see the program still flourishing!”

Elizabeth Cahn, completed Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies in 2010 and her PhD in Regional Planning in 2014, “Project Space(s) in the Design Professions: An Intersectional Feminist Study of the Women’s School of Planning and Architecture, 1974-1981.” She currently works as Program and Befriending Training Coordinator at Cancer Connection in Northampton, MA, a community-based nonprofit organization serving cancer patients and caregivers. Elizabeth is also involved in regional and national cancer patient research advocacy, in which she uses the skills in intersectional analysis that she gained in the Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies to bring attention to racial and other disparities in cancer research and treatment.

Send us your news! We’ll print it next fall.



Thanks to donors!

We always love all our donors--each name on a donor list, whether a new donor or a returning one, is heart-warming and encourages us to keep doing what we are doing. This year we had some special moments: thanks especially to Julia Becker Collins, an alum who set up a scholarship for WGSS transfer students, and to the several people who volunteered to be “Ambassadors” for #UMassGives, and many more who donated during the fund-raising drive that corresponded with Founders Day. Because of donations like these we can help students, do

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E-NEWS!

By the time you get your newsletter, we'll have a new website! With the new site, comes a new URL that reflects the name we've for a few years now....www.umass.edu/wgss. But don't worry, the site will redirect from the older URL. Check it out and let us know what you think!



This newsletter is produced online and in written form twice a year funds permitting. The newsletter is written and edited by Karen Lederer, design and production by Linda Hillenbrand. Thanks to Laura Briggs, Lezlie Frye, Linda Hillenbrand, Kirsten Leng, Isabel Espinal, and Jeanine Ruhsam for their contributions.

Because of our move to the new building, our spring newsletter is expected to be brief, but we will return in full next fall, filled with accomplishments, pictures and more news of our alums.