Dear WGSS alumni and friends,

In higher ed, as elsewhere, this has been a time of austerity (and resistance), fear (and community-building), violence (and protest). Here in WGSS we find ourselves engaged in the day-to-day business of teaching and writing against the backdrop of the loss of a vital staff position, student protests demanding community safety, and the raced and classed politics of COVID. All the while, we’re planning, strategically. We’re writing and fighting for the faculty and staff we need to teach our curriculum and serve our students, to maintain and grow spaces of knowing and worlding otherwise here at UMass.

We have an exciting year of programming that reflects our commitments to nurturing the conditions of possibility for more just worlds. From a speaker’s series that takes on a range of timely questions by centering Asian American feminist activism and scholarship to a symposium on feminist work in a neoliberal economy, to talks on Hindu nationalism, abolition, and the importance of art in movements for change, we are collaborating to make time and space for the conversations we need to be having. With the Prison Education Initiative, led by our own Laura Ciolkowski, now officially housed here in the department and two new scholarships going live this spring, we are feeling deeply the power and generosity of our communities.

Going forward, we’re looking forward to doing some hiring, getting our PhD program started after pandemic delays, introducing a few new classes, and getting back in the same physical spaces together, more and more. In the meantime, I want to take this space to appreciate the labor of my faculty and staff colleagues and our grad students. I also want to appreciate our students, alumni, and other friends and supporters. Thanks to all of you for showing up and for all the ways you do your work, in the Lordean sense.

In Solidarity,
Angie
GOODBYE KAREN AND ALEX!

This past spring, we had two virtual events to celebrate the retirement of Karen Lederer and Alexandrina Deschamps. Both events were well attended and tributes flowed in for both! They will be missed!

Along with each event, we launched two new scholarships for undergraduate students. Dr. Deschamps’ scholarship will be for students working on black feminisms. Karen’s scholarship is titled “WGSS in Action” and will go towards students doing any activist work. We hope to launch them this spring, so stay tuned. Thanks to all who contributed to these events and to the scholarships!

STAY IN THE LOOP

If you would like more details about events that WGSS and friends are planning throughout the year, please do sign up for our listservs and/or follow us on social media. As a reminder, UMass moved to Google Groups for listservs earlier this year, but the rules remain the same! If you’re not on our lists and want to be added, check the website or email Linda at lindah@umass.edu. We have lists for undergraduates, graduate students, faculty and staff and one list dedicated completely to events.
Karen Cardozo started out in career services at Harvard, where she completed a Masters in Higher Ed Administration. After finishing her PhD in English at UMass Amherst and teaching across the Five College consortium from 1998-2012 (including as a founding member of the APA Studies Certificate Program), she directed Leadership and Women's Studies at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, where she received tenure in Interdisciplinary Studies. She went on to lead career development at Hollins University in VA and, most recently, Northeastern University in Boston.

In Spring 2022, Dr. Cardozo will be teaching three courses: Envisioning/Enacting Change, Rewilding Feminisms, and Work Matters. She also maintains her own career coaching practice and is completing a holistic advising book for PhDs: Authentic and Brave Career Design: A Guide for Academics Who Want to Get a Life. With Shannan Palma and Katherine Kearns, she is also co-editing a collection on Higher Education Careers Beyond the Professoriate to showcase diverse professional roles in academe for those with advanced degrees.

Karen Cardozo will share her expertise in career development through several Fall workshops (details below). In the Spring, Karen's interdisciplinary graduate course, Work Matters, will include with related programming: a mini-conference presenting students' final projects; a networking event to connect under/graduate students with WGSS alumni mentors across sectors; and a public symposium analyzing revolutions at work due to both technological change and pandemic impacts. Save the date for the symposium, Whither Work? -- Friday March 25 OR April 1, 2022 (and that's no joke)!
EVENTS

Career Development Fall Workshops
With Karen Cardozo

Wednesday October 27th at 4-5:15 PM | South College W211
Thursday November 4th, 12:15-1:30 PM | Zoom
WGSS at Work: Under/Graduate Career Workshops
Same content both dates!

Wednesday December 8th, 4-5:30 PM | South College W211
Exploring All Your Options (Ac/Alt/Out): WGSS Graduate Student Workshop
Hybrid, with Zoom option!

*To sign up for either workshop, email kcardozo@wost.umass.edu
Asian American Feminisms Speaker Series (Virtual)
Organized by Millian Kang

Thursday Oct. 7 / 1:00pm - 2:15pm
“Our Community has Boundaries” LA’s Asian and Latina Immigrant Women Activists on Embodiment, Race, Class, and Morality
Talk by Dr. Nadia Kim, Professor of Asian & Asian American Studies (and Sociology) at Loyola Marymount University

Thursday Nov. 4 / 1:00pm - 2:15pm
Panel with Red Canary Song
Red Canary Song is a grassroots collective of Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) and Asian Migrant Sex Workers, Massage Parlor Workers, and Allies.

Tuesday Nov. 16 / 1:00pm - 2:15pm
Anti-Carceral Approaches to Sexual Violence: Lessons from Asian American Feminist Activism
A panel with Dr. Grace Kyungwon Hong (UCLA); Dr. Iyko Day (Mount Holyoke); and Dr. Ren-yo Hwang (Mount Holyoke).

April 2022
“Traces of Indianness” and Transnational Settler Colonialisms
Talk by Dr. Nishant Upadhyay, Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies and Queer & Trans Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder.

* Co-sponsored by the UMass Amherst Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Department, the UMass Asian & Asian American Studies Certificate Program, UMass Fine Arts Center Asian and Asian American Arts and Culture Program, and the Five College Asian Pacific Islander Studies Certificate Program. Additional sponsors have provided support for specific speakers in the series. Stay tuned for more events in this series!
Pathways to Liberation
Organized by  Laura Ciolkowski

Friday Oct. 22, 2pm | Campus Center 804
Talk by Dr. Erin Corbett
Founder & CEO, Second Chance Educational Alliance

Dr. Corbett has 20 years of experience in education programming, and is the founder of an education-focused reintegration initiative designed to provide incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people with the educational opportunities necessary to fully engage in their communities and society.

* Sponsored by the UMass Prison Education Initiative, Center for Justice, Law, and Societies, and the Department of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies.

REMINDERS

Undergraduates
We have a new advisor! Svati Shah will be the undergraduate advisor going forward. You can reach Sva at wgss-advisor@umass.edu. You can also get career advice and other forms of advising through the HFA Advising & Career Center.

Graduate Certificate Students
If you’re finishing classes for the certificate, please email Linda at lindah@umass.edu and she will send you the form for our Graduate Program Director and the Graduate School to clear you. Please help us spread the word about the certificate program to your fellow graduate students! The deadline to apply remains March 1 of each year.

Alumni
If you haven’t already, check out Connect UMass (www.connectumassalumni.com), a platform that will help you stay in touch with other alumni and current students to offer or receive career advice, job postings, event info, and more! To tell us your news about what/how you’re doing, please email: wgss-alum-news@umass.edu
Svati Shah published a new article, "Impossible Migrants: Debating Sex Work and Gender Identity amid the Crisis of Migrant Labor," in the Reading Sex Work special issue of South Atlantic Quarterly. This semester, Sva is participating in a number of exciting events, including the "Theory and Practice: Transnational Conversations on Gender and Sexuality" webinar series, co-sponsored by Ashoka University in New Delhi and NYU’s CSGS; a workshop on migration at the Center for the Advanced Study of India; and a panel on queer materialisms at the Annual Conference on South Asia this October.

Laura Briggs has been busy promoting her widely reviewed new book, Taking Children: A History of American Terror. In an interview with Davey D. Cook, Cook calls this book the perfect example of why the right doesn’t want us to teach critical race theory. As a member of the Migration Scholar Collaborative, Briggs has worked with historians and others to address the ongoing brutal treatment of migrants by the Biden administration, publishing timely essays on why migrants need a pathway to citizenship if are serious about not separating families, and sexual violence and "the crisis" of/for Central American asylum seekers." She has also written about the recent Texas abortion law. Briggs’s new article on the history of Black and Native activism against the foster care system just came out in an extraordinary issue of the Columbia Journal of Race and Law honoring the 20th anniversary of Dorothy Roberts’ Shattered Bonds and calling for the abolition of the racist child welfare system. She is currently working on books about debt imperialism and the Caribbean and, with Felicia Kornbluh and Rickie Solinger, a documentary history of the Coalition for Abortion Rights and End Sterilization Abuse and the Reproductive Rights National Network.
Miliann Kang was promoted to Full Professor and completed her term as Director for Diversity Advancement for the College of Humanities and Fine Arts. In addition to publishing a piece in Ms. Magazine about the Atlanta massacre last spring, she published "Reproducing Asian American Studies: Rethinking Asian Exclusion as Reproductive Exclusion" in Amerasia journal's special issue on "Rethinking Gendered Citizenship." She is part of team that was awarded a grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts' Collective Imagination for Spatial Justice program. This grant supports projects that "do the important work of imagining public art that fosters and contributes to more just futures for our public spaces and public culture." Her next book Mother Other: Race and Reproductive Politics in Asian American, is under contract with the University of California Press, and her previous book The Managed Hand: Race, Gender and the Body in Beauty Service Work is being translated into Chinese by Beijing Normal University.

Laura Ciolkowski was awarded a 2021 Distinguished Community Engagement Award for Teaching. The awards committee recognized her for her work in the area of prison education and teaching and her ongoing commitment to building a prison education program at UMass. The UMass Prison Education Initiative, led by Laura, was also awarded a Mutual Mentoring Grant for 2021-22. This coming year, Laura will be presenting two papers related to prison justice and abolition, one at this year's national conference on Higher Education in Prison (HCHEP) titled "A tale of the perils and the promises of tech" and one at the Midwest Modern Languages Association titled “'What to do with the Dangerous Few?': Abolition, Transformative Justice, and Collective Responses to Sexual Harm."

Derek Siegel, a graduate of our Certificate Program, has published an essay on abortion in Rewire based on their 2019 WGSS capstone project! They've also published this research in Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience.
Cameron Awkward-Rich has returned from his year away from teaching. Thanks to an ALCS Fellowship, he spent the year co-editing a special "t4t issue" of Transgender Studies Quarterly, which will be published this coming February, and completing his book The Terrible We due out from Duke University Press in Fall 2022.

Sandra Joy Russell, a graduate of our Certificate Program, started this fall as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at Hollins University!

Associate Faculty Emerita and longtime supporter of WGSS Joyce Berkman has had a fruitful year, "despite Covid and the surgical removal of a malignant thyroid tumor." She has had two essays published on Edith Stein and has been invited to prepare a book on Stein’s Autobiography. She continues to be vital to the intellectual life of the Five Colleges in numerous ways, not least through her Endowed Scholarship for graduate students in WGSS and History. Amidst her busy schedule, which also includes German lessons, fitness sessions, piano lessons and performances, she writes that she "remain[s] keenly interested in all developments with WGSS."

Finally, you might have noticed that our hallway is a little quieter than usual. That’s in part because Banu Subramaniam, Kiran Asher, and Kirsten Leng are all on leave. Banu is taking a well-earned leave after chairing the department for three unusually eventful years, Kiran is finally getting to take her Fulbright, and Kirsten is on sabbatical for AY 21-22 after earning tenure last year!

Thank you to our donors!

Due to the pandemic, we couldn’t give our graduates breakfast again this year, but we could still give them bread and roses symbolically and that is due in large part to your generosity. We so appreciate your ongoing support, which has been helping us to weather these strange times. Donations can be made directly through our website by simply clicking the give button.
We're trying something new

One thing we've learned from the last year and a half is the importance of building and maintaining our online communities. Also, in the absence of Karen Lederer, we are reevaluating our media and outreach campaigns.

For the next few cycles, we will be producing both a print and a digital newsletter. However, we are going to be phasing out the print newsletter in favor of building up our digital communication. That means that if you would like to keep up with what's happening in the department, we'll need your email address to ensure that the digital newsletter reaches you. Please reach out to Linda Hillenbrand at lindah@umass.edu to let us know how to contact you.