



Making Waves

Women's Studies

at the University of Connecticut

Spring 2011, Vol. III, Issue I

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A Letter from the Director - Dr. Nancy A. Naples

This has been a very exciting year in the Women's Studies Program. As a new unit within the CLAS, we are committed to expanding our collaborations with other units to enhance our contributions to the college and to the school, more generally. We have partnered with the Institutes of African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Puerto Rican and Latino Studies (PRLS) to identify ways that our overlapping critical scholarship and teaching can be expanded through joint programming and curricular developments. One of the first successes in this regards was the decision to offer Latino masculinities, a course that had not been offered in several years. This course will be cross-listed with English, Women's Studies, and PRLS.

We also joined with the Institutes and the Rainbow Center (which supports LGBTQ students and allies) to invite Transgender Studies scholar Professor J. Halberstam from the University of Southern California to give a public talk and conduct a workshop with faculty and students. Other collaborative highlights include a presentation by Professor Valerie Jenness, Dean of Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine on her work on transgender prisoners in the California prison system. CLAS Dean Jeremy Teitelbaum is supporting our programming efforts by establishing a fund for interdisciplinary programs that will offer us financial support for collaborative workshops and other initiatives.

We also received funds from the Human Rights Institute to support the visit of UCLA philosopher of science, Sandra Harding, for the fall semester. Her visit was also funded by the Honors Program in conjunction with the new WS Honors course in Gender and Science. As indicative of our goal of interdisciplinary collaboration, the committee put together for this effort includes Professors Arlene Albert and Rachel O'Neill, Molecular and Cell Biology; Holly Fitch, Psychology; and Shirley Roe, History. For more information regarding 2010-2011 events, including the Distinguished Guest Speaker Series and Monthly Spotlight & Pedagogy series, please see pages 7 & 8.

We continue our strong relationship with the Women's Studies Program at the Stamford campus. In 2010-2011 they held 12 events that attracted 836 faculty, students, staff and other community members. We are working on linking the events held on both campuses through live streaming, an innovation that resulted from the work of WS Administrative Assistant, Coleen Spurlock. For more information, please see page 6.

We have been fortunate to receive a newly endowed scholarship fund set up in honor of Kristie Ann Wood by her family and friends. Kristie Ann was the first student to graduate from UConn with an individualized major in Women's Studies in the 1970's. Please see the article about this remarkable woman on page 2.

During the 2010-2011 academic year, Women's Studies courses in Storrs enrolled a total of 2,010 students on both the undergraduate and graduate level. We offered a total of 66 courses. This academic year, approximately 14% of the graduating seniors on the Stamford Campus graduated with a WS minor. Since 2006, when Dr. Ingrid Semaan was hired as Director of Women's Studies at Stamford and Coordinator of the Women's Center, enrollments have increased dramatically (91% in five years). This is a testament to her incredible organizational skill, mentorship, and commitment to Women's Studies.

(Director's letter continued on page 2)

(Director's letter, continued from page 1)

The Storrs' teaching program was accomplished through the contributions of our full time tenured and tenure track faculty - Anne D'Alleva, Margaret Breen, Manisha Desai, Manisha McComiskey, Heather Turcotte, and Nancy Naples; three Assistant Professors in Residence - Michael Gill, Angelique Nixon, and Alexis Boylan; nine graduate students and teaching assistants; and six cross-listed courses offered by affiliate faculty in other departments. Women's Studies faculty and graduate students teaching in the program continue to perform at the highest level in the classroom. In Spring 2011, the average of all the teaching evaluations for our courses equaled 9.1 out of 10 – instructors for nine of the thirty four courses received scores of 9.7 or higher. We are fortunate to have three 2011 award winning instructors teaching for Women's Studies, Professor Margaret Breen; former Assistant Director and newly minted Ph.D. Barbara Gurr; and PhD student Nikki McGary.

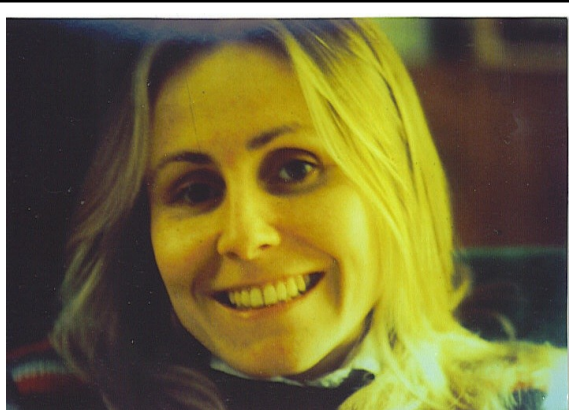
The Storrs' based Women's Studies Program is fortunate to have two very hard working support staff - Program Coordinator, Kate Hurley-Dizigan, and Administrative Assistant, Coleen Spurlock. Amongst other things, Kate manages course scheduling and has established useful procedures to ensure the diversity of course offerings and seat numbers while also keeping in mind the needs of the undergraduate and graduate program requirements. Kate also coordinates and keeps track of the majors, minors, and graduate certificate students. Some of Coleen's many responsibilities are managing the budget and overseeing purchasing and related equipment needs and repairs. She also works with relevant staff in other units to coordinate special events and co-sponsorship. Coleen's knowledge of travel, employment, and other university policies has facilitated the smooth functioning of the program. This year Coleen investigated and implemented live streaming and video archiving of all WS sponsored talks and events. This included the graduation celebration where the parents of one of our students were able to watch the event from Germany.

Women's Studies - Storrs employed six student staff members for the 2010-2011 academic year. All six WS student staff members are high achievers, honors students or leaders in one way or another on campus. One student staff member was the recipient of the 2011 WS Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein Scholarship as well as the 2011 Chase Going Woodhouse Prize (please see pages 15 & 16 for more details on all of the 2011 Women's Studies prize recipients).

I am looking forward to another incredible year in Women's Studies. I am fortunate to be surrounded by students, staff, and faculty who believe in the feminist mission of our program and who are willing to go "above and beyond" to make Women's Studies an exciting, collegial, and productive site for interdisciplinary scholarship and critical pedagogy.

Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship Award Fund

By Nikki McGary



Kristie Ann Wood

The Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship Award Fund is a lasting tribute to Kristie Ann Wood, a feminist mother, wife, friend, daughter, and lawyer who is remembered by her loved ones for being courageous, socially conscious, politically motivated, and particularly feisty. As an undergraduate student in the early 1970's at the University of Connecticut, Kristie worked hard to develop her own curriculum for an individualized major in Women's Studies and consequently paved the way for our Program today. "Feminism influenced everything she did," remembers her husband, Chris Flisher, "and we are excited to make such a meaningful tribute to Kristie."

Kristie was raised in Monroe, Connecticut, where her close friend from high school, Patti Parlette, recalls that Kristie was in the student body government and also the first woman in the town to pump gas. Kristie was once famously quoted in a local newspaper as saying that people ought to think for themselves and "don't be a product of your parents," which both Patti and Chris emphasize is ironic since Kristie's fabulous parents were excellent role models and are what set the foundation for

Kristie's own independence, tenacity and good will. After graduating from UConn, Kristie went on to Boston University School of Law, where she excelled. Kristie and Chris were married in 1984, soon after which they became the parents of twin boys, Benjamin and Ryan. And in 1992, they gave birth to a third son, Miles.

Their family photo album shows pictures of Kristie hanging balloons for celebratory parties, reading books to her children before bed, and posing alongside her excited children dressed up for Halloween. Family stories include sleepless nights as new parents and memorable cross-country family vacations. Alongside being a loving and active mother, wife and an amazing friend, Kristie was a successful lawyer for consumer protection for 16 years, and later shifted her focus to child advocacy. The difficult balance of family and career is no easy task, but the stories of Kristie are truly inspirational as they reveal such strength, patience, and love.

Kristie passed away in March of 2001 from a brain tumor. And as always, she showed great courage, even in the final year of her life. Her loved ones remember how when Kristie would go running in the neighborhood, she would always stop and say something kind to her neighbors such as complimenting their garden... a reminder that we should all stop and smell the flowers and spread kindness in this world.

Kristie's courage helped set the stage for our Program and we at the Women's Studies Program are honored and forever grateful to be gifted with a scholarship award fund in Kristie's name. Thank you to Kristie's family and friends for their generosity, especially Kristie's husband, Chris, parents, Kenneth and Catherine Wood, and friend, Patti Parlette.

Honoring our Graduates & Award Recipients

During 2010 - 2011, Women's Studies saw the graduation of many wonderful undergraduate students - 7 majors, and 37 minors - as well as 5 students who completed the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate. Students completed their coursework throughout the year, graduating in August and December 2010 and May 2011. Certificates were presented at the Commencement celebration held on Sunday, May 8, 2011 at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

<u>Majors</u>	<u>Minors</u>		
Cassidy Brooks Desiree DiLallo Victoria Flagg Dayna Hine Jacqueline Martone Ryan O'Connor Stephanie Yacenda	Joseph Arcisz Laura Arnold Dana Behuniak Stephanie Bousquet Amanda Brown Kerri Brown Mindy Brown Kalie Buchman Jennifer Cannella Devan Cody Caitlin Cox Suzanne Davis Lauren DiLello	Michelle Farber Melissa Gittens Carrie Greenough Trisha-Ann Hawthorne Marie Hu Marissa Johnson Patricia Kostiuik Jessica LeMere Elizabeth Littlewood Rachel Madariaga Andrew Megeurdichian Samantha Meller	Bryanna Neale Katelyn Peowski Katie Phee Krista Prince Rebecca Putman Jonathan Ramos Holly Sansolo Conlan Segerson Keisha Stephens Siuyan Su Ah Sor Taylor Trudon Alicia Waring
<u>Graduate Certificate</u>			
Julie Anderson Ute Bettray Tara Harney-Mahajan Barret Katuna Lwendo Moonzwe			

In addition to our majors, minors and graduate certificate students, Women's Studies honored 8 students with annual awards. Please see the article on pages 15 & 16 for more details. In summary, the awards were presented to:

Undergraduate Awards:

- **The Chase Going Woodhouse Prize:** Alicia Waring (minor), Ryan O'Connor (major), Tess Koenigsmark (major), and Marissa Dubecky (minor).
- **The Gladys Tantaquidgeon Award:** Alicia Waring (minor)
- **The Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein Scholarship:** Marissa Dubecky (minor) and Nkemdilim Anako (minor).

Graduate Student Awards

- **The Excellence in Graduate Teaching in Women's Studies Award:** Nikki McGary (PhD candidate Sociology, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010)
- **The Marita McComiskey Distinguished Graduate Career Award for Feminist Praxis:** Amber West (PhD candidate English, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010)
- **The Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award:** Jamie Huff (PhD candidate Political Science, WS Graduate Certificate - May 2010) and Amber West (PhD candidate English, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010)



WS Major Jacqueline Martone and Margaret Breen, Professor of Women's Studies and English



WS Minor and 2011 Award winner Alicia Waring and Nancy Naples, Director of Women's Studies



2011 Award winner Nikki McGary and Coleen Spurlock, Women's Studies Administrative Assistant

A special THANK YOU to Coleen Spurlock and the Women's Studies student staff whose hard work resulted in a wonderful celebration for all of our graduates, award recipients and guests.

2010 – 2011: A Year of Changes

The 2010-2011 academic year was the first year that the Women's Studies Program reported to CLAS. In addition to the structural reportage of the program, Women's Studies experienced a series of major changes in staffing and curriculum.

The most notable change to the curriculum is a new program name. The Women's Studies faculty voted to rename the Women's Studies Program to signal that the program incorporates contemporary perspectives on gender and sexuality studies while retaining the historical significance of Women's Studies in our course offerings and general approach. Our decision was also influenced by the student demand for sexuality studies, echoed by the Rainbow Center. The new name of the program will be Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, effective May 2012.

The decision to change the program dates back to the external review of our program in 2003. With our move into CLAS in July 2010, we formally applied to change our name to reflect the scholarship in our interdisciplinary field and curriculum developments in our program. The name change was accompanied by a series of updates to the curriculum including a request to revise the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate to the Feminist Studies Certificate. The process was so extensive, that only some of the changes were made effective for May 2011, while the balance will become effective in May 2012.

Women's Studies also experienced a number of staffing changes during the 2010 -2011 academic year:

- Manisha Desai's appointment as director ended early when she accepted Fulbright funding for a year's research in India, starting in January 2011.
- Nancy Naples was appointed Interim Director at that time, and has since been hired on as the Women's Studies Director.
- Marita McComiskey resigned as Associate Director effective January, 2011, in order to continue her contribution to the Study Abroad Program in South Africa. The internship and courses she teaches in Cape Town all contribute to the Women's Studies Program, therefore, she continues to contribute to our program despite her absence from the Storrs campus. Marita is in Storrs teaching for Women's Studies in the fall, and South Africa in the spring.
- Assistant Professor in Residence Angelique Nixon completed her second year here at UConn. She will not be back in Fall 2011 as she has accepted a tenure track position at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania.
- Assistant Professor in Residence Alexis Boylan came to us in Fall 2010 with expertise in feminism, arts, and culture. She has provided essential support to the program by taking over the teaching duties related to the general education *Feminisms and theArts* large lectures each semester. Her time is shared with Art & Art History where she teaches upper division classes. Please see the article about Dr. Boylan on page 5.
- Assistant Professor in Residence Michael Gill also came to us in Fall 2010, with an expertise in disability and sexualities studies. He has taught both large and small lectures to general education Gender in Global Perspective students, as well as upper division classes *Women & Violence*, and offering special topics classes, *Disability & Gender* and *Masculinities*. Please see the article about Dr. Gill on page 5.

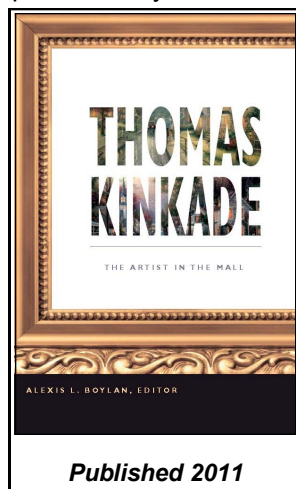
The teaching landscape expands further for 2011 – 2012 with the hiring of a joint, senior faculty member with Political Science, a Postdoctoral Fellow, and two additional Assistant Professors in Residence.

- Dr. Christine Sylvester will begin a joint position as a senior tenured faculty member in Women's Studies and Political Science in January, 2012. Formerly, she was at Lancaster University in the UK where she served as a Professor of International Relations and Development and recently held the post of Kerstin Hesselgren Chair for Sweden, 2010-2011, School of Global Studies - University of Gothenburg. This opportunity hire expands our program's expertise in transnational feminisms.
- Dr. Rachel A. Lewis comes to us from Oklahoma State University as a Postdoctoral Fellow. Rachel recently received her doctorate in Musicology from Cornell University with her dissertation is entitled "Bordering on Desire: Towards a Transnational Lesbian Cinema." Rachel will add to our program's emphasis in arts and culture as well as sexualities and transnational feminisms.
- Dr. Barbara Gurr will be joining us as an Assistant Professor in Residence, having received her doctorate this summer in Sociology from UConn with her dissertation entitled "The Ruling Relations of Reproductive Healthcare for Native American Women." Barb's areas of expertise are reproductive health/healthcare, focus on marginalized communities; genders and sexualities, focus on transgender youth and queer families; structural and gendered violence, transnational perspectives, and; social movements, focus on LGBT communities and Native American communities.
- Dr. Judy Rohrer will also be joining us as an Assistant Professor in Residence. Judy comes to us from the Beatrice Bain Research Group at the University of California Berkeley. She earned her Ph.D. in 2005 at the University of Hawai'i, Honolulu in Political Science, with her dissertation titled "*Haole Matters: An Interrogation of Whiteness in Hawai'i*." Her first book, [Haoles in Hawai'i](#), was published in 2010 by the University of Hawai'i Press. Judy's areas of expertise are race and colonization in Hawai'i, gay marriage, disability studies, and citizenship.

Welcome, Dr. Alexis Boylan

Alexis L. Boylan, a joint appointment with Art History and American Studies, received her B.A. in history from Bryn Mawr College and her Ph.D. in Art History from Rutgers University. Her research focus is on American art from the colonial to the contemporary periods, with particular emphasis on race and gender.

Boylan recently edited *Thomas Kinkade, The Artist in the Mall*, published by Duke University Press in 2011. She has completed



her manuscript, *Man on the Street: Masculinity, Urbanism, and Ashcan Art*, which examines the Ashcan circle of artists and their visual commentaries on urban masculinity. Boylan's new book project, *The Case of the Two Mrs. Sloans*, uses the extraordinary lives of the two wives of artist John Sloan to critically consider the cultural roles and meanings of different stages of identity for heterosexual women, namely the positions of wife, mistress, and widow.



Dr. Alexis Boylan at the Louvre, Paris

Boylan has published in *Rethinking Marxism*, *Prospects*, and has a forthcoming article in *Woman's Art Journal*. She has also contributed essays to recent museum exhibition catalogues including *Seeing the City: John Sloan's New York* (Yale University Press and the Delaware Art Museum, 2007) and *Landscape of Slavery: The Plantation in American Art*, (University of South Carolina Press and the Gibbes Museum of Art, 2008).

Welcome, Dr. Michael Gill

Michael Gill joined Women's Studies as an Assistant Professor in Residence in Fall 2010. He received a Ph.D. in disability studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago as well as graduate certificates in gender and women's studies and disability ethics. Prior to entering graduate school, he worked in the area of supported employment for individuals with developmental disabilities in Spokane, Washington. He has also taught gender and women's studies classes at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dr. Gill's publications appear in *Disability & Society*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, and *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*. Currently, he is working on a book manuscript *Intellectual Disability and Sexuality: Intersections of Pleasure, Reproduction, Competence, and Agency* exploring the sexualities of individuals with intellectual disabilities. While historically people with intellectual disabilities have been considered overtly and inappropriately sexual and subjected to eugenic practices of sterilization and marriage prohibition, more recent professional educational materials also maintain this problematic view of sexuality by implying that people with intellectual disabilities are abnormally sexual and in need of control. His work engages with broad concepts such as competence, pity, pleasure and agency examining sex education materials used in special education classrooms, discussing sexual abuse cases, and analyzing representations of sexuality of people with intellectual disabilities in popular media.



Dr. Michael Gill

Last year, he taught a variety of classes in Women's Studies including special topics on masculinities and disability and gender. In his teaching, he encourages students to make connections beyond their own experiences to examine their roles in global discourses and practices by adopting a comparative feminist studies model. He is looking forward to returning to Beach Hall and the classrooms of UConn this upcoming year.

Women's Studies at UConn-Stamford

Women's Studies course enrollments have increased by 91% over the past 5 years. This year, 36 students are graduating with a minor in Women's Studies. This represents approximately 14% of all students graduating from the Stamford campus.

The Women's Studies Program sponsored 10 very well attended talks and cultural events this year.

Women's Studies students established a new student organization at Stamford this year--Women for Women International. They sponsored a Winter Gala and an International Women's Day Festival, and co-sponsored a talk about media representations of Muslim women by Deepa Kumar with the Women's Studies Program. The group also held several bake sales, and raised approximately \$1000.

Another student group affiliated with the Women's Studies Program, Zero Tolerance, was also very active this year. They held a supplies drive for the Domestic Violence Crisis Center and co-sponsored three events with the Women's Studies Program--a talk about challenges faced by Latina domestic violence survivors by Jenny Rivera, a talk about masculinities by Michael Kimmel, and a self defense workshop. They also organized 6th annual production of "The Vagina Monologues," which had an attendance of 225 people and raised over \$4000 for organizations that address violence against women.

Stamford Women's Studies in the News

The Stamford Advocate published an article about the Stamford Campus' Zero Tolerance program and the 2011 Vagina Monologues production - please see below. The article has been reprinted with the paper's permission. The article was written by Maggie Gordon, Staff Writer for the Stamford Advocate/Hearst Connecticut Media Group, and published on April 6, 2011. It is available at: <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/default/article/UConn-Stamford-group-hosting-Vagina-Monologues-1326156.php>.

UConn Stamford group hosting 'Vagina Monologues' Thursday

A student group at the University of Connecticut Stamford wants to break the silence around a certain part of the female anatomy by speaking about vaginas Thursday and Friday evening. Zero Tolerance, UConn Stamford's anti-violence-against-women organization, is hosting its sixth annual performance of Eve Ensler's "Vagina Monologues" this week. The performance features roughly 10 short monologues in which female actresses discuss women's sexuality as well as the social stigma around rape and abuse, through a variety of points of view.

"The mission is to break the taboo about women's bodies, sexualities and the word 'vagina,'" said Yazmin Khan, 28, president of Zero Tolerance. "Most people aren't really aware of the epidemic of violence against women, and often this is their first time hearing of these things," Khan said.

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, someone is sexually assaulted somewhere in America once every two minutes. For college-aged women, the prevalence of rape is especially disturbing, Khan said. A report by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2010 revealed women in college are raped at a rate four times higher than women in the general population. In addition, the National College Women Sexual Victimization Study estimates between one in four and one in five college women experience rape or attempted rape during their college careers. "This happens, but there's a silence around it," Khan said.

Seventeen student actresses are taking part in the event, including Sam Bertier, 19, who will perform "The Spotlight Monologue," about Miriam Merlet, a Haitian activist who helped criminalize rape in the island nation a few years ago. Merlet died in the January 2010 Haiti earthquake. "I got involved in this just because I feel like it's such a great cause. And when I read my monologue or the first time, it was like, 'This is really making me cry right now.' It's just so moving," Bertier said.

The performances, which are held at 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday at UConn's Gen Re Auditorium, at 1 University Place, cost \$15 for the general public and \$5 for students. "I mean, you could do this, or you could go see a movie on a Friday night, and with this your money goes toward more than just a Hollywood studio," said Khan. "You'll probably forget the latest Bruckheimer film, but you won't forget the 'Vagina Monologues.' "

Ninety percent of the event proceeds will go to The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education; the remaining 10 percent will go to VDay, an international organization working to end violence against women. While Zero Tolerance members have set a goal of raising \$4,000, their greater aim is to change the culture of shame surrounding women's bodies and crimes against women and girls. "It happens here. Violence against women isn't exclusive to people who aren't well-to-do," said Tori Ruther, 24.

"It spans, unfortunately, all groups," Khan said. "And the more people who come, and who realize that, the closer we are to making a change."

2010-2011 Women's Studies Events

The Women's Studies Program has a very active program of events and co-sponsorships. The Storrs based Women's Studies Program typically has five major events and speaker series each academic year. They include *Monthly Spotlights* featuring faculty in departments and interdisciplinary units working in the field of women's, gender, and sexualities studies. For example, the March Spotlight featured Dr. Elizabeth Holzer, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Human Rights, who discussed her work on "Political Fear and Political Hope in the Face of Humanitarian Care." We also hold *Monthly Pedagogy Brown Bags* to support new faculty, APiRs, and graduate students teaching in WS or in cross-listed courses.

The *Distinguished Guest Speaker Series* features internationally prominent scholars from universities across the country and abroad who address agreed upon themes identified by WS faculty. This year we emphasized four themes. The first was Women's Organizing and Citizenship which featured a Constitution Day Panel (co-sponsored with Asian American Studies Institute). We also organized a panel What's in a Name? to offer a forum to discuss the renaming of WS programs/departments across the country. The featured speaker was UCLA Professor Grace Hong (co-sponsored by Asian American Studies). The third session focused on Transgender Studies and featured University of Southern California professor Judith Jack Halberstam and Dean of Social Ecology Valerie Jenness of University of California, Irvine (co-sponsored by the Institutes and Rainbow Center). Dean Jenness lecture was also linked the Prison Series, a series of events and forums that were developed in collaboration with the ethnic studies institutes. The final theme was Transnational Feminisms and featured Professor Anna M. Agathangelou of York University, and Monique Eckmann, Fulbright Scholar, Holocaust Center, Kean University (co-sponsored with Human Rights Institute);

We also support the efforts of other units on campus, especially those organized by the ethnic studies institutes, as is illustrated above. The most notable collaboration this year was the *Prison Series*. We are also in the process of organizing events for the next academic year. Among these future events are a fall workshop on 911 and *Gender, Science and Human Rights*. We have received funds from the Human Rights Institute to support the visit of UCLA philosopher of science, Sandra Harding. As indicative of our goal of interdisciplinary collaboration, the committee put together for this effort includes Arlene Albert and Rachel O'Neill, Molecular and Cell Biology; Holly Fitch, Psychology; and Shirley Roe, History. The committee is chaired by Nancy Naples and Anne Hiskes.

This past year we also co-sponsored a number of other events including the following: Danelle Ragoonanan-Storphy's presentation on "Human Trafficking 101 From Victim Service Provider Perspective," International Institute of CT; Diwali 2010 organized by the Asian Student Organization; Ann Russo's talk on "Building Queer Communities" organized by the Rainbow Center; MCL's Graduate Student Conference; Shirin Neshat lecture on "Expressing the Inexpressible" organized by the Department of Art and Art History; the speaker series organized by the Asian American Studies Institute; the Provost's Committee and the Status of Women's CT Government Appointments Project and Women's Day at the Capital; LUNAFEST's short films by, for, and about women, organized by WCTR; the Department of History's Gender and History Visiting Scholar Series Public Lecture; and the Women of Color Luncheon organized by the Women's Center;

The Stamford Center for Women's Studies also sponsors annual events. This year they held 12 events that attracted 836 faculty, students, staff and other community members. We are working on linking the events held on both campuses through live streaming, an innovation that resulted from the work of WS Administrative Assistant, Coleen Spurlock.

Upcoming 2011 - 2012 Women's Studies Events

Women's Studies Distinguished Speaker Series

Dr. Sandra Harding, UCLA - September

Feminist and Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies: Convergences and Dissonances

Spotlights on Faculty - Fall 2010

- September 19 - Barbara Gurr, Assistant Professor in Residence Women's Studies, starting Fall 2011
- October 17 - Rachel A. Lewis, Postdoctoral Fellow Women's Studies, starting Fall 2011
- November 7 - Judy Rohrer, Assistant Professor in Residence Women's Studies, starting Fall 2011

Proposed 2012 Collaborative Conference

March 30 & 31, 2012

- this would be a collaborative conference between Women's Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies and Puerto Rican/Latino Studies supported by the CLAS Interdisciplinary Programming Fund
- we are still in the preliminary planning stages - please check back in late Fall 2011 or early Spring 2012 for more details

Please visit our website for more information on these events as well as additional events that will be added to the Women's Studies schedule as the year progresses - www.womens.studies.uconn.edu.

Dr. Grace Kyungwon Hong

By Dr. Heather M. Turcotte



**Grace Kyungwon
Hong**

Dr. Grace Kyungwon Hong from the Department of Women's Studies and Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles was this Spring's featured speaker for the Women's Studies Program and Asian American Studies Institute collaborative Speaker Series. Dr. Hong's talk, "Citizenship and Biopower," focused on questions of the state under globalization through Foucauldian theories of biopower to explain how power extends beyond the law-based operations of the state that manages life through the production of norms and relegates even greater populations to death and devastation.

Dr. Hong's presentation argued that the shift into globalization must be contextualized within a history of gendered racial capital. She situated decolonization / liberation movements in Asia and Africa and the new social movements in the US as turning points that marked the triumph, but also the limits of nationalism. Dr. Hong articulated alternatives to nationalism through women of color feminism and queer of color critique in texts by Cherrie Moraga, Frances Beal, and the Combahee River Collective, to theorize the newly complicated relationship between race, gender, sexuality, and vulnerability to death in the wake of the transnational turn. A small seminar

amongst faculty and graduate students followed the event, which focused on a deeper investigation into the meanings of feminism, transnationalism and justice.

Dr. Hong's research and teaching focuses on women of color feminism, gender, race, and work in the global economy, gender and sexuality in Asian American culture, and feminist approaches to American literature and culture. Dr. Hong's book, *The Ruptures of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and the Culture of Immigrant Labor* (2006), won an honorable mention for 2008 Cultural Studies Book Award. Her articles have appeared in journals such as *American Literature*, *American Quarterly*, *Journal of the West*, and *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*.



**Front (L to R): Dr. Turcotte, Dr. Hong,
Leah Christiani; Back (L to R):
Shazne Hussain, Jamie Huff,
Vanessa Lovelace**

Graduate Student Corner

Barbara A. Gurr, Ph.D. Sociology (2011) & WS Graduate Certificate (2010)

This past summer I defended my dissertation in Sociology. I noticed, while I was in the midst of extolling the virtues of my particular chosen method, my theoretical framing, and perhaps throwing in a finding or two, that every single person in the room – and there were several other than my five committee members – was affiliated with Women's Studies somehow. They were either a joint appointment, an affiliate, a graduate instructor, the former Director, or, as with my advisor Dr. Nancy Naples, the new Director.

It's no surprise that my defense should be witnessed by a roomful of academic feminists; I've been involved in Women's Studies literally my entire adult life, since finding Marita McComiskey (then a graduate student herself!) back in...well, Marita was kind enough to remind me recently it's been a twenty year journey for us. Since then, I've brought Women's Studies in some guise or other to middle school students in Connecticut and high school students on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota; to young men in the state juvenile detention system and adolescents in the Department of Children and Families; to Southern Connecticut State University, where I completed my Master's degree in Women's Studies in time to serve as interim Director of the Women's Studies Program there; and back to UConn, where I have been an administrator, adjunct, graduate student, and graduate instructor in Women's Studies over the last six years or so. But it's not really my commitment to Women's Studies that brought all those people to my dissertation defense. It's the commitment of the Women's Studies Program to building community and fostering genuine intellectual growth.

That commitment began a long time ago at UConn, with amazing women like Dr. Joan Joffe Hall (whom I was also lucky enough to find...twenty years ago), Dr. Irene Brown (again – lucky), Dr. Pat Carter (yup), and Dr. Susan Porter Benson (missed her by that much. I did get a chance to work briefly with Dr. Myra Marx Ferree, though I had no idea at the time how great an opportunity that was). It continues today through the hard work and dedication of scholar feminists such as Dr. Anne D'Alleva, Dr. Margaret Breen, and Dr. Nancy Naples, and feminist activists such as our administrative assistant Coleen Spurlock and our Program Assistant Kate Hurley-Dizigan – and, of course, all our fabulous undergraduate and graduate students.

I'm excited to continue the work begun and continued by my foremothers (also known as the "fairy Godmothers") here at UConn, to try on a new feminist hat as Assistant Professor in Residence for the Women's, Genders, and Sexualities Studies Program. I'm grateful for those who have made this possible, stretching back to Dr. Hall and forward to new students I'll meet for the first time this fall. Marita McComiskey is fond of saying that a Women's Studies education is an education for life. For me, this has been literally true, as it has not only informed my professional trajectory, but my personal one, as well. For twenty years now, anyone who introduces me to someone new begins by saying, "Barb's in Women's Studies." I will always be introduced in this way, because it will always be true, no matter where I am professionally. I am in Women's Studies.

Undergraduate and Graduate News

At the Storrs campus in 2010 – 2011, twenty-four students majored in Women's Studies (fourteen of these students were double majors) and sixty-five students were enrolled as Women's Studies minors. A total of eight majors and thirty-seven minors graduated this past year. Twenty students are currently enrolled in the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate (WSGC), five of whom completed the requirements in 2010-2011.

Additionally, during the 2010-2011 academic year, Women's Studies - Storrs courses enrolled a total of 2,010 students on both the undergraduate and graduate level. Of that number, 1,350 were enrolled in Gen Ed classes; 23 were enrolled in W courses, and; 10 of them were enrolled in graduate classes.

2010-2011 WS Faculty and Staff

In 2010 - 2011, Women's Studies had outstanding faculty and graduate assistant teaching our students here at UConn – Storrs, as well as a top notch staff of student workers. We'd like to extend our sincerest appreciation to these individuals who contributed so fully to the advancement of Women's Studies.

Women's Studies faculty:

Alexis Boylan, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women's Studies & Art and Art History
Margaret Breen, Professor, Women's Studies & English
Anne D'Alleva, Associate Professor, Women's Studies & Art and Art History
Manisha Desai, Associate Professor, Women's Studies & Sociology, WS Director until January 2011
Michael Gill, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women's Studies
Marita McComiskey, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women's Studies
Nancy A. Naples, Professor, Women's Studies & Sociology, WS Director beginning January 2011
Angelique V. Nixon, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women's Studies
Heather M. Turcotte, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies & Political Science

Women's Studies Affiliate Core and Affiliate Faculty

Mary Bernstein, Professor, Sociology
Susan Divietro, Adjunct Lecturer, Anthropology
Francoise Dussart, Professor, Anthropology & Women's Studies
Jocelyn Linnekin, Professor, Anthropology
Catherine Page, History Graduate Instructor, ABD-History
Venida Rodman Jenkins, Violence Against Women Prevention Program Coordinator, Women's Center
Sylvia Schafer, Associate Professor, History
Doreen Simons, Lecturer, Linguistics & American Sign Language
Narcisse Tiky, Assistant Professor in Residence, Political Science

Women's Studies Graduate Instructors

Shweta Majumdar Adur (Sociology)
Maya Ahuja (Fine Arts)
Julie Anderson (German)
Ute Bettray (German)
Mary Burke (Sociology)
Barbara Gurr (Sociology)
Jamie Huff (Political Science)
Vanessa Lovelace (Political Science)
Nikki McGary (Sociology)
Albina Mmao (Anthropology)
Latisha Nielsen (Sociology)
Theresa Pilz (Fine Arts)
Amber West (English)

Women's Studies Adjunct Instructors

Molly Ferguson (Ph.D. English)
Geeta Pfau (Ph.D. Medical Anthropology & Health Education)
Deric Shannon (Ph.D. Sociology)

Women's Studies Staff

Coleen Spurlock, Administrative Assistant
Kate Hurley-Dizigan, Program Coordinator
Ann Matthewson, Administrative Specialist, July 2010 - December 2010

Women's Studies Student Staff

Jazmine B., Kyra B., Marissa D., Katherine H., Nina H., Katie K.



**WS Student Staff members
Marissa D. (l) and Katie K. (r).**

Expanding the Invaluable Internship Experience By Dr. Marita McComiskey



2011 Cape Town Study Abroad students

Combining Study Abroad Experiences with Coursework and Internships

Having coordinated and directed the Women's Studies Internship Program for the past 20 years, I am well aware of how beneficial internships are in empowering students to begin to integrate their academic knowledge with personal and professional experience. Serving as resident director and faculty advisor for the Cape Town Study Abroad Internship Program the last 4 spring semesters has surely furthered that appreciation as I have witnessed amazing life-altering experiences unfold for each of the 75 students with whom I've had the privilege to work.

This particular study abroad program was designed to facilitate greater understanding of South Africa's troubled past while contributing to its vibrant hope for the future through combining three-day a week internships with relevant coursework. Through the perceptive planning of our Cape Town coordinator, students from a wide variety of majors have interned at placements specifically selected to best fit their major, their explicit interests, and their potential career goals. While living and working in one of most beautiful settings in the world students had the opportunity to study the multiple concerns facing South Africa as it strives to become one of the world's most progressive democracies.

Course Work

Taking two classes with native Capetonians has enabled students to get to know and work with folks who not only know the history of the country but also continue to play a part in creating the positive changes of the present. Their History and Politics of South Africa course inspired them to place what they were seeing, hearing, and experiencing within the broader historical and contemporary social context. Their course on Research Methodology on Non-profits assisted each student in better understanding the particular organization in which she or he interned by looking not only at the vision, mission statement, strategic plan, and annual reports, but also at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and potential threats faced at their individual placement site. Cognizant of the enormous amount of learning that takes place beyond the classroom I designed WS 3998 to expand, not compete with, those educational opportunities. Therefore their course on The Comparative Study of Race, Class, Genders, and Sexualities was structured to encourage students to connect issues they confronted in South Africa with issues they may or may not have been aware of in the U.S.

Expanding upon their academic and experiential learning students also had participated in a Human Rights Training Weekend with other young adults from South Africa and various other African countries. Working in teams they learned incredible lessons about such things as universal human rights; civil rights, challenges faced by asylum seekers/refugees, and the complexities involved when attempting to make decisions with individuals from various backgrounds and perspectives. Through such cohesive fusion of their academic, personal, and professional experiences students not only learned much about themselves but also continued to broaden their understanding of what it means to be a consciously engaged global citizen.

Beyond the Classroom

Beginning with orientation week, students got to truly know the area in which they would be living and working. Combining cultural and historical activities they: visited Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was held as a political prisoner; participated in the Transcending History Tour of the Slave Lodge followed by a walk to the auction block in the center of Cape Town where slaves had been bought and sold; and listened to an educational lecture at the District 6 Museum and then visited several of the places that had been declared "white only" areas under apartheid. Such immediate engagement provided a valuable perspective to what they would be learning in the months ahead.

Our weeklong "semester break" excursion in March took us to Johannesburg where we were able to visit: the Apartheid Museum; the Hector Pieterse Memorial; the former home of Nelson Mandela; the site of the Sharpeville Massacre; Freedom Square; the new Constitutional Court; and many other historically significant places. And since many believe no trip to South Africa would be complete without seeing some of the "big five" for which the country is famous, we concluded our excursion with a trip to Kruger National Park where all enjoyed a sunrise game drive, and many chose to participate in an afternoon "safari walk."

Additional Information

There is no way to put into a few paragraphs what this Cape Town experience has meant the 24 co-educators in the 2011 program. However, for anyone who would like to read more about the students, their insights and experiences, as well as see some amazing pictures, I invite you to check out their "UConn to Cape Town 2011 Blog" that students created as part of their class assignment, <http://cptadventures2011.blogspot.com/>.



Dr. Marita McComiskey at the Cape of Good Hope

2010 – 2011 Women’s Studies Faculty and Graduate Student Accomplishments

In 2010 – 2011, the Women’s Studies faculty and graduate students proved, again, how much talent and brilliance we have in our program. Although we cannot list everything this incredible collection of individuals have done, we would like to share some of their highlights and accomplishments from this year.

WS FACULTY

Alexis Boylan

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- (editor and author of introduction), Thomas Kinkade: The Artist in the Mall, Duke University Press, 2011.

Papers (presented, published)

- Association of Historians of American Art Symposium, Brooklyn, NY, “‘The Girl of Today’: Beauty, Nationalism, and the Role of the Artist,” October 8, 2010
- Southeastern College Art Conference, Richmond, VA, “‘You’ve Got the Look:’ Publicity Photographs, Portraiture, and the Ashcan Circle,” October 21, 2010
- Feminist Art History Conference, American University, Washington D.C., “The Curious Case of the Two Mrs. Sloans,” November 6, 2010
- UConn Art and Architecture Department, “Thomas Kinkade, A Reconsideration,” November 11, 2010
- UConn Women’s Studies Spotlight on Faculty Series, “The Two Mrs. Sloans: Archives, Marriage, and Feminism,” November 15, 2010
- UConn Humanities Institute 10th Anniversary Conference, “A Case Against Kitsch,” April 7, 2011

Margaret Breen

Academic/Professional milestones

- Awarded full tenure - now Professor of English and Women’s Studies

Awards

- CLAS Teaching Excellence Award, awarded Spr 10

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- Narratives of Queer Desire (second yr)

Book Reviews

- Review of “Coping with Religion and Gender” in *The European Legacy*, p. 786.

Journal Articles

- “Gender and Translation” in *The European Legacy* 16.2: 147-161.
- “Narratives of Queer Desire,” pov essay, www.glbtc.com, 10pp.

Anne D’Alleva

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- Arts of the Pacific Islands, Yale Univsity Press, 2010.

Manisha Desai

Book Chapters

- “From this Bridge Called my Back to this Bridge We Call Home: Identities and Social Movements.” Pp: 421-436 in Maragret Wetherell and Chandra Mohanty, edited, Handbook of Identities. London: Sage 2010.
- “The Possibilities and Perils of Scholar Activism and Activist Scholarship: Reflections on the Feminist Dialogues.” In Activist Transnographies: Ethnography and Activism within Networked Spaces of Transnational Encounter, Jeffrey S. Juris and Alex Kashnabish editors, Duke University Press. Forthcoming Fall 2011

Book Reviews

- *Liberalization’s Children: Gender, Youth, and Consumer Citizenship in Globalizing India*. By Ritty Lukose. Duke University Press. In *Gender and Society* 2011

Grants (active, approved, submitted)

- Fulbright Hays Faculty Research Abroad, US Dept of Education: \$121,000, May 2010

Papers (presented, published)

- “Transnational Movements and Collective Identities.” Presented at the International Sociological Association’s World Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden, July 2010
- “New Directions in Women’s Human Rights Movements in India and the US.” Presented at the International Sociological Association’s World Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden, July 2010.
- “Beyond Citizenship: A New Cartography and Ontology of Belonging.” Presented at the Birkbeck Institute, University of London’s Conference on Beyond Citizenship in London. June 2010

Technical Reports

- “Hope in Hard Times: Women’ Empowerment and Development.” Background Paper for the 20th anniversary of the Human Development Index for the United Nations Human Development Report Office <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2010/papers/>. November 2010

Michael Gill*Book Chapters*

- "Sex Education and Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities: Crisis Response, Sexual Diversity, and Pleasure" in *The Myth of the Normal Curve*. Curt Dudley-Marling and Alex Gurn (Ed). New York: Peter Lang. 2010: 171-186.

Book Reviews

- Review of *Staring: How We Look* by Rosemarie Garland Thomson *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* 4(1): 123-125.

Papers (presented, published)

- "The Specials meet the Lady Boys of Bangkok: Sexual and Gender Transgression in New Media Representations of Intellectual Disability." *Health, Embodiment, and Visual Culture: Engaging Publics and Pedagogies Conference*. McMaster University. Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. November 2010.
- "Disabled Women, Parenting, and Reproductive Intrusions: Recent Activist and State Intervention in Illinois." *National Women's Studies Association Conference*. Denver, Colorado. November 2010.

Marita McComiskey*Academic/Professional milestones*

- July 2010: Served as lecturer for student leaders from Western Africa for UConn's. Summer Institute on Social Entrepreneurship for Student Leaders (SUSI). Course: Women and Minorities in Entrepreneurship, Storrs
- August 5 - 15, 2010: Served on Planning Committee and as a facilitator and speaker for the 6th International Leadership Training Programme: A Global Intergenerational Forum
- May 1-May 8, 2011: Served on as a facilitator for the European Regional Forum (April 29 - May 8, 2011, Italy: *Empowering Young Leaders to be Agents of Positive Change*)
- May 11-May 21, 2011: Traveled to Accra & Shama, Ghana on fact finding mission to surface felt needs of community leaders with a delegation from the UNESCO Chair, Dr Amii Omara-Otunu

Nancy Naples*Awards*

- Excellence in Research Award for Social Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Connecticut, May 2011
- 2011 Distinguished Feminist Lecturer, Sociologists for Women in Society, Aug. 2010
- Honorable Mention, Latino Studies Section Book Award, Latin American Studies Association for *The Sexuality of Migration: Border Crossings and Mexican Immigrant Men* by Lionel Cantú (co-edited with Salvador Vidal-Ortiz), Oct 2010
- Best Book Award, Sexualities Section, American Sociological Association, co-winner, for *The Sexuality of Migration: Border Crossings and Mexican Immigrant Men* by Lionel Cantú (co-edited with Salvador Vidal-Ortiz) Aug 2010

Book Chapters

- "Women's Leadership, Social Capital and Social Change: Marilyn Gittell's Legacy for Activist Scholars." Pp. 265-279 in *Activist Scholar: Selected Works of Marilyn Gittell*, edited by Kathe Newman and Ross Gittell. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011.
- "Feminist Travels: A Historical and Textual Journey," *Transatlantic Conversations: Feminism as Traveling Theory*, edited by Kathy Davis and Mary Evans. London, UK: Ashgate, forthcoming 2011

Grants (active, approved, submitted)

- Family Policy, Social Movements, and the Law, NSF: \$162,017, March 2009

Journal Articles

- 2010 "Borderlands Studies and Border Theory: Linking Activism and Scholarship for Social Justice." *Sociological Compass*.

Papers (presented, published)

- 2011 - "Sexual Citizenship and Reproductive Rights in Transnational Context: Creating Dialogue Between Feminist and Queer Theories" (co-authored with Mary Bernstein). Paper presented at the Eastern Sociological Society for the Presidential Panel on "Transnationalism, Gender, and Sexuality." Philadelphia, PA, February.
- 2010 - "What's In a Name? Sexual Citizenship and the Symbolic Power of Marriage," Thematic Session on "Intimate Citizenship, American Sociological Association, Atlantic, GA, August 16.

Angelique Nixon*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Accepted tenure track Assistant Professor position in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Susquehanna University (Pennsylvania) beginning Fall 2011

Ingrid Semaan*Awards*

- Club Advisor of the Year, 4/21/2011

Papers (presented, published)

- 2011. "Sisterhood at Work in the Tower: Women's Center and Women's Studies." Presented at the Coalition of Women's Studies in CT/RI, April 1, 2011.

Heather Turcotte

Academic/Professional milestones

- New Director of the New England Women's Studies Association, June 2011- May 2013

Grants (active, approved, submitted)

- The Newhouse Center for the Humanities

Journal Articles

- "Contextualizing Petro-Sexual Violence." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 36 (3).
- "Politicizing Emotions: Historicizing Affective Exchange and Feminist Gatherings." Co-authored with Shirin Saeidi. *International Studies Review* 13 (4).

Papers (presented, published)

- "Imag(in)ing Capital's Monsters: Representation, Racial Violence, and A Feminist Geopolitics of Abolition," with Vanessa Lovelace, New England Woman's Studies Association Annual Conference
- "Configurations of Petro-Sexual Violence," New England Political Science Association Annual Conference
- "Critical Ethnic Studies, Feminist Studies, and the Politics of Knowledge: Crises, Conjunctures, Complicities," Critical Ethnic Studies Conference
- "The Affective Turn in IR?" Historicizing Labor, Feminist Knowledges, and the Politics of Emotions," with Shirin Saeidi, International Studies Association Annual Conference
- "The "Geopoliticality" of Justice: Feminisms, Transnationalisms and Petroleum," American Studies Association Annual Conference

CORE-AFFILIATE & AFFILIATE FACULTY

Veronica Makowsky, English

Academic/Professional milestones

- After ten years in administration, first as Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and then as Vice Provost, had a research leave from January 2010 until January 2011
- Became Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of English, January 2011

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- During research leave, began a book-length study of the works of Orange-Prize Winning novelist Valerie Martin which will be ready to send out to a publisher in Fall 2011.

Journal Articles

- Wrote an article on Jordan Baker in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* – to be published in the *F. Scott Fitzgerald Review*, September 2011.

Papers (presented, published)

- George Washington Cable at the Society for the Study of Southern Literature Conference
- Women in Higher Education at the She Roars Conference at Princeton University.

Anita Garey, Human Development & Family Studies

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- Edited with Karen V. Hansen, At the Heart of Work and Family: Engaging the Ideas of Arlie Hochschild, Rutgers University Press, 2011

Evelyn M. Simien, Political Science and the Institute for African American Studies

Books (authored, edited, etc)

- (editor) *Gender and Lynching: The Politics of Memory* (Palgrave, November 2011)

Journal Articles

- Mini-Symposium: Intersectionality Research, published in *Political Research Quarterly*, edited by Evelyn M. Simien and Ange-Marie Hancock March 2011

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Julie Anderson, MCL- German

Academic/Professional milestones

- Completed the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies
- Passed Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams (German)

Ute Bettray, MCL – German

Academic/Professional milestones

- Completed the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies

Barbara Gurr, Sociology

Academic/Professional milestones

- Successfully defended her dissertation, "The Ruling Relations of Reproductive Healthcare for Native American Women," and PhD awarded, July 2011
- Has accepted a position as Assistant Professor in Residence here in the Women's Studies Program, UConn, starting Fall 2011

Tara Harney-Mahajan, English*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Completed the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies

Awards:

- July 2010 - Graduate Research Excellence Award, English Department, University of Connecticut Fall 2010 - Aetna Graduate Critical Essay Contest 2nd Place Award June 2011 - Fulbright Program Irish Language Summer Award

Jamie Huff, Political Science*Awards*

- 2011 Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award for her paper "Die With It In You: Understanding Frankie Silver and the Image of Appalachia Through Critical Legal Theories"

Barret Katuna, Sociology*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Completed the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies

Nikki McGary, Sociology*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Passed Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams (Sociology)

Awards

- Recipient of the 2011 Women's Studies Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching Award

Lwendo Moonzwe, Sociology*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Completed the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies

Amber West, English*Academic/Professional milestones*

- Passed Ph.D Comprehensive Exams (English)

Awards

- 2011 Women's Studies Marita McComiskey Distinguished Graduate Career Award for Feminist Praxis
- 2011 Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award for her paper "Making A Troublemaker: *Being a true account of the critical misrepresentations of the avant-garde multi-disciplinary entrepreneurial artist, Charlotte Charke, and most particularly her contributions to the puppet theater*"

Fellowships

- Awarded Jacob K. Javits Fellowship for 2007-2012 from US Department of Education

Grants (active, approved, submitted)

- 2011 Community Workshop & Performance Grant, Brooklyn Arts Council/New York State Council for the Arts for Alphabet Arts' *Puppets & Poets* project.
- 2011 Performance Grant, Brooklyn Arts Council/Department of Cultural Affairs for Alphabet Arts' *City of Hamburgers* Brooklyn Public Library Tour.

Poetry Publications

- "Amorette," "Misery Index," *Umbrella Factory Magazine*, March 2011.
- "Happy Hour," "The dictionary begs us to call off the goddamn war," *45 Magazine* Winter 2011.

Presentations (Academic & Artistic)

- "Making A Troublemaker: Charlotte Charke's Proto-Feminist Puppetry." Invited panelist: Race, Gender & Ethnicity in Puppetry. *Puppetry & Post Dramatic Performance*: International Puppetry Conference. University of Connecticut, April 2011.
- *Long River Live!* Arts/Performance Series. Headlining poet. University of Connecticut, February 2011.
- Alphabet Arts presents *City of Hamburgers*. Adapted and produced *The Simpsons'* writer Mike Reiss' children's book, *City of Hamburgers*, as a puppet play that has toured to block parties, bookstores, dance studios, and public libraries. We had the honor of performing at the Dweck Center for Contemporary Culture in Brooklyn, NY in November 2011, and at the Connecticut Children's Book Fair at University of Connecticut in November, 2010.
- "The MFA/Ph.D. in Creative Writing: An Informational Panel." Invited panelist. University of Connecticut Creative Writing Program, September 2010.
- *Puppets Got Talent*, 3rd Annual Hawthorne Street Block Party, NYC, August 2010. With my artist collective, Alphabet Arts, created, performed and produced a multi-genre puppetry talent contest in which our youth and family audiences determined the winners.
- "Fourth Way: Young Women Taking Hybrid Poetics Beyond the Page." Organizer & presenter. *Contemporary Women's Writing: New Texts, Approaches & Technologies*: Third Biennial International Conference of the Contemporary Women's Writing Network, San Diego, CA, July 2010.

2011 Undergraduate & Graduate Student Awards & Recipients

Undergraduate Awards:

The Chase Going Woodhouse Prize is named in honor of former Congresswoman and Director of the Women's Service Bureau, [Chase Going Woodhouse](#). An activist and leader among the first generation of post-suffrage women in Connecticut, Chase Going Woodhouse provided an example of commitment to women's interests and to realizing feminist goals in practical politics. The prize is awarded to an undergraduate for an academic project that focuses on feminist concerns. This year **Alicia Waring** (minor), **Ryan O'Connor** (major), **Tess Koenigsmark** (major), and **Marissa Dubecky** (minor) received the award jointly for a year-long research project examining access to and use of contraceptives by UConn students. "Our research project studied contraceptive awareness, use, and accessibility on the University of Connecticut campus. We were interested in finding out how informed students were regarding contraceptives and if they had any difficulty accessing contraceptives at UConn. We carried out our project from a feminist perspective. We feel that access to contraceptive options is a necessity for a healthy student body, and is especially important to female students. Our project made a number of interesting discoveries. For instance, while most students felt that all parties in a sexual encounter should share responsibility for contraceptives, actual responsibility for contraceptives was more likely to fall on women. In addition, men were less knowledgeable than women about hormonal contraceptives. There was also a strict gender division in assumed contraceptive responsibility. Generally speaking, men were expected to provide condoms and women were expected to be on the birth control pill. Our study found that UConn does make considerable efforts to educate students about their sexual health and provide access to contraceptives. The positive impact of the Health Education Office in South was evident throughout our research. One area that UConn could improve on is making students more aware of the presence of the Women's Clinic."

The Gladys Tantaquidgeon Award is named in honor of the Mohegan Indian medicine woman, anthropologist and community educator, [Gladys Tantaquidgeon](#), who featured original scholarship on Eastern Native American culture through the Tantaquidgeon Indian Museum. In her leadership role and scholarly research she has highlighted the significance of Native American women's culture. The award is presented to an undergraduate student who's academic and/or community work reflects a dedication to the understanding and advancement of women of color in the U.S. This year's recipient was **Alicia Waring** (minor), who was also chosen as one of three Outstanding Women Graduates in CLAS. Alicia graduated this year with a major in Psychology and a minor in Women's Studies, earning a 3.7 GPA. Her academic accomplishments have been recognized by her induction into Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Lambda, and the Tau Sigma National Honor Societies. Alicia's accomplishments include completing her undergraduate degree as a single mother and a veteran who has contributed to the well being of women veterans at UConn. She founded and facilitated a Women Veterans Group to raise awareness of women veterans' needs by creating agendas and conducting monthly meetings. She has also created and disseminated a survey to assess veteran engagement in University activities. Her military service includes three and a half years as a Dental Journeyman with an Honorable Discharge. Her leadership experiences have been recognized by the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award.

The Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein Scholarship was endowed by George Dickstein in memory of his wife, Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein. This scholarship is awarded to a Women's Studies major or minor who demonstrate academic achievement and financial need. This year two students received the award: **Marissa Dubecky** (minor) and **Nkemdilim Anako** (minor).

In 2012, **The Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship Award** will be awarded for the first time. This scholarship has been established to honor Kristie Ann Wood, the first UConn student to major in Women's Studies (as an Individualized Major). The scholarship fund was set up by her good friend Patti Parlette, Administrative Coordinator in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. Ms. Wood's parents have pledged \$10,000 a year for 5 years. Please see page 2 of this newsletter for an article about Kristie Ann and this scholarship.

The Feminist Art Award was established to recognize feminist visual, music, poetry, fiction, or film created by an undergraduate. This award was established to honor the wonderful outburst of feminist arts activity at UConn. This award was not given this year.

Graduate Student Awards

The Excellence in Graduate Teaching in Women's Studies Award recognizes excellence in teaching by graduate students in the Women's Studies Program. It is awarded annually to a graduate student who exemplifies feminist pedagogy in the classroom and brings a passion and commitment to women's issues to teaching. This year's recipient, **Nikki McGary** (PhD candidate Sociology, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010), has taught in Women's Studies for several years. *Nikki* has excelled in the classroom, and her teaching evaluations are among the highest in the program.

Graduate Awards, Continued

The Marita McComiskey Distinguished Graduate Career Award for Feminist Praxis is named for former Women's Studies director and long time faculty member, Marita McComiskey. This award honors contributions by a current Women's Studies graduate student who, over the course of their graduate career, has provided distinguished service to the Women's Studies Program and modeled feminist praxis in their career as a graduate student. The recipient of this award demonstrates the value of feminist praxis through their teaching, mentoring, scholarship, and community building. The award recognizes the recipient's ongoing and multi-year commitment to feminist praxis as exemplified in the student's contributions to all aspects of Women's Studies and feminist praxis. This year's recipient, **Amber West** (PhD candidate English, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010), has been a key participant in the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate Program as an outstanding student in our classes, instructor, and member of the WS conference planning committee. Her contributions include innovations in teaching, organizing sessions, and contributing her passion to strengthen the Women's Studies program in many other ways. She has taught for WS since early in her graduate career several years ago and has excelled in the classroom.

The Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award is named for former director of Women's Studies and long time faculty member, Susan Porter Benson. This award recognizes cutting edge research in the field of feminist studies that takes an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach and provides an innovative articulation of theory and practice. This year Women's Studies had an exceptional pool of submissions and decided to give the award to two scholars, **Jamie Huff** and **Amber West**. The paper submitted by **Jamie Huff** (PhD candidate Political Science, WS Graduate Certificate - May 2010), *Die With It In You: Understanding Frankie Silver and the Image of Appalachia Through Critical Legal Theories*, is an interdisciplinary reading of a famous and folkloric murder case, weaving together multiple disciplinary and interdisciplinary sites in an attempt to understand legal regulation in Appalachia through the life and trial of Frankie Silver. The paper submitted by **Amber West** (PhD candidate English, WS Graduate Certificate – May 2010), *Making a Troublemaker: Charlotte Charke's Proto-Feminist Puppetry*, is an exploration of the critical misrepresentations of the avant-garde multi-disciplinary entrepreneurial artist, Charlotte Charke, and most particularly her contributions to the puppet theater.

Why Should You Consider Making a Donation To the Women's Studies Program?

The Women's Studies Program has several ways in which we use the funds generously donated by our supporters. Most importantly are our annual awards. All graduate and undergraduate Women's Studies students are eligible to be nominated for these prizes. The nominations are reviewed by the Awards committee which offers recommendations to the Core Faculty, who select the best nominee(s) for the prizes. The awards are presented to students at the Graduation Celebration in May. The undergraduate awards carry with them financial prizes; the graduate awards, instituted in 2009, do not yet have financial prizes associated with them, although we do hope to add some in the future.

The Women's Studies Annual Awards are supported by funds in accounts at the University of Connecticut Foundation. These accounts are privately funded by donations from alumni, faculty and other friends of the Women's Studies Program. Additionally, we can use the donated funding for other things, such as paying for students to attend regional or national conferences, purchase equipment or videos for the program, and even pay for publications like this newsletter.

If you would like to donate, please do so on-line (<http://www.foundation.uconn.edu/>) or complete the form on the next page and return it to the University of Connecticut Foundation at the address provided. The University of Connecticut Foundation, Inc. is a tax-exempt corporation dedicated exclusively to benefit the University.

To donate in support of the Chase Going Woodhouse Prize, the Gladys Tantaquidgeon Award and the Feminist Art Award, the **Women's Studies Prize Fund, #21592**, is the account to direct your donation to. This is also the account from which we would draw graduate student prizes in the future. Donations to the newly established **Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship in Women's Studies** should be directed to account **#31237**. WS also has a general account, the **Women's Studies Fund, #20446**, from which WS can draw funding to carry out non-awards activities such as funding students to attend national conferences. The Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein Scholarship is funded by a generous endowment from the Brown-Dickstein family to which other donations are not possible.



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Women's Studies Program in 2010 - 2011!

We'd like to say a special thank you to Dr. Lisa D. Brush, a former student who is always so generous to the Women's Studies Program. Lisa's long-time, monthly contributions are greatly appreciated.



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The Women's Studies Program thanks you for your generosity!