Gender Spectrum: News from the
Women, Gender, and
Sexuality Studies Department

A Word from Our Chair

The continuing discussions of sexual harassment and assault in the past year have led to increased reporting, as more people understand that the behaviors they experience are assaults on their dignity, their ability to earn a living, and their bodies. That increased awareness is evident in the growth in reporting on sexual assault and harassment from Oct 2017-August 2018 (up over 30%, according to the Women’s Media Center report)
http://www.womensmediacenter.com/reports/media-and-metoo

The Kavanaugh hearing was a brutal reminder of how much work we still have to do. In my conversations with women (and men) from all over the U.S. in the past few weeks, two perspectives emerged. One was common among young people under 40, particularly. The other was more common among people older than 45 or 50. The first suggested to me that young people are coming to terms with the extent to which the burden of educating about and responding to sexual assault has fallen on them in their work with their peers. On campus students are becoming still more active around the issue. With respect to Title IX, a group called Title Mine addresses weaknesses in the Title IX process at Washington University. Another group has conducted a survey among sorority women focused on sexual assault in fraternities—the problem that does not seem to die—and found a startling frequency of assault in these all-male environments, where sexual conquest seems a mark of power and hyper or toxic masculinity.
(http://www.studlife.com/news/2018/10/29/wpa-survey-finds-widespread-sexual-violence-across-wu-fraternities/). And in WGSS, for example, our students are continuing their commitment to research on sexual assault. It is an immediate problem for them and their friends and they want to understand better how the experience of assault affects survivors in order to make even stronger arguments for intervention. In Feminist Research Methodologies alone, one graduate student is working on a dissertation on intimate partner violence in Indigenous communities. Three undergraduates are working on sexual assault projects: one on secondary trauma among volunteers and professionals; another on trauma-informed design for spaces of reporting treating assault survivors; and another on representation of violence against trans people in popular media as opposed to research on violence against trans in scholarly literature, and the costs to the trans population of ignorance and misrepresentation.

Among the older group of people with whom I have talked, the Kavanaugh
hearing was both enormously frustrating and deeply discouraging. We saw how, yet again, men with power were able to avoid accountability for sexually assaulting and harassing their fellow human beings and were then protected and championed by powerful men, while the survivors of his attacks were vilified, disbelieved, and, in the end ignored. One of the most difficult aspects of this case was the way other women defended Mr. Kavanaugh and dismissed his accusers. That response was anathema for our students and all-too-recognizable to the older ones among us. After all, we have had a known harasser on the Supreme Court for nearly 30 years, a known sexual assaulter in the Office of the Presidency, and who knows how many in other in positions of power in every institution and occupation in the U.S. Too many continue to be protected from accountability.

I was asked recently about the core values of the WGSS department. I see our core values as manifested in the curriculum, pedagogy, and research in

WGSS and in the faculty research in WGSS. Our courses examine how power operates to the advantage of some and not others, for example. Our work rests on accountability—to locate, critically examine, and expose the misuse and abuse of power; the appropriation and vilification of others for economic, political, social, and cultural ends; and discrimination against or exclusion of groups based on their racial, gender, sexual, social class, religious, and ethnic positions in our national, political, cultural, and social life. We use critical tools in our research to expose both the operation of power and the exercise of resistance. We explore how operation and resistance occur to shape our institutions and cultural productions to create and perpetuate inequality in the US and in other parts of the world. As our students are finding, it requires an unending and deep commitment to further our ability to resist what Tarana Burke calls "the unchecked accumulation of power."

**QUEERING THE TRANSNATIONAL CONVERSATION**

**READING GROUP**

WGSS was approved for a Humanities Center grant to continue the Queering the Transnational Conversation Reading Group. We have three new members this fall, and have met twice so far. Our first reading was Audra Simpson’s *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Boarder of Settler States*. Simpson explores, through ethnography, participant observation, and archival work, issues of political refusal, membership, migration, gender, and family formation in relation to questions of citizenship and belonging. She challenges historically based assumptions regarding Mohawk identity and culture among ethnographers, state officials, and purveyors of popular culture about Native peoples. We found enlightening her exploration of the relationship between the political and the body, for example in the use of blood measures to determine either citizenship or membership, and the ways she examines belonging in the contexts of these issues and of gender. We discussed at length her use of "refusal" and her distinction between refusal and resistance in how these people push against the law. And we came better to understand the meaning of settler colonialism, which includes the permanent establishment of non-Native people on land inhabited by indigenous peoples and structural forms of long term occupation, including the use of extractive labor to build, in ways that disenfranchise indigenous peoples. Simpson made clear to us the importance of place in understanding how settlers then construct themselves as native (as in "real" Americans or Canadians) in order to justify settler states' permanent dispossession of indigenous populations. She points to forms of "ideological colonialism," for example settlers describing the places they encounter as "empty land," despite the abundance of evidence that the land is already inhabited. Our second reading was Scott Morgensen's *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*. We found that Morgensen calls for critical examination of the reductive terms used by anthropologists and others to describe queer and non-binary indigenous people and their cultural roles. He argues that the biopolitics of settler colonialism involve eliminating Native nations and sovereignty because Native sovereignty disturbs the finiteness of settler colonialism. As important, he suggests that non-Native queer people and others can’t simply intellectualize their relationship and resistance to settler colonialism, but need to denaturalize settler colonialism and "act in relationship to others in the struggle" (230) as a means of refusing their inheritance of the power settler colonialism confers on all non-Native white people. The remaining two sets of readings this fall include de la Hesa’s *Queering the Public Sphere in Brazil and Mexico* and, Shailja Patel's *Migritude* with Sylvia Wynter’s "Unsettling the Power of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human."
Cynthia Barounis (Lecturer, WGSS) published two articles: "Witches, Terrorists, and the Biopolitics of Camp" in GLQ and "Not the Usual Pattern": James Baldwin, Homosexuality, and the DSM" in Criticism. She also organized a panel at the National Women's Studies Association conference in November titled "Asexual Healing: Recovery and Embodiment Beyond the Human" and presented a paper there titled "Slowly Turning to Grit": Stone Butch Asexualities and Non-Human Intimacies."

Amy Eisen Cislo (Senior Lecturer, WGSS & Faculty Fellow, Institute for Public Health) celebrated the 10th anniversary of "Trans" Studies" with students enrolled in the fall 2018 class. Cislo first taught the course in 2008 and has since taught one or more sections of the class. Cislo continues to work on the Transgender Spectrum Conference, which was held at the University of Missouri, St. Louis, November 9 and 10. Feminist and Queer Youth Studies, a community-based service-learning class, worked with the following organizations: Transparent, Mathews-Dickey Boys and Girls Clubs, Girls in the Know, and Missouri Institute for Mental Health. Four girls in Cislo's girl scout troop earned the Silver Award this year for a project that encouraged students to discuss diversity in their schools by recognizing privilege and implicit bias. Many community members helped the girls with the project, including Washington University's Adrienne Davis, the Washington University Police, and alumna De Nichols.

Rebecca Copeland (Professor and Chair, East Asian Languages and Cultures, WGSS and Comparative Literature affiliate) celebrated the launch of Diva Nation: Female Icons from Japanese Cultural History (University of California Press) on September 6, 2018, with her co-editor Dr. Laura Miller, Eiichi Shibusawa-Seigo Arai Endowed Professor of Japanese Studies and Professor of History at the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Diva Nation explores the constructed nature of female iconity in Japan, asking how the diva disrupts or bolsters ideas about nationhood, morality, and aesthetics. Contributors critically reconsider the female icon in Japan, tracing how she has been offered up for both emulation and censure.


Mary Ann Dzuback's (Associate Professor and Chair, WGSS, Associate Professor, Education) essay "Women Economists in the Academy: Struggles and Strategies, 1900-1940" was recently published in Routledge Handbook of the History of Women's Economic Thought (2018).

Vanessa Fabbre (Assistant Professor, Brown School, WGSS Affiliate) recently published To Survive on This Shore: Photographs and Interviews with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Older Adults (Kehrer Verlag, 2018), which coincided with a show at Projects + Gallery in St. Louis, MO. Her "Transgender Ageing: Community Resistance and Well-Being in the Life Course", will be published in the forthcoming volume, Intersections of Ageing, Gender and Sexualities: Multidisciplinary International Perspectives (United Kingdom: Policy Press). She presented this fall at the Gerontological Society of America conference "The State of Theory in LGBTQ Aging: Implications for Gerontological Scholarship."

Andrea Friedman (Professor of History and WGSS) is continuing her work on the history of LGBTQ life in St. Louis. Her article (co-authored with Ian Darnell), "Queer History in the Divided City: A New Approach to Digital Mapping" was published in Notches: (re)marks on the history of sexuality.

Melanie Micir (Assistant Professor of English, WGSS Affiliate) co-authored an essay with Aarthi Vadde (Duke University) that came out in the September 2018 issue of Modernism/modernity. She headed the C21 STL podcast, which began in her Spring 2018 seminar, "Contemporary Fiction."

Angela Miller (Professor of Art History and Archaeology, WGSS Affiliate) is on sabbatical leave this Fall in New York City, as the J. Clawson Mills Fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She continues research on transatlantic gay artistic and literary networks in the years around World War II, centering on the essayist and cultural impresario Lincoln Kirstein in New York City.
Patricia Olynyk (Director, Graduate School of Art, Florence and Frank Bush Professor of Art, Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, WGSS Affiliate) is an invited guest editor on a special edition of PUBLIC Journal: Art/Culture/Ideas on interspecies communication and contributed an essay to the publication: Creature Comforts and the Ties that Bind. Her "Redesigning Humans: Art and the Technological Future" will appear in The Common Reader this fall. She is lecturing this fall at the Institute for Fine Art and Media Art, Department for Art & Science, University of Vienna, Austria, and her sculpture, Oculus, is on exhibit at Palazzo Michiel until mid-November in an ancillary exhibition of the Venice Architecture Biennale.

Akiko Tsuchiya’s (Professor of Spanish, WGSS affiliate) edited volume, Unsettling Colonialism: Gender and Race in the Global Nineteenth-century Hispanic World was accepted for publication by SUNY Press. Thanks to a Summer Faculty Research Grant, she spent a month in Barcelona conducting archival research for her new book project: Spanish Women of Letters in the Nineteenth-century Antislavery Movement: Transnational Networks and Exchanges.

Anika Walke (Assistant Professor of History, WGSS Affiliate) is co-recipient of a 2018 Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, which will support "The Holocaust Ghettos Project: Reintegrating Victims and Perpetrators through Places and Events." A three-year endeavor of the Holocaust Geographies Collaborative, the project will create a historical geographic information system (GIS) model of 1,400 Nazi-era Jewish ghettos. Anne Knowles, at the University of Maine, is project director; Walke and Paul Jaskot of Duke University serve as co-directors. She also published "Split Memory: The Geography of Holocaust Memory and Amnesia in Belarus," in Slavic Review focused on the long aftermath of the Nazi genocide in Belarus.

Rebecca Wanzo (Associate Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Associate Director, Center for Humanities, WGSS Affiliate) published "The Cosby Lament: Rape, Marital Alibis, and Black Iconicity" in differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies; "The Normative Broken: Melinda Gebbie, Feminist Comix, and Child Sexuality Temporalities" in American Literature; "Michelle LaVaught Robinson Obama" in ASAP Journal; and "The Racist Serena Cartoon Is Straight Out of 1910" for CNN.

Gerhild Williams (Barbara Schaps Thomas & David M. Thomas Professor of Humanities in Arts and Sciences, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Provost, WGSS Affiliate) edited Women – Books – Courts: Knowledge and Collecting Before 1800, with Volker Bauer, Elisabeth Harding, and Mara Wade, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2018), and published, "Varieties of Agency........ " in the same collection. She presented a paper titled "Crossing borders, bridging cultures: Speer’s Pseudo Simplicissimus on His Way from Breslau to Kairo and Back" at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, in Milwaukee on October 27, 2017.

Adia Harvey Wingfield (Professor of Sociology, WGSS Affiliate) won the American Sociological Association’s 2018 Public Understanding of Sociology Award, honoring those who have made exemplary contributions to advance the public understanding of sociology, sociological research, and scholarship among the general public.
Anwesha Kundu (English) won the Cornelison English Graduate Award (2018) for her essay entitled "Postcolonial Feelings: Gender, Nationhood and Nostalgic Labour". She will be presenting a paper, "I Remember Our Adventure": Alternate Timelines and the Women’s War Pastoral", at the SMLA 2018 this November.

Chelsey Carter (Anthropology) is attending the National Association of Independent School's 2018 People of Color Conference as a newly selected Board of Trustee with New City School here in St. Louis. She published a commentary in the Museum Anthropology journal entitled "Racist Monuments Are Killing Us". She was awarded a $500 travel award through the Society of Medical Anthropology and is presenting "More than analytic? Considering the intersections of race & class in the lived experiences of people with ALS" at the American Anthropological Association 2018 meeting.

Fran Dennstedt (Hispanic Cultures) organized a panel for the Latin American Studies Association Conference (LASA, May 2018) entitled "Queer Female Bodies in Mexican Cultural Production," where she presented the paper, "'Take Magic Mushrooms with Muxe Maravilha': temporalidades cuir a través de Guadalupe y Carmin Tropical." An article based on this topic will appear in the next issue of Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies. She also co-founded and is currently co-president of the Association of Gender Minority and Women Graduate Students (GeMWGS) at Washington University in St. Louis.

Emma Merrigan (Hispanic Studies) organized and chaired a conference panel on globalization and disability studies for the 2018 Latin American Studies Association conference in Barcelona. Within that panel, she presented work on assemblages of disability, race, gender, and sexuality in Monkey Hunting, a contemporary novel by Cuban-American author Cristina Garcia. She also co-founded and serves as treasurer for Washington University in St. Louis's Association of Gender Minority and Women Graduate Students (GeMWGS).

Rose Miyatsu's (English) "'Hundreds of People Like Me': A Search for a Mad Community in The Bell Jar" has been published in the collection Literatures of Madness: Disability Studies and Mental Health (2018), edited by Elizabeth Donaldson and published by Palgrave Macmillan. She is presenting "At Home They'd Heal Better": Deinstitutionalization in The Virgin Suicides and the Crisis of Suicide" at the American Studies Association Conference (ASA) as part of the panel "ASA Critical Disability Studies Caucus: Cripistemologies of Continuous Crisis: Cultural Etiologies and Exacerbations of Crisis States."

Adwoa Opong (History) was awarded the Center for the Humanities Graduate Student Fellowship for this Fall. She is also the chair of the History Graduate Student Association and is presenting a paper at the African Studies Association conference: "For the Welfare of Children: Juvenile Delinquency and the Regulation of Customary Marriages in Ghana, 1944-1963".

Dick Powis (Anthropology) is in Dakar, Senegal, conducting field research for his dissertation.

Laurel Taylor’s (Japanese) "I’m Telling the Truth, I Swear: Metafictional Steps in Tanizaki" won this year’s Percy Buchanan prize for best graduate student paper concerning Northeast Asia. She was awarded the prize at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs in October.

"Things might appear fluid if you are going the way things are flowing. Those who are not going the way things are flowing are experienced as obstructing the flow. We might need to be the cause of obstruction. We might need to get in the way if we are to go anywhere."

Sarah Ahmed, On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life
Faculty Spotlight: Cynthia Barounis, Lecturer
Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Cynthia Barounis has worked in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department since 2012, initially as a Post-Doctoral Fellow and currently as a lecturer whose courses address disability studies, queer theory, and masculinities. She received her Ph.D. in English, with a concentration in Gender and Women's Studies, at the University of Illinois at Chicago. During her graduate studies, she was able to work alongside well-known disability studies scholars David Mitchell and Lennard Davis, who was her main thesis advisor and with whom she continues to collaborate on various research projects. Her first book Vulnerable Constitutions, and the Remaking of American Manhood is forthcoming from Temple University Press in Spring 2019. In it, she explores how disability studies can offer challenging and new reading practices to queer theory, particularly in terms of masculinities and medicalizations of queerness in 20th century American culture. In her current project, tentatively-titled The Biopolitics of Camp, she develops this conversation even further by looking at disability through the camp aesthetic, traditionally examined through queer theory.

This latter book provides fresh and often counterintuitive links between disability studies and camp, as well as innovative readings of cultural artifacts through which Barounis thinks about affective responses to disability as a source of laughter and parody. Her objects of study include popular culture representations such as Crazy Ex-Girlfriend, Enlightened, and the graphic comic series Hothead Paisan: Homicidal Lesbian Terrorist. Barounis’ work is interdisciplinary and consistently maintains a feminist thrust, for example in highlighting how women’s experiences of anger and feminist humorlessness seem “often at odds with the seeming lightness of camp sensibility,” but at the same time may be critically and productively reincorporated into that aesthetic and affective mode. Departing from Esther Newton’s formulation of camp as a way of laughing instead of crying, Barounis asks important questions of camp and disability: “What happens when you can't laugh? What happens when that kind of psychological endurance isn't possible?” The latter question becomes particularly crucial to interrogate conceptions of psychiatric disability and to explore feelings for which camp aesthetics do not always make space.

In addition to her individual investigation, Barounis also collaborates with other scholars in spaces such as the NWSA’s Asexualities Studies Interest Group, for which she currently serves as Co-Chair. Furthermore, she often uses her connections in the broad field of disability studies to bring important scholars to campus. In 2016 she and colleague Claire McKinney organized a roundtable on campus, with Mel Chen and Robert McRuer as speakers and Julie Elman as a respondent. Her research greatly influences her pedagogy, and one of her favorite courses to teach is Feminist and Queer Disability Studies, a seminar in which students often make their first encounters with disability as a category of critical analysis.

When she is not teaching, researching, or writing, Barounis enjoys exploring St. Louis’ abundant nearby hiking spots with her partner. Though she misses living near a body of water, as she did in Chicago, she appreciates being closer to other outdoor spaces. She also notes that she enjoys teaching at WashU and has an excellent community of colleagues and students.
The Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
"Decentering the West" Lecture Series and
the Gender, Sexuality & Health Initiative
Present

"Where Did Trump Come From? Reproductive Politics, Whiteness, and Neoliberalism"

Laura Briggs, PhD
Chair and Professor in the Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
University of Massachusetts Amherst

October 2, 2018  4 PM
McMillan Café

For many inside and outside the United States, the election of Donald J. Trump seemed to come out of nowhere—what happened to the nice folks that elected Barack Obama? This talk argues the opposite: Trump is not exceptional, but the normal face of the Republican Party over the past 40 years (albeit slightly more blunt). It explores the ways that both white supremacy and neoliberalism have been enacted through attacks on the reproduction and family forms particularly of women of color—from welfare "reform" that eliminated support for single mothers (by portraying those receiving government benefits as Black and Latinx) to crackdowns on immigrants that have particularly targeted household workers to a home-loan debacle that crashed the global economy while blaming (surprise!) Black and Latinx single mothers, not banks or lenders. Meanwhile, the pain of the neoliberal austerity policies that these events authorized was centered on households, by turning an ever-widening series of former government functions into the "private" labor of households, all the while enacting a strong-armed government program of limiting access to birth control and abortion.

Co-Sponsored by the Departments of History and Political Science and the American Culture Studies Program
Laura Briggs, chair and professor in the Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, was the speaker for this fall’s installment of the "Decentering the West Lecture Series." She shared a prescient lecture with a crowded room of faculty and students, entitled "Where Did Trump Come From? Reproductive Politics, Whiteness, and Neoliberalism." In this lecture, Briggs drew on arguments in her book *How all Politics Became Reproductive Politics: From Welfare Reform to Foreclosure to Trump* (2017).

She works against the idea that current political trends have come out of nowhere, arguing rather that they originate in Reagan-era economic policies as well as the foreclosure crisis of 2008. In her talk, Briggs argued that by persuading some people who think of themselves as white to regard the families of people of color as morally inferior and disposable, U.S. Republicans and Democrats alike enacted neoliberal policies that benefited Wall Street and the 1% in all three of these historical moments. She highlights the hypocrisy of this discourse; as it paints the families of people of color, immigrants, and refugees as deviant, those benefiting from the wealth disparity, the elite upper class, exploit their reproductive labor.

The family, particularly the reproductive labor that occurs in and around it, is central to understanding this political discourse that reappears in these various moments in U.S. history. Briggs discusses how around the time of Reagan’s presidency, care work, the feminine labor of caring for children and the elderly, was becoming privatized and outsourced to minority people, particularly women. In the Republican effort to make federal government smaller, policies were pushing more responsibilities on the family, while cutting funding for programs that helped the lower classes. Unable to meet these new responsibilities, lower class families, both white and black, were pushed into welfare. But, rather than creating a bond across race, the political discourse around people of color and immigrants convinced white families, who were in reality the largest recipients of welfare at the time, that these minority families, stereotyped in the image of the welfare queen, were the real cause of the country’s financial problems. Even as these black and immigrant workers were being exploited for their reproductive labor, they were being touted as "dependent" on the government.

These minority families were made further "dependent" during the 2008 foreclosure crisis, as the largest targets of the predatory loans that caused the crisis. Briggs argues that, just as during welfare reform, these vulnerable groups were made into political targets to bolster right-wing agendas. She features the figure of Rick Santelli as a leading voice in this effort. As one of the founders of Tea Party rhetoric, Santelli’s rant on CNBC after the crisis struck emphasized the narrative that the government, by forgiving these predatory loans, was perpetuating the cycle of "dependence." Briggs explored this narrative on reproductive labor in the context of the current presidential administration, with examples such as Vice-President Pence’s agenda to control women’s reproductive health. Briggs ended her argument on a more hopeful note: that even though these discourses are being repeated in the Trump administration, movements like Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Me Too show the potential to subvert this history of using the most vulnerable families as scapegoats for national problems. Why? Because Me Too and BLM both examine institutional and structural patterns of inequality and demand that we attend to them.
On October 2, a dozen graduate students and faculty from departments including English, History, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies came together with Laura Briggs to discuss the precedents in American history for the Trump administration’s current policy of separating children from their parents at the border. The paper we read and discussed at the Workshop/Colloquium was entitled “Understanding the Spectacle of Separating Children at the Border: A History.” Briggs explained that this draft of the article came from testimony the Washington State Attorney General’s Office asked her to give in opposition to the Trump policy. We had a lively discussion about how the theatrical spectacle of children’s separation from their families has been used to different ends throughout American history. Briggs argues that abolitionists used slave owners’ separation of children from their families to show the inhumanity of slavery before the Civil War. In the 1870s the federal government used images of Native American children’s “civilization” through education, which required these children to leave their families for months at a time, to gain public support for Indian boarding schools. Briggs uses these two moments to show the complicated, mixed quality of the spectacle surrounding contemporary separation of migrant children from parents seeking refugee status in the United States.
WGSS Course Offerings

**Fall 2018**

L77 100B Intro to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

L77 205 Intro to Queer Studies

L77 3133 Service Learning: Feminist and Queer Youth Studies

L77 3173 Service Learning: Documenting the Queer Past in St. Louis

L77 3203 Bodies Out of Bounds: Feminist and Queer Disability Studies

L77 3255 Black Masculinities: From Slavery to Hip-Hop Dreams

L77 337 Women’s Literature: Before Thelma and Louise: American Women’s Literature Stories

L77 343 Understanding the Evidence: Provocative Topics of Contemporary Women’s Health and Reproduction

L77 3561 Law, Gender, and Justice

L77 360 Trans Studies

L77 406 Queering Theory: The New Ways of Seeing and Reading

L77 417W Feminist Research Methodologies

L77 425A Video Games, Gender, and Sexuality

L77 439 The Arab and Muslim Americans: Feminist Perspectives

L77 499 Honors Thesis: Research and Writing

**Spring 2019**

L77 100B Intro to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

L77 3014 Queering Citizenship

L77 3031 Queer Theory

L77 3041 Making Sex and Gender: Understanding the History of the Body

L77 3171 Service Learning: Women in Prison

L77 3221 Girls’ Media and Popular Culture

L77 323A Sex Trafficking

L77 3561 Law, Gender, and Justice

L77 361 Women and Social Movements: Gender and Sexuality in US Social Movements

L77 364 Gender, War, and Migration

L77 383 Spectacular Blackness: Race, Gender, and Visual Culture

L77 393 Gender Violence

L77 3942 Service Learning: Projects in Domestic Violence

L77 419 Feminist Literary and Cultural Theory

L77 429 Feminist Political Theory

L77 475 Reformers and Radicals: Feminist Thinking through History

L77 502 Critical Sexuality Studies
Ariel Kravitz is a double major in WGSS and Organization and Strategic Management in the Olin Business School. After graduation in Spring 2019, she will begin work as a business analyst for Capital One as the first step in her product management career.

How has your coursework in WGSS influenced your involvement in leadership roles on campus?

My coursework in WGSS has enabled me to be an effective leader during my time at WashU. As Director of OWN IT: Women’s Leadership Summit, I implemented ways to make the conference more intersectional and accessible to all sorts of women. As Vice President of Internal Operations for Women’s Panhellenic Association, I’ve used my education in gender inequality to understand how the institutional administration supports an unequal power distribution. Being a WGSS major has allowed me to see the world in a different way. I see how individuals interact with each other and how individuals interact with groups and institutions and I understand how gender, sexuality, race, etc. characterize those interactions. My WGSS education has challenged me to be a more aware leader, conscious of how I both complicate and comply with existing gendered social norms.

What organizations have you been involved in that have proven the most beneficial in making changes at WashU?

As the Vice President of Internal Operations for Women’s Panhellenic Association, I’ve been a vocal advocate for change in Greek Life. In my tenure, we’ve advocated for policies to minimize the power imbalance between fraternities and sororities, petitioned for a Panhellenic living and recreation space, and conducted an independent climate survey regarding sexual assault and satisfaction with Greek Life. Along with other members on my council, I’ve listened to the needs of sorority women and use those stories and voices to advocate for the needs of sorority women as a whole. We’re just finishing the phase of understanding and sharing the results of the survey, and we’re all very excited to begin our actionable response. Our council has never undertaken a survey like this before and we hope it’s going to be a useful tool to justify new policies that rectify the way our administration supports gender inequality and sexual assault in Greek Life.

How do you think your advocacy and leadership at WashU will impact your future career?

The two most important things I learned from advocacy at Washington University are to: 1) get angry and 2) get loud. While I don't think these are necessarily the most important aspects of advocacy, they were the hardest for me to achieve. It took me a while to realize that it was okay to have my opinions and even longer to figure out how to vocalize those opinions. Now that I'm in my senior year, I'm not afraid to openly challenge administration when I know they're doing a disservice to the people they're meant to serve. It makes me angry to see that the things we were demanding four years ago are still the things we demand today. I've learned how to get angry about injustice rather than complacent, and I know that skill will prove useful in my career. I look forward to being someone who challenges the status quo and isn't afraid to speak her mind.
During your first two years at WashU, you wrote many pieces on politics and campus life for Student Life. What’s the most important issue you have covered, and how has it influenced your viewpoint as a member of the WashU and St. Louis community?

My favorite article was on Susan Bennet, a St. Louis-based photographer and blogger. The St. Louis Business Journal had done a photo series where they had the most powerful women in St. Louis pose with their favorite pair of shoes. There was significant backlash in the community to this demeaning project, and Susan Bennet responded with a photo series of successful women and something they chose to represent themselves -- a cooking knife or boxing gloves for example. She allowed women to characterize themselves rather than force them into mold of what a woman is expected to be. As someone who will be entering the corporate world, this piece was especially meaningful to me. I was reminded that, no matter how much money you make, how many titles you’ve held, how many years of education you’ve had, people still care first and foremost about what you look like and what you wear. Yes, it’s amazing that women are finally claiming positions of power and prestige, but the work isn’t done until women are seen as more than their gender. Susan Bennet inspired me to challenge my own perceptions of femininity and how I comply with gendered expectations because it’s easier and less threatening.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF STELLA MUKASA

The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality announced in September the death of Stella Mukasa. A lawyer and champion of women in Uganda, all of Africa, and transnationally, Mukasa’s work and activism contributed to the development of Uganda’s Domestic Violence Act. As a member of Uganda’s Ministry of Gender and Community Development she contributed to the reform of Uganda’s and Rwanda’s constitutions with respect to gender and rights. She was a founding member of ActionAid International Uganda and, at her death, the regional director for Africa at the International Centre for Research on Women. She contributed to the development of the African Women’s Development Fund and lectured at Makerere University on gender rights. All of the organizations of which she was a part remember her as a fierce critic of patriarchal laws and policies and defender of women’s rights.

"As a feminist I believe in equality between men and women and I continuously challenge male domination at any given opportunity. As African feminists we face the perception that feminist principles are alien to African culture. We also face persecution and misogyny. In resisting this, I lay claim to women’s personhood and dignity as fundamental human rights that are not negotiable. These principles inform the work I do" (Stella Mukasa on African Feminist Forum).
Congratulations!

Class of 2018

Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Majors

Mohammed Alshamsi
Olivia Beres
Molly Brodsky
Emilia Epstein
Jacqueline Feldman
Madeline Krips
Miranda Kroeger
Rachel Lilenbaum
Wendy Lu
Margaret Min
Sally Rifkin,
Leah Shuckit
Jaime Swank
Divya Velury
Carly Wolfer
Emi Wyland
Priyanka Zylstra

Minors

Kelly Barr, Camille Borders, Emily Byrn, Zita Chan, Lizzie Cohan, Sarah Gordon, Lily Grier, Jasmine Han, Magdalena, Lijowska, Melanie Marcille, Laura Motard, Dakota Putnal, Sabrina Roberts, Molly Shuman, Rachel Stockdale, Sarah Tanner, Harry Varon, Marie Warchol, Julia Widmann, Emily Williams, Olivia Williamson, Arya Yadama, Sara Zarny
Congratulations to the 2018 WGSS Award Recipients

Helen Power Award for Scholarship and Service Award
Carly Wolfer and Olivia Beres (left)

Social Justice Award
Jaime Swank and Mohammed Alshami
ALUMNI UPDATES

WGSS UNDERGRADUATES

Emily Brown (WGSS 2016)

After graduation, Emily Brown worked at the Fenway Institute, an LGBTQ health research department within an LGBTQ healthcare organization, where she facilitated a behavioral intervention focused on medication adherence in serodiscordant (one partner is HIV-positive and one partner is HIV-negative) cisgender male couples. In May, she began working as a Health Services Advocate at Boston Children’s Hospital, where she provides case management for adolescents living with HIV and manages the HIV/STI counseling and testing program. Since taking Jami Ake’s service learning course in interpersonal violence (IPV), she has continued to focus on intersections between IPV and HIV work. After much deliberation, she has decided to apply to Master’s Direct-Entry Nursing programs, where she will study to become a Family Nurse Practitioner focused on trauma-informed sexual health practices, as well as cultural competencies to support LGBTQ folks in healthcare. Emily was an author on an academic paper that was the first to survey both partners in male couples about IPV perpetration and victimization - 40% of respondents reported experiencing IPV (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/m/pubmed/29749299/). Some of Emily’s work, which looked at violence victimization among male sex workers, was presented at the International AIDS Conference (http://www.aids2018.org/) in Amsterdam. Due to budget constraints Emily could not attend the conference with the project’s PI, but discovered that Cameron Kinker (WGSS 2016) was there working on the U=U (Undetectable = Untransmittable) campaign. The campaign is revolutionary - it means that people living with HIV who take their medication as prescribed and have an undetectable viral load cannot sexually transmit HIV.

Abby Mros (WGSS16)

Abby Mros entered the Brown School in Fall 2016 to pursue her Master’s of Social Work (2018). She concentrated in Violence and Injury Prevention and specialized in Sexual Health and Education, developing an expertise in the field of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, completing a clinical practicum with Magdalene St. Louis (now called Bravely). Her second practicum was with the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at Washington University where she oversaw the redesign of #RewindBlurredLines. Abby additionally surveyed all sophomore, junior, and senior students in the 2017-2018 academic year about their prior experiences with The Date. She served as the Graduate Advisor for the Sexual Assault and Rape Anonymous Helpline (S.A.R.A.H.), and says that “working with those students was one of the most rewarding parts of” her time at the RSVP Center. Abby passed her first licensure exam and is now a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) working on her clinical license (LCSW) at Bridgeway Behavioral Health’s Sexual Assault Center (SAC) as both a Sexual Assault Therapist and Youth Therapist. She provides trauma therapy, including evidence based treatments for PTSD, to adults, children, and adolescents with experiences of sexual assault or intimate partner violence. In addition Abby works part-time at RISE Collaborative Workspace, a female-focused coworking space. She loves being part of the female-focused community at RISE and connecting with women in a wide variety of fields. Abby is grateful for her strong connections in the Washington University WGSS Department and still maintains contact with her professors and mentors from the Department.
Sally Rifkin (WGSS 2018)

Sally Rifkin spent the summer volunteering with the Cambridge Women’s Center, which provides women from around the Boston metro area a space to cook a meal, use a computer, attend a workshop, or just relax with friends. She worked with the Development Director to identify and research potential funding sources for the center, brainstorm projects, and write letters of inquiry to foundations. She is continuing to expand her research skill set as an Opposition Research Intern at NARAL Pro-Choice America. Her first week coincided with Brett Kavanaugh’s Supreme Court confirmation hearings, so intern orientation was replaced by rallies outside the Senate building, occupying Chuck Grassley’s and Susan Collins’ offices and meeting her own senator, Elizabeth Warren. Sally’s main task now is monitoring the far-right anti-choice movement on Twitter, tracking and synthesizing their discussions on current events. NARAL uses her research to inform its knowledge and communications around the anti-choice movement.

Andrea Bolivar, PhD (2018)

Dr. Andrea Bolivar (PhD Anthropology and WGSS Graduate Certificate, 2018) is an LSA Collegiate Fellow at the University of Michigan. Although the fellowship is housed in the National Center for Institutional Diversity, Dr. Bolivar is located in the department of Women’s Studies. She has been working on an article entitled “‘My Pussy Actually Grabs Back’: A Trans of Color Critique of Pussyhats and a Trans Latina Expansion of ‘Pussy’”, in which she offers a trans of color critique of popular criticisms of the term “pussy,” the pussyhat movement, and the larger public feminist movement, based on her ethnographic research with sex working transgender Latinas. This fall she will be participating in “Trans Studies in the Global South: An Emerging Scholars Symposium” hosted by the program in Gender and Sexuality Studies at Bates College, in which she will present work that addresses the ways in which blackness—and anti-blackness more specifically—circulates within trans Latina sexual economies of labor in the U.S.. The two-year fellowship supports her work on her book manuscript: ‘Somos una Fantasia’: Race, Violence, and Potentiality in Transgender Latina Sexual Economies of Labor. The book examines the experiences of sex working transgender Latinas in the Chicago metropolitan area. Dr. Bolivar interrogates how transgender Latinas are racialized and sexualized in sexual economies of labor.

"No woman can call herself free who does not control her own body."
(Margaret Sanger)
and in the U.S. nation more broadly. She offers a new analytical framework "fantasia" for understanding the complex racial, sexual, and gender identities of trans Latinas, and their ephemeral presence in the United States—they are always at risk of disappearing. Yet "fantasia" also indexes forms of queer potentiality. Dr. Bolivar describes how trans Latinas use their bodies to produce resistant forms of labor, care, kinship, and space-making, locally and transnationally. She is thrilled to be teaching Introduction to Transgender Studies next semester. And while she misses Wash U, she is excited to be in such a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment!

Dr. Andrea Thomas received grants from the Maryland Humanities Council and the Loyola Center for Community and Social Justice to develop and screen a documentary film shot by undergraduate intermediate-level modern language students. Students conducted interviews with long-immigrated Baltimore locals in their mother tongues, Italian, Spanish, French, and Chinese, and edited and subtitled their interviews. The interviews were then pieced together and screened at Loyola University and at the Baltimore Creative Alliance under the title "Multilingual Baltimore." In 2017, Patrick also completed an 18-month research and renovation project into technology-integrated language learning spaces, which resulted in a $30,000 capital investment in the Language Learning Center. He has been traveling and speaking widely in Germany and the United States, to give lectures at the Universität Konstanz and the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen on Black Feminist, Ignatian, and Critical Pedagogies and on feminist approaches to the study of early modern warfare, respectively. He presented an updated version of the latter study at the Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär at WashU in March. His book Black Powder Plots and Gunpowder Weapons in Early Modern German Texts, is in final stages of preparation for publication.

His ongoing research includes topics ranging from learning space design for foreign language classrooms to women warriors in early modern European literature, gendered representations of firearms, cultural translation and national identity, and women's experiences of aging in the late Middle Ages. He has been working with Baltimore Catholic schools providing training to K-12 educators and students on healthy masculinity, gender and literacy, and feminist approaches to gender topics in the K-8 classroom. He is the Vice Chair of the School Board at Archbishop Borders School, a community-justice oriented, bilingual Spanish-English, immersion school in the Canton neighborhood in Baltimore. Patrick and his partner, Dr. Ann Brugh, who is a Clinical Psychologist at the VA Hospital, have two sons, Henry Wolf (4) and Baer (1).

The significance of feminist movement...is that it offers a new ideological meeting ground for the sexes, a space for criticism, struggle, and transformation.

bell hooks, Feminist Theory from Margin to Center
CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS OF 2018

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

Andrea Bolivar, PhD – Anthropology
Mary LeGierse, PhD – German
Simone Pfleger, PhD – German
WGSS has received numerous contributions from our friends, large and small. We are grateful for every gift that helps to support our work. We have used the funding to support our Decentering the West lecture series; faculty travel to conferences; course development for undergraduates; student internships and travel for research and study; books and films for our library and course work; and many other enriching and important activities involving faculty and graduate and undergraduate students. Some of these activities are visible on our web page:

http://wgss.artsci.wustl.edu/; in our newsletters: http://wgss.artsci.wustl.edu/newsletters; our undergraduate prize for research and service; and in our material resources—a seminar, meeting, and workshop room, which we furnished with tables and chairs; video equipment in our library, which supports both teaching and routine department activities; and in our excellent collections, which faculty and students use for research, writing, and course work.

WGSS is positioned within an internationally renowned, top-tier research university. To enhance the department’s impact across the institution and around the world, we must expand our resources and offerings as follows:

**Attract Exceptional Faculty**
Our current faculty exhibit nationally recognized strengths in humanities, social sciences, critical race studies, and transnational gender and sexuality studies. We hope to recruit additional faculty expertise in both transnational and ethnic studies.

**Increase the Number of Postdoctoral Fellowships**
We intend to expand our postdoctoral fellow program from one fellow to supporting several each year. Postdoctoral fellows enrich WGSS by increasing the variety and depth of our coursework; employing the newest methodological and theoretical research approaches; sharing developing scholarship with university colleagues and students; and increasing the intellectual diversity of the postdoctoral cohort in Arts and Sciences.

**Develop Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs**
We are working collaboratively with other university units on joint graduate programs that fully integrate feminist, gender, and sexuality studies in coursework and theses and in graduates’ career plans in and outside of the academy.

**Establish a Conference Series**
We plan to create a series of intensive one-day conferences to draw scholars and students from around the world. Led by distinguished faculty, the series will generate exciting conversations on campus, help participants develop powerful scholarly networks, and advance research critical to gender equity among faculty and students here at Washington University.

To support the Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, please send your gifts to:
Arts & Sciences Development Office
Attn: Julianne Smutz, Campus Box 1210
Washington University, One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130

"Responsibility to yourself means refusing to let others do your thinking, talking, and naming for you...it means that you do not treat your body as a commodity with which to purchase superficial intimacy or economic security; for our bodies to be treated as objects, our minds are in mortal danger. It means insisting that those to whom you give your friendship and love are able to respect your mind."