Making Waves
Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies
at the University of Connecticut
Spring 2012, Vol. IV, Issue I

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

This has been a year of firsts. It will be the first time we graduated students under the new designation of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS). And beginning in May 15, WGSS will become the new name for the program. We have a new logo designed by an amazing design team from the School of Fine Arts, who were also recipients of the Feminist Arts Award in recognition of their design.

It is also the first year that we had an invited speaker for our graduation celebration. Dr. Lisa Brush (UConn, Women’s Studies, class of ’85), delivered an inspirational talk about “The Virtues of Being an Adult Beginner.” We have included the talk on page 2 of the Newsletter.

We awarded the first Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship. The Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship was established by Kristie’s friends and family to honor her incredible spirit and contributions to social justice. Kristie was the first Women’s Studies student at UConn. Since the Women’s Studies Major wasn’t formally established until the late 1980s, Kristie designed it herself and was the first student to officially graduate with a B.A. in Women’s Studies. The award was given to Marissa Dubecy. Honorable mention was awarded to Theresa Gove. You can learn more about these incredible students on pages 19 and 20.

This year was also the first time we had a Post-doctoral Fellow in the program. After a national search, Dr. Rachel Lewis was hired on the basis of her expertise in transnational sexualities. Transnational feminisms and sexualities are two of the major foci within our program. Rachel’s work serves as a bridge between these areas. Her attention to arts and culture within her research speaks to the third dimension we highlight; namely, Arts, History, and Culture. While at UConn Rachel organized a conference, entitled “Bodies in Motion, States of Unrest: Sexuality, Citizenship, and the Freedom of Movement as a Human Right.” The workshop featured interdisciplinary scholars from across the country (see page 9 for more details on the workshop).

We held our first workshop in Feminist Disabilities Studies co-organized by APIR Michael Gill and Director of Asian American Studies, Cathy Shlund-Vials. The workshop was entitled ‘Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Disability.” This workshop jump-started a conversation with the Department of Human Development and Family Studies to create a position for a joint hire in this area. We were successful in our proposal to CLAS Dean Jeremy Teitelbaum who approved a joint hire in Feminist Disabilities Studies next year.

In addition to this new position, we have also been granted approval to hire in the field of bio-ethics. This new hire will have a joint position with Philosophy. Our success in gaining this new position is linked to our desire to build expertise in Science, Health, and Technology. As we argued in our hiring proposal, those who control the power of medicine, science and technology are at an advantage in reaping economic benefits and social prestige. This dynamic contributes to processes of inequality. Claims validated by science have a status above all other claims in Western culture. There are gendered and racialized processes that contribute to who has power in medicine, science, and technology. Consequently, it is important to apply the theories and methods of feminist scholarship to the areas of health, science, technology, and its biomedical applications. Our proposal focused attention on four burgeoning fields within Women’s Studies: disabilities studies, indigenous studies, environmental studies, and digital media studies.

http://wgss.uconn.edu/
Students, parents and other family members, friends, and colleagues: Good morning. It is a pleasure to be here to celebrate with the UConn Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies graduates of 2012!

I carried the banner for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at my own commencement ceremony here in May of … wait for it … 1985. There was no Women’s Studies degree at the time, so I did what they called in a left-over from hippy days an “individually designed major.” My supervisor was Delia Aguilar, who by the way recently published an essay in Monthly Review on the historical roots of the concept of “intersectionality” that changed how I understand that central concept in feminist theory – thanks, Delia, for continuing to teach me! With Delia’s encouragement, and the flexibility that came from being a University Scholar (which meant I didn’t have to declare a traditional major), I took every Women’s Studies course in the catalog plus an entire remarkable semester of directed reading in feminist theory and politics with the professor who has been my mentor ever since, Myra Marx Ferree (now Alice Cook Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison). Rich Hiskes in Political Science chaired my senior thesis committee, and I spent a semester during my junior year in London studying the gendered dimensions of one of the hottest political phenomena of the day: the privatization of local and national government services under the Conservative regime of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The transformations of the campus and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies since those days are truly impressive. So are the accomplishments of the students gathered here today. To Marissa, Brichelle, Tess, Suge-hilted, and all the other majors who are graduating today, and to Lisa and the other minors: Congratulations!!!!! To the faculty and staff who take pride and pleasure in those graduates’ accomplishments: Congratulations to you, too, and also thank you for your hard work and dedication to excellence in feminist education. And to parents, family, and friends: Yippee, skippy, do!! This is my first commencement address, so naturally I asked some folks for ideas about what I should say. “Say something funny,” suggested one friend. “Say something inspiring,” said another. A third tersely recommended: “Be brief.” I’m going to go for two out of three – you be the judge.

The notion of inspiration reminded me of an old bumper sticker that says, “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.” Each of us has something that animates our curiosity, that quickens our interest, and that leaves us a little breathless, like a really good kiss. Some of that breathlessness can be due to anxiety and surprise: Is this real? It’s kind of scary. Can I make it happen again?! But “breathless with anticipation” is a cliché for good reasons, and much of what happens when we live a life measured not by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away is about the rush of energy and feeling of rightness that go along with allowing ourselves to be moved by a sense of expansive possibilities.

I have been doing research and publishing on battered women for over 20 years. After the first decade, for me, this work frankly started to seem depressing rather than inspiring. So I changed what I was doing and how I did it. For the last decade, now, I have been listening especially carefully to battered women and welfare recipients talk about what they need to transform their lives so they can escape the dual traps of poverty and abuse. Instead of a cramped sense of bad options, wrong turns, and betrayal of their hopes and skills, they want a sense that they can pursue life projects of their own design. We talk about what has to change in the world for them to be not just struggling to catch their breath but thriving.

Although not all of us have to contend with poverty and abuse, we each have to figure out how to thrive in this challenging world. Here’s what has inspired me, including what has allowed me to build a career on listening to and thinking with women whose wretchedness is frequently only made worse when they turn to the “welfare” and “justice” systems.

It really helps if you always have something you can approach with what the Zen tradition calls “beginner mind.” As the Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki-Roshi points out, “In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, but in the
In the dojo where I trained in traditional Japanese karate when I was in graduate school, as an adult beginner, I was amazed that the chief instructor and the most senior students always flocked to the raw beginners. At first, I thought: Why were all these accomplished big shots paying so much attention to the most clueless people in the room?! Over time, I learned that beginners help experts see their own stale habits. Beginners use trial and error to reach time-honored conclusions and have much more faith in something they have discovered themselves than in any received wisdom. Beginners are the best partners for senior students because they are excited and open and they make tons of mistakes – and mistakes are invaluable to beginners, experts, and teachers alike. Beginners’ mistakes shed light on what cognitive psychologists call “tacit knowledge,” that is, the things we didn’t know we knew and often couldn’t begin to describe. Beginners’ mistakes make obvious to teachers and experts what we haven’t communicated about how we do what we do. And beginners’ mistakes show us where we can learn new ways to explain or demonstrate across gaps of skill and experience.

More recently, I became an adult beginner in the world of music. My trajectory was a bit different from that described by Gary Marcus in his smart and interesting book, Guitar Zero. I knew how to read music, keep time, and carry a tune, and I knew from a childhood of piano lessons the rewards to working diligently at developing new music skills. But learning to play the French horn, which I have practiced for an hour every day for almost four years, has been the hardest thing I have tried to do as an adult. When I started, I had no idea how to produce even a squeak on a brass instrument, and although I sang in chorus in Middle School, I had never played an instrument in an ensemble. After almost eight semesters (plus two summers) of weekly lessons and almost two years of orchestra, I still basically blow. In fact, my penultimate lesson this semester could fairly be described as an epic fail, and at my last lesson of this semester, my instructor spent the entire hour going back to the absolute beginning of technique and told me to spend half of each daily practice session going from completely relaxed to producing just one clean note, at the correct pitch, and in rhythm. Back to the beginning. Back to the pleasure of learning this fiendishly complicated skill on this notoriously treacherous instrument — and making it sound beautiful and easy. Malcolm Gladwell and others argue that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to reach expert proficiency at anything. At my current rate, I will hit my 10,000th hour of horn practice in my early 70s. I’m delighted I have lots of time between now and then to be a beginner. But also, the most fluent and fabulous virtuoso performers are open to surprises, approach what they do with humility and joy, leave us breathless in part because they are so obviously devoted to the freshness of their practice and the adventure of performance from a place of beginner mind. I saw virtuoso cellist Yo-Yo Ma perform last winter and it was clear that he is an expert who understands beginner mind — and that’s a big part of what makes him such a rock star.

Beginner mind is inspiring because it gives us permission to learn, explore, and engage with passion. Beginners know that mistakes are an important part of what we bring to the classroom, the internship placement, the lesson, the research practicum, the laboratory, the playing field, or the workplace. Beginner mind is also inspiring because it moves experts, teachers, and leaders from a place of habit to a place of curiosity, from familiarity to refreshing new vision, from a place of mastery to a place of discovery. Beginner mind inspires us to question, experiment, and collaborate. Those three practices don’t always get us directly to the One Right Answer to fill in on the bubblesheet. But how many more of those do you expect to encounter in your life?!?? Questioning, experimenting, and collaborating from a place of beginner mind will definitely increase the chances that we will have moments where what we see, hear, touch, learn, and do will leave us at least temporarily breathless and wide-eyed with wonder.

So in order to find inspiration for a lifetime of breathless moments, cultivate your beginner mind. Try something new, no matter how accomplished and expert you are. Model the energy and sense of adventure that go along with beginner mind to inspire those around you to think in new ways and embark on new projects. Share your enthusiasm with your community and reach out to newcomers. Ask questions that show off your willingness to take risks of curiosity and compassion, and that honor your teachers and your peers by taking your self, your work, and your ideas seriously – but not too seriously, so you can also just play. Approach the unknown with the kind of curiosity and open-mindedness that will draw experts and other seekers into collaboration with you. Finally, be filled with wonder and never be embarrassed by your mistakes. Take advantage of being a beginner and fail first, fail fast, and fail better – it’s the best way to find great teachers and collaborators, and to figure out what you really need to learn.

Mara Keisling, Director of the National Center for Transgender Equity, inspired me when she said: “To be amazing, you must first be amazed.” Being an adult beginner requires and inspires radical amazement. So though you will finish this day with an amazing record of accomplishment, keep enough beginner mind to continue being amazed. Congratulations. Have an amazing next breath.
Honoring our Graduates & Award Recipients

During 2011 - 2012, WGSS saw the graduation of many wonderful undergraduate students - 5 majors, and 42 minors - as well as 5 students who completed the Feminist Studies Graduate Certificate. Students completed their coursework throughout the year, graduating in August and December 2011 and May 2012. Certificates were presented at the Commencement celebration held on Sunday, May 5, 2012 at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

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<td>Samantha Jensen</td>
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<td>Brichelle Guerrero</td>
<td>Rachel Bolinsky</td>
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<td>Alyssa McCarthy</td>
<td>Brittany Brookbanks</td>
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In addition to our majors, minors and graduate certificate students, WGSS honored 12 students with annual awards. Please see the article on pages 19 and 20 for more details. In summary, the awards were presented to:

**Undergraduate Awards:**
- **The Kristie Ann Wood Endowment Scholarship:** Marrisa Dubeczy 
- **Honorable Mention:** Theresa Govert
- **The Chase Going Woodhouse Prize:** Anna Brennan
- **The Jacqueline Brown-Dickstein Scholarship:** Theresa Govert
- **Feminist Artist Award:** Jenna Simmons, Dana Haddad, and Jucelle Lim

**Graduate Student Awards**
- **The Excellence in Graduate Teaching in Women’s Studies Award:** Shweta Majumbar (Ph.D. candidate Sociology)
- **The Marita McComiskey Distinguished Graduate Career Award for Feminist Praxis:** Nikki McGary (Ph.D. candidate Sociology)
- **The Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award:** Stacy Missari and Christine Zozula
- **CLAS Dean’s Doctoral Research Summer Fellowship:** Jamie Huff, and Julie Anderson-Shoults

A special THANK YOU to Coleen Spurlock and the WGSS student staff whose hard work resulted in a wonderful celebration for all of our graduates, award recipients and guests.
During the 2011-2012 academic year, we officially changed our name from the Women’s Studies Program to the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program, to reflect student demand for a focus on contemporary perspectives in gender and sexuality studies while retaining our historical indebtedness to Women’s Studies approaches. Some of the changes that we made to the curriculum, as part of the process of shifting our focus and incorporating new approaches, also came into effect in May 2012.

Following review of WGSS faculty expertise and course offerings, we established a fourth concentration in our program to foreground the interdisciplinary work and curriculum contributions in the area of Art, History, and Culture. Our other three concentrations are: Health, Science and Technology; Sexualities; and Transnational Feminisms.

In order to update the curriculum to reflect the new program focus in WGSS, it was necessary to review our catalogue copy and course descriptions to revise accordingly. This involved identifying missing courses in our curriculum and courses that needed revisions to broaden their foci. This process led to the development of three new courses that have now been approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ C&C (Feminist Disabilities Studies, Masculinities, and Politics of Reproduction) and the revision of Research Methods and Social Movements.

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, 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. Kate manages course scheduling and keeps track of major, minors, and graduate certificate students. Both Kate and Coleen serve as informal advisors to students to come seeking information or support. Unfortunately, the year ends with another first, this is the first time in recent memory that we will not have two staff people supporting our program. Due to personal reasons, Kate has left WS and UConn. Due to budget constraints, her position will not be replaced and perhaps could anyone take her place. She will be sorely missed!

Welcome Back, Dr. Rachel A. Lewis

Dr. Rachel A. Lewis continued her position with us as a postdoctoral fellow. She came to us from Oklahoma State University as a Postdoctoral Fellow. Rachel recently received her doctorate in Musicology from Cornell University with her dissertation entitled “Bordering on Desire: Towards a Transnational Lesbian Cinema.” Rachel has added to our program’s emphasis in arts and culture as well as sexualities and transnational feminisms. Her research interests include women and political asylum, sexuality and immigration, and human rights. She is currently working on a book-length manuscript entitled Bordering on Desire: The Cultural Politics of Lesbian Asylum. This project explores how lesbian refugees and asylum-seekers are turning towards new media and cultural production in the form of independent filmmaking, theatre and performance art, and online activism as a means of resisting deportation. She has published articles in Social Justice, the International Feminist Journal of Politics, the Journal of Lesbian Studies, Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture, and Music & Letters. Dr. Lewis has contributed to fostering our scholarly community at the University of Connecticut, co-organizing a workshop on transnational sexualities and human rights: “Bodies in Motion, States of Unrest: Sexuality, Citizenship, and the Freedom of Movement as a Human Right.”
Welcome, Dr. Judy Rohrer

Judy Rohrer grew up in Hawai‘i and received her Ph.D. in Political Science in 2005 at the University of Hawai‘i. Most recently she was a Scholar in Residence at the University of California Berkeley in their gender research unit. She also held fellowships at the University of California Santa Barbara, Syracuse University, and the University of Limerick, Ireland. Dr. Rohrer’s research focuses on constructions of identity, sexuality, sexual citizenship, state politics, and colonialism. The diversity of publication outlets for her scholarship indicates the reach that her work across several fields of inquiry including American Studies, indigenous studies, ethnic studies, feminist studies, and Pacific region studies. Her first book, *Haoles in Hawai‘i*, was published in 2010 by the University of Hawai‘i Press. Recognizing haole as a form of American whiteness specific to Hawai‘i, this book argues that haole was forged and reforged over two centuries of colonization and needs to be understood in that context. She has published on race and colonization in Hawai‘i, gay marriage, disability studies, and citizenship in *Racial & Ethnic Studies, borderlands, Feminist Studies, The Contemporary Pacific, American Studies, and American Quarterly*.

Welcome, Dr. Christine Sylvester

Christine Sylvester is professor of political science and of women’s studies at UConn and is affiliated with the School of Global Studies, The University of Gothenburg Sweden. A native of Connecticut, she also holds Australian citizenship and has worked extensively outside the USA, including at the Australian National University (Canberra), The Institute of Social Studies (The Hague, Netherlands), Lancaster University (UK), and Lund University, Sweden. She was awarded the Swedish Research Council’s Kerstin Hesssgren Professorship for Sweden for 2010-2011. Other recent awards include a Leverhulme fellowship at the School of Oriental and African Studies, The University of London; the Susan Northcutt Award of the International Studies Association (ISA); Eminent Scholar of the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section of the ISA; and Vice-President of the ISA. She was also named one of Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations, Martin Griffiths, Steven Roach, M. Scott Solomon, eds. (Routledge, 2008). Her most recent research and writings are on war as experience and on art/museums and international relations. She is the editor of a Routledge book series: *War, Politics, Experience*. This opportunity hire expands our program’s expertise in transnational feminisms.

Welcome Back, Dr. Barbara Gurr

Barbara Gurr joins us as an Assistant Professor in Residence, having received her doctorate 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. She is actively involved on campus, and you’ll frequently see her at events sponsored by our Cultural Centers and the Women’s Center, although student-organized events are her favorite. She has worked closely with students in Triota (the national Women’s Studies Honor Society), the Violence Against Women Prevention Program, and the Human Rights Tour as well as the Community Outreach Program and the Native American Cultural Society. Off campus, she frequently works with the New Britain Rotary Club, True Colors, TransPact (a local support group for families with transgender adolescents), and a women’s shelter in New Haven.
Students ‘Take Back the Night’

The Violence Against Women Prevention Program lit up UConn this Wednesday with Take Back the Night. The event was kicked off in the Student Union Ballroom with rousing speeches and other acts. The goal for the event was to empower survivors and give them hope and strength. This year’s TBTN focused on creating change one voice at a time. The theme of the night was speaking out against rape culture in our society.

The program started at 7 p.m. with a performance by a cappella group A Minor. After their performance the TBTN team recited “Over It” by Eve Ensler. With lines like “We just don’t think that uninvited penises up our anus, or our vagina is a laugh riot” this poem was jarring and truthful. It was personal as well, criticizing a platform almost all students use: Facebook. Lines like “I am over rape culture, rape mentality, rape pages on Facebook” showed how widespread and pervasive the problem is. The chorus of “Because we are over I” ended the recitation on a powerful note.

Keynote speaker Nikki McGary delivered a speech next. McGary is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology, a women studies instructor and a Vagina Warrior. “What an amazing turnout. See who you are in solidarity with. You are creating change one voice at a time,” she said addressing the large crowd. She urged the audience to “make visible” the problem of sexual violence and become critical of a world where “women are afraid to walk out at night in fear of sexual assault.” She pointed out that although April is Sexual Assault Awareness month, sexual assault occurs every day and is a year round problem. As instructor for the class Women and Violence, McGary receives many emails from students sharing their own stories about sexual violence. She wished that she could unite these students with these experiences in solidarity and was glad that TBTN was an event that allowed this.

“Gendered violence is a pervasive epidemic,” said McGary. Our “heterosexist, sexist and racist society culminates in one out of six women and one of 33 men in the United States being sexually assaulted.” The numbers grow higher for minorities or members of the LGBTQI community. “The number one killer of pregnant women is murder by their partner,” said McGary.

“Sexual assault and rape is not in a vacuum,” she said. “Sexual violence has become institutionalized and structured.” According to McGary only 1 in 16 rapists are convicted and rape kits sit in warehouses collecting dust. McGary cited that a journalist followed up on claims that the rape kits weren’t used because of funding issues, and found that the state spent more money on buying officers new cars. “What is it that we are allowing our politicians to prioritize?” asked McGary. But it is not just the government, according to McGary, all institutions, including schools and universities, share the responsibility. “All social institutions are interconnected; change needs to happen on all fronts,” she said.

McGary stressed that change was very possible. “Change can happen,” she said. “You all have power too.” According to McGary even something as small as being kind and respectful was enough to shatter the silence about rape. She encouraged the audience to watch their language and be careful about how they used words like “gay” and “pussy.” She encouraged women to love their body in a society that teaches them to hate it.

The Men’s Project spoke next and reminded everyone about the large role which men played in perpetuating rape culture. They asked, “Why should women be complacent in a world that is hostile to them?”

After an hour of presentations, the crowd filed out and picked up their candles. With posters in hand they walked the campus. The leaders of the march warned them that the march might encounter resistance and in such an event, advised them to avoid confrontation, but simply chant louder. With shouts like “S sexist, rapist, anti-gay, don’t you take our night away!” and “We have the power, we have the right, the streets are ours take back the night!” they shook the campus.
The Women’s Studies Program has a very active program of events and co-sponsorships. The Storrs based Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program typically has several 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 November Spotlight featured Judy Rohrer, Assistant Professor in Residence - Women’s Studies, who discussed her work on “Homonormals, Homonationals & Healthy Children: Prop 8 and the ‘Importance of Being Ordinary.’”

The Distinguished Guest Speaker Series features internationally prominent scholars from universities across the country and abroad who address agreed upon themes identified by WGSS faculty. This year we focused on Feminist and Post-colonial Science and Technology Studies and featured University of California-Los Angeles professor Sandra Harding Professor (co-sponsored by the CLAS Fund for Innovation in Interdisciplinary Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Studies; the Human Rights Institute; University of Connecticut Research Foundation; the Department of Philosophy; the Department of Sociology; and the Honors Program).

We also support the efforts of other units on campus, especially those organized by the ethnic studies institutes and cultural centers, as illustrated above. With the Economic and Social Rights Group at the Human Rights Institute, we co-sponsored a lecture by Marcia Inhorn, professor of anthropology and international affairs at Yale University, entitled: “The New Arab Man: Emergent Masculinities, Technologies, and Islam in the Middle East.” With the Human Rights Institute, and Department of Literatures, Languages and Culture – German Program,, we co-sponsored a lecture entitled “The Trouble with Faith: Rethinking Islam And Intersectionality In Europe” from Beverly Weber, Assistant Professor of German Studies and Affiliate Faculty in Women’s Studies at the University of Colorado—Boulder. With CLACS, the Department of Dramatic Arts, and the Women’s Center, we co-sponsored a dramatic reading of “What the Walls Say,” a play by Ailyn Morera, CLACS visiting artist-in-residence, in October. We also co-sponsored the CLACS Mead lecture “Property Rights, Asset Accumulation and Patrimonial Violence in Ecuador” by Carmen Diana Deere, Professor of Food and Resource Economics at the University of Florida. We co-sponsored a lecture with the Asian American Studies Institute from Minh-Ha T. Pham, Assistant Professor in the History of Art & Visual Studies Department and the Asian American Studies Program at Cornell University, focusing on her work, “Behind the Seams of Paul Poiret’s Harem Trousers (1911): Race, Fashion, and Virtuality in the Machine Age.”

The Stamford Center for Women’s Studies also sponsors annual events. Some highlights from this year include: “Sewing Women: Immigrants and the New York City Garment Industry,” a lecture by Margaret Chin, “Sex Ed: Shelby Knox on Sex, Power, and Building a Revolution,” a talk by activist Shelby Knox,” They Call Me Lizzy: From Slavery to the White House,” a performance chronicling the true life story of Elizabeth Keckly, best known as dressmaker to Mary Todd Lincoln, by actor and UConn alumna Stephanie Jackson, and “Reel Women: Gender & Realism in Documentary Film,” a talk by Filmmakers Immy Humes and Bari Pearlman.

Please visit our website for more information on these events as well as additional events that will be added to the WGSS schedule as the year progresses - http://wgss.uconn.edu/
Disability Workshop

Cathy-Schlund-Vials, Director of the Asian American Studies Institute and Michael Gill, Assistant Professor in Residence organized a faculty workshop on disability, human rights, and humanitarianism in early March 2012. The Human Rights Institute generously funded the workshop.

The two-day event brought together UConn faculty and scholars from the University of Alabama (Nirmala Ervelles), University at Buffalo (Michael Rembis), College of Staten Island (Terry Rowden) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Eunjung Kim) to discuss a wide-variety of topics related to the theme including the role of international humanitarian relief, vulnerability as a construct, disabled subjects in neoliberal landscapes, the use of language to describe disability, and themes of incarceration and psychiatry. Additionally, there were papers that explored representations of disability and polio, disabled masculinity and hip-hop, and disability themes in The Hunger Games. The workshop illustrated the promise of interdisciplinarity by bringing a multiplicity of academic disciplines in conversation to explore the complex relationship between human rights and disability.

In establishing specific human rights standards, the 1948 Universal Declaration Human Rights (UDHR) provides a normative foundation upon which to evaluate subsequent policies and laws that promote the rights of persons with disabilities. Specifically, Article 7 guarantees equality before the law and equal protection by the law for all individuals; Article 25 (1) establishes particular socioeconomic rights that foreground the contemporary imaginary of disability activism: the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, and old age. Notwithstanding the rise of disability studies as a foundation for university curricula and programming throughout the nation and across the globe, the interstitial nature of the field (which enables multivalent conversations about bodies, (im) mobility, and hegemonic norms) has by and large been overlooked in scholarly evaluations of human rights and humanitarianism. Even though disability is specifically mentioned in the UDHR, it is often cast as a symptomatic rather than a root issue in human rights. Correspondingly, the question of “what to do” with those considered “disabled” necessarily accesses the problematical terrain of humanitarianism (replete with considerations of care and care-giving). The faculty workshop challenged those paradigms by relocating disability studies from the margins to the center.

As a follow-up to the workshop, Professors Schlund-Vials and Gill circulated a call for papers for an edited collection that will continue the conversations and collaborations that came out of the workshop. The workshop signals the exciting disability studies work underway on campus.
Dr. Sandra Harding

Dr. Sandra Harding was this Spring’s featured speaker for the Women’s Studies Program. Dr. Harding is Professor of Education in the Social Sciences and Comparative Education Division of UCLA’s Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences. She has directed Women’s Studies, co-edited Signs, the most influential feminist studies journal, and served as a consultant on epistemology and philosophy of science issues for several UN organizations, including the Pan American Health Organization; the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); and the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

Dr. Harding’s presentation, “Indigenous Knowledges and Human Rights,” argued for the significance of indigenous knowledge for fighting poverty and social inequality.

Dr. Harding’s research and teaching focuses on the intersections of science and feminist studies. She has long been engaged in the most cutting edge questions of feminist, anti-racist, and postcolonial projects: namely, what counts as knowledge, who gets to define it, and produce it, and who benefits from it. She is tireless in her efforts to broaden the angle of vision to include respect for different ways of knowing and different sites of knowledge production. She is the editor or author of 13 books, including The Science Question in Feminism (1986), Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? (1991), The Racial Economy of Science: Towards a Democratic Future (1993), Is Science Multicultural? (1998), Science and Social Inequality (2006), Sciences from Below (2008), and the just released book, The Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies Reader.

Undergraduate and Graduate News

At the Storrs campus, a total of five majors in Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies and thirty-two WGSS minors graduated in 2011 – 2012. Five graduate students completed the requirements for the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Graduate Certificate in 2011-2012.

During the 2011-2012 academic year, WGSS - Storrs courses enrolled a total of 2502 students on both the undergraduate and graduate level, an increase of almost 25% from last year. Of that number, 1620 were enrolled in Gen Ed classes (a 20% increase from last year. The number enrolled in W courses almost doubled from last year (23 W seats to 43).

2011-2012 WGSS Faculty and Staff

In 2011 - 2012, 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, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Faculty:
Alexis Boylan, Assistant Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Margaret Breen, Professor, Women’s Studies & Associate Department Head of English
Anne D’Alleva, Associate Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & Art and Art History
Manisha Desai, Associate Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & Sociology
Françoise Dussart, Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & Anthropology
Michael Gill, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Barbara Gurr, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Veronica Makowsky, Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & English
Marita McComiskey, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Nancy Naples, Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Director & Sociology
Judy Rohrer, Assistant Professor in Residence, Women’s Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Christine Sylvester, Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & Political Science
Heather M. Turcotte, Assistant Professor, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies & Political Science
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Core and Affiliate Faculty

Nehama Aschkenasy, Professor in Residence, Literature, Culture, and Languages
Marysol Asencio, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, Interim Director of IPRLS
Janet Barnes-Farrell, Professor, Psychology
Mary Bernstein, Professor, Sociology
Pamela Brown, Associate Professor, English
Eleni Coundouriotis, Associate Professor, English
Elaine DalMolin. Professor, French and Francophone Studies
Ana María Díaz-Marcos, Assistant Professor, Literature, Culture and Languages
Clare Eby, Professor, English
Anita Garey, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies
Davita Glasberg, Professor and Associate Dean, Sociology
Serkan Gorkemli, Assistant Professor, English
Elizabeth Holzer Assistant Professor, Sociology
Kristin Kelly, Associate Professor, Political Science
Kathryn Libal Assistant Professor, Social Work
Hallie Liberto, Assistant Professor, Philosophy
Jocelyn Linnekin, Professor, Anthropology
Thomas Long, Associate Professor in Residence, School of Nursing
Margo Machida, Associate Professor, Art & Art History, School of Nursing
Allison MacKay, Associate Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
Vicki J. Magley, Associate Professor, Psychology
Elizabeth Mahan, Interim Executive Director of International Affairs
Samuel Martinez, Associate Professor, Anthropology
Michele P. McElya, Assistant Professor, History
Liansu Meng, Assistant Professor In Residence, Chinese
Kim Price-Glynn, Associate Professor, Sociology
Bandana Purkayastha, Professor, Sociology & Asian American Studies
Kathryn Ratcliff, Assistant Professor, Sociology
Diana Rios, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences
Frederick Roden, Associate Professor, English
Sylvia Schafer, Associate Professor, History
Cathy Schlund-Vials, Interim Director of Asian Studies, Assistant Professor, English
Blanca Silvestrini, Professor, History
Evelyn Simien, Associate Professor, Political Science
Doreen Simons, Lecturer, Linguistics & American Sign Language
Merrill Singer, Professor, Anthropology & Public Health
Judith Thorpe, Professor, Art & Art History
Janet Watson, Professor, History
Steven Wisensale, Professor, Human Development & Family Studies

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Graduate Instructors

Shweta Majumdar Adur (Sociology)
Julie Shoults (German)
Ute Bettray (German)
Jenniann Colon
Cameron Froude
Tara Hanney-Mahajan (English)
Brenna Harvey
Ruth Hernandez (Sociology)
Anna Hayrapetyan
Jamie Huff (Political Science)

Shaznene Hussain (Political Science)
Vanessa Lovelace (Political Science)
Nikki McGary (Sociology)
Albina Mmao (Anthropology)
Lwendo Moon zwe (Sociology)
Latisha Nielsen (Sociology)
Caryn Nuñez (Political Science)
Theresa Pltz (Fine Arts)
Malaena Taylor (Sociology)
Amber West (English)
Sherry Zane (History)

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Adjunct Instructors

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

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Staff

Coleen Spurlock, Administrative Assistant
Abbey Willis, WGSS Student Liason

http://wgss.uconn.edu/
By Manisha Desai

Jan Denge Jamin Nahi, (We will give our lives but not our land)

Gam ni Jamin Gamni Sarkar ni Nahi (The village land belongs to the village not the government)

Chanting these slogans, hundreds of farmers -- men, women, and children and I -- carrying banners and flags and wearing bandanas that proclaim Jal, Jamin, Jungle Bacho (Protect our Water, Land, and Jungles) walk along the highway in the early summer heat in Gujarat, India. They have embarked on a 14-day march, from their villages in Mahuva taluka (a district sub-division) to Gandhinagar, the capital of Gujarat state, 350 kilometers away. Along the way they have camped in open fields, been hosted by local villagers, and engaged in public education about their protest -- against the construction of the cement factory amidst their fertile lands -- and the destruction wrought in the name of development. Their immediate goal is to stop the construction of the cement factory. This padyatra (pilgrimage by foot) or march is an important public manifestation of a struggle that spanned three years and along the way won important legal and political victories and in the end was successful in moving the Supreme Court of India in their favor, which led to the stoppage of the factory construction, despite great opposition from the Chief Minister of the state.

This protest movement, commonly referred to as the Mahuva Movement, and two others -- the Macchimar Adhikar Sangsharsh Samiti (MASS, Committee for the Struggle for Fisherfolks' Rights) and Par-Purna Adivasi Sangh (Collective of Indigenous People from Par-Purna Rivers) were the focus of my Fulbright Hays research in India from January 2011 to October 2011. During this time I traveled 11,000 kilometers across the state conducting: ethnographic research in the villages where the movements had originated; interviews with movement participants, activists, artists, feminists, government officials, journalists, and scholars; and analysis of movement documents, websites, and other secondary sources. This research is the basis of the book I'm currently writing in which I address questions such as: What do these protests represent in the current neoliberal conjuncture in India? How are the protest repertoire gendered? What kinds of articulations of alternative development do these protests produce? What is the relationship of public, organic, and academic intellectuals in these movements? What are the implications of this for social transformation and emancipation? By addressing these questions, I intend to provincialize academia as the privileged site of knowledge production and in so doing contribute to a new cartography of feminist knowledge that has for decades been redrawing the contours of theory and praxis, mainstream and marginal.

Like most feminist scholars, during my research I also engage in various activist projects in the communities in which I live and work. For example, I worked with feminist colleagues in my ancestral town of Valsad, Gujarat in a project that focused on empowering girls (aged 12-18 from local public schools,) via creative self-expression. In India, only the poor and dalit, previously called “untouchables,”children attend public schools. Most middle class and upper class children go to a variety of private schools. We worked with about 50 girls in six, 3-hour sessions over a period of three months. The sessions engaged them in writing short stories as well as letters to local officials, feminist street theatre and songs, and photography. At the end of the sessions, they presented their skits and photographs -- of the gendered division of work in their communities -- at an exhibition that was attended by other children and teachers from their schools and their families. While this project was funded as a one-time event, many of us felt that it would be more rewarding and productive for the girls if they could have such gatherings on a more regular basis during their remaining school years. We are in the process of exploring funding opportunities for such ongoing sessions. Unfortunately, many girls before they reach high school graduation will discontinue schooling to start working and contributing to their families’ incomes. Another memorable and challenging endeavor was to conduct a day-long session on contemporary feminist theories in Hindi and Marathi for the young staff, men and women, of Akshara, a feminist organization in Mumbai (www.aksharacentre.org). You can imagine the fun I had translating Butler and Spivak.

It was wonderful to be home, where I have not lived for this length of time since the mid-1980s when I was doing my dissertation research. Although I go home almost every year, being there for this duration enabled me once again to enjoy the familiar rhythms of the seasons, essentially two versions of summer and monsoon, and more importantly the social and cultural cycles, all of which are associated with special foods. Monsoon and mangoes are among my favorites. In order to capture these daily rhythms, and to give free rein to my own creativity, I wrote a daily doha (a form of folk poetry written as couplets) in Gujarati. My literary agent in my ancestral town, a well-known feminist writer and activist who also happens to be my cousin’s wife, sees possibilities for publication. Who knows, I might yet embark on another career.
2011 – 2012 WGSS Faculty and Graduate Student Accomplishments

In 2011 – 2012, 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.

WGSS FACULTY

Alexis Boylan

Books


Book Chapters


Papers (presented, published)

- “The Two Mrs. Sloans: Problems of Biography and Feminism in Art History,” Lecture Series, University of Georgia, Athens, GA, February 2, 2012
- “Love New Mexico Style: Coupling and Uncoupling in John Sloan’s Paintings of the Southwest,” Southwest Art History Conference, Taos, NM, October 27, 2011

Margaret Breen

Academic/Professional milestones

- Appointed Interim Head of English for 2012-2013.

Book Chapters


Book Reviews


Anne D’Alleva

Papers (presented, published)


Manisha Desai

Academic/Professional milestones

- Spent 2011 in Gujarat, India on a Fulbright Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship

Book Reviews

- 2011 Ritty Lukose, Liberalization’s Children: Gender, Youth, and Consumer Citizenship in Globalizing India. In Gender and Society 25(6):797-798

Grants (active, approved, submitted)

- Fulbright Hays Faculty Research Abroad, US Dept. of Education: $116,000), 2011

Papers (presented, published)

- "Mahila Panchayats: Practice of Real Utopias in India", Winter Meeting of Sociologists for Women in Society, 2012
- "When Subaltern Women March: Gender Dynamics of Protest in Neoliberal India." At SWS organized event at the UN Commission on Status of Women, 56th session, 5 March, 2012.
- "What's in a Name?: Women's Race, and Ethnic Studies at UConn", Annual Meeting of the National Women's Studies Association, 2011.
- Mahila Panchayats: Practice of Real Utopias in India. Plenary Speaker, Sociologists for Women in Society, February 5 2012
Gender, Environment, and Development in a Globalizing Gujarat. Talk presented at the Centre for Social Studies, Surat, India, February 4, 2011

Francoise Dussart
Awards
- 2012 Faculty Mentor of the Year. The Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, a nonprofit educational organization funded by the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, and the Gates Foundation, Atlanta, Georgia
Grants
Book Chapters

Michael Gill
Awards
- 2011 Dorothy Haecker Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship, University of Missouri (Declined)
Grants (active, approved, submitted)
- Co-coordinator (with Cathy Schlund-Vials) of Human Rights Institute Faculty Workshop, “Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Disability Studies,” March 2012, University of Connecticut, $10,000.
Papers (presented, published)
- “One of These Things is Not Like the Other: Engaging Identities and Bodies in the Classroom.”
Book Reviews

Barbara Gurr
Academic/Professional milestones
- Accepted a position as Assistant Professor in Residence in the Women’s Studies Program, UConn, starting Fall 2011
Awards
- 2012 Named Speaker of the Year by the University of Connecticut’s Rainbow Center.
- 2011 Received the University of Connecticut Dean Ross McKinnon Fellowship
- Received the National Council on Family Relations Feminism and Family Studies Section Jessie Bernard Award for Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective.
Book Chapters
Encyclopedia Articles

Grants
- National Council on Family Relations Feminism and Family Studies Section Jessie Bernard Award for Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective.

Papers (presented, published)

Veronica Makowsky, English

Academic/Professional milestones
- 2011-2012: Director of English Graduate Studies, University of Connecticut

Papers (presented, published)

Nancy Naples

Awards
- 2011 Feminist Mentor Award, Sociologists for Women in Society

Book Chapters

Grants (active, approved, submitted)
- 2012 “Bodies in Motion, States of Unrest: Sexuality, Citizenship, and the Freedom of Movement as a Human Right,” workshop co-organized with Rachel Lewis and Marysol Asencio, UConn Human Rights Institute, $1,500; UConn Research Foundation, $1,500; CLAS Dean’s Fund for Interdisciplinary Programming, $1,000.
- 2012 “Intersectionality of Interdisciplinarity,” conference co-organized with Marysol Asencio, Martha Cutter, and Cathy Schlund-Vials, University of Connecticut Humanities Institute, $4,000; CLAS Dean’s Fund for Interdisciplinary Programming, $20,000.
- 2012 Film Screening and Discussion of “Getting Out” with Rachel Lewis, University of Connecticut CLAS Dean’s Fund for Interdisciplinary Programming Fund, $1,000, University of Connecticut.
- 2011 Human Rights Program Funding for Public Lecture on “Indigenous Knowledges and Human Rights” by Dr. Sandra Harding, Professor of Education in the Social Sciences and Comparative Education Division of UCLA’s Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences UCLA, University of Connecticut, $2,500.

Papers (presented, published)
- Colloquium “Doing Social Science Research that Matters,” Department of Sociology, Ohio University, April 11, 2012.
- Workshop, “Negotiating the Challenges of Interdisciplinary Praxis,” Rice University, October 12, 2011.
### Judy Rohrer

**Journal Articles**


**Papers (presented, published)**

- "What do you mean 'We' white professor?: Teaching about race in Feminist Classrooms," The Past, Present, and Future of Feminist Studies conference, UC Santa Barbara Feminist Studies Department, Santa Barbara, 2012.

### Ingrid Semaan

**Academic/Professional milestones**

- UConn-Stamford Director’s Advisory Committee, 2011-present

**Papers (presented, published)**

- "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 2011.

### Christine Sylvester

**Book Chapters**


**Papers (presented, published)**


### GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Ute Bettray, Literatures, Cultures & Languages**

**Awards**

- Urkunde/Certificate in Recognition of Outstanding Achievements in the Study of German Language and Literature, Der Generalkonsul der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Boston, 2012

**Papers (presented, published)**


**Penny Brandt, Music**

**Awards**

- Proclamation from President of the Asamblea Nacional for contributions to Culture in Quito, Ecuador, 2011

**Grants**

- Pianist and Alto Section Leader, Ecuador Tour (Musicological Recording Project), Collegium Musicum, 2011

**Performances**

Anna Hayrapetyan, Music
Performs
• Fairy, Fairy Queen (Purcell), UConn Opera Studio, 2011
• Pernille, The Beautiful Bridegroom (Shore), UConn Opera Studio, 2011
• Edeth, The Pirates of Penzance, UConn Opera Studio, 2011
Solo Performer, French Song Fest, UConn von der Mehden Recital Hall, 2011
Featured Soloist, UConn Concert Choir, UConn von der Mehden Recital Hall, 2011

Jamie Huff, Political Science
Papers (presented, published)

Barret Katuna, Sociology
Book Chapters

Papers (presented, published)
• “Human Rights and the Women’s Treaty: Why We Should Care? What We Can Do?” Panel Participant at the 2012 Sociologists for Women in Society Winter Meeting (St. Petersburg, FL: February 2012).
• Social Ties and Protest Participation. Roundtable Presider for Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements at the 2011 American Sociological Society Meeting (Las Vegas, NV: August).

Caryl Nuñez, Political Science
Awards
• Multicultural Fellowship Scholar, The Graduate School, University of Connecticut (2011)

Papers (presented, published)
• “Women’s Empowerment Programs in Malawi”, Human Rights Week, University of Dayton, 2011

Kristina Reardon, Literatures, Cultures & Languages
Awards
• Borys & Lisa S. Bilokur Award, UConn Department of Literatures, Cultures and Languages, April 2012
Grants
• AETNA Works-in-Progress Grant, University of Connecticut, Department of English, January 2012

Papers (presented, published)
• “Portrayals of Childhood Innocence in Contemporary Israeli Fiction.” eSharp (University of Glasgow), Issue 19, Autumn 2012: http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_247026_en.pdf.
• “Writing with the Left Hand.” World Literature Today inaugural Translation Tuesday blog post, July 17, 2012: worldliteraturetoday.com/writing-left-hand-kristina-zdravic-reardon#.ULKpi2dioSE.
(2011 – 2012 WGSS Faculty and Graduate Student Accomplishments continued)


**Julie Shoults, MCL- German**

**Grants**
- Zantop Travel Award; Coalition of Women in German (WiG) (2012)
- Northeast Modern Language Association (NeMLA) Summer Fellowship (2012)
- Graduate Student Summer Grant (2012) University of Connecticut Humanities Institute
- Summer Research Fellowship (2012) UConn WGSS Program
- Summer Research Fellowship (2012) UConn, Department of Literatures, Cultures & Languages

**Papers (presented, published)**
- “Building Socialist Unity: International Socialism as an Alternative to Nationalism in Hermynia zur Mühlen’s Der Tempel (The Temple)”; American Comparative Literature Association Conference; Providence, RI (March 2012)

**Malaena Taylor, Sociology**

**Academic/Professional milestones**
- Graduate Certificate, Feminist Studies; University of Connecticut, 2012

**Amber West, English**

**Poetry Publications**
- “If you wake” and “If my face were outerspace,” Esque Issue 3: Revolutionesque, 2012.

**Presentations (Academic & Artistic)**

**Abbey S. Willis, Sociology**

**Papers (presented, published)**

**Presenting the New WGSS Logo:**

Janne Simmons, Jucelle Lim, and Dana Haddad from the Department of Art and Art History’s Design Center were awarded the 2012 Feminist Arts Award for their work on the new logo for the WGSS program as we implemented our official name change. They worked with students in the Spring 2011 Women’s Studies Senior Seminar to research the logo designs of other WGSS programs and to develop the new logo. Dr. Anne D’Alleva writes: “It was not easy to create a design that would be fresh and forward-looking, referencing the human figure but not falling into a simplistic gender binary (the students decided early on that they did not want anything to do with male and female gender symbols, linked or unlinked). The active and eye-catching design they created expresses the multiplicity of human experiences and identities, and the multi-faceted nature of our research and teaching in WGSS.
2012 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 Anna Brennan (major) received the award for her paper on “Female Genital Surgeries in Western and non-Western Context.”

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 Theresa Govert received the award for her community activism in the U.S. and South Africa and academic excellence. Theresa is a junior majoring in Psychology with a minor in WGSS. She is passionate in fighting against violence against women. She is working as a TA for the Violence Against Women Prevention Program and for an in-patient substance abuse treatment facility for pregnant and parenting women where she runs groups on women’s issues. In Cape Town she is interning at the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women. At the end of this semester she is traveling to Tanzania to work with a group working on women’s public health issues in rural villages. In addition to her activist work, she has consistently made the Dean’s List throughout her college career.

In 2012, The Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship Award was awarded for the first time. This scholarship was 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. This year’s recipient was Marissa Dubeczky, a double major in English Literature and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She has participated in Project Academic Advancement and Big Brother Big Sister, and has served as President of Triota, the Women's Studies Honor Society. She has received numerous awards and honors, including the Homer Babbidge Scholar, New England Scholar, Jacqueline Brown Dickstein Scholarship, Chase Going Woodhouse Award. She has interned at the Women's Studies Program, and has continued working there as an employee. Among the major activist projects she has worked on is planning a clothing drive for the No Freeze shelter in Willimantic and protesting against rape culture at UConn. She has coordinated her efforts with other student groups including Revolution Against Rape and Idealists United. The most recent collaboration was with Idealists United’s Social Justice Awareness Week. Her goal is to continue to work on behalf of social justice and hopes to join Teach for America or Americorps.

An Honorable Mention for this award went to Theresa Govert for her extensive activism to promote social justice and outstanding academic achievement.

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 year, Jenna Simmons, Dana Haddad, and Jucelle Lim received the award for their redesign of the WGSS website and development of our new logo.

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, Shweta Majumdar Adur (PhD Sociology 2013, WS Graduate Certificate –2009), has taught in Sociology and Women’s Studies for several years. Shweta's teaching evaluations are among the highest in the program and she currently serves as the faculty advisor to an undergraduate group Love 146 that raises awareness against trafficking.

The CLAS Dean's Doctoral Research Summer Fellowship This year’s recipients were Jamie Huff for her dissertation project, “On Southern Soil: Fiction, Violence, Identity and the Law,” and Julie Anderson-Shoults for her dissertation project, “Socialist Women and Women Under Socialism: On the Transhistorical Formation of Women’s Socialist Identities in German-Language Literature.”
(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. Nikki McGary is a PhD candidate in Sociology and has been an instructor of WGSS since 2007. Her research focuses on gender, law and society, and stems from her deep seeded commitment to reproductive justice. Her feminist consciousness was first ignited in an intro WS class here at UConn when she was an undergrad over a decade ago, which prompted her to major in WS (with Marita as one of her feminist mentors), ultimately influencing her feminist praxis that prompted this award.

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, Stacy Missari and Christine Zozula, both graduate students in Sociology, for their terrific paper on “Women As.: Personhood, Rights, and the Case of Domestic Violence.” Stacy is also an instructor in WGSS where she has taught Masculinities and Violence Against Women.

Why Should You Consider Making a Donation To the Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program?

The Women’s, Gender & Sexuality 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, Gender and Sexuality 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, Gender & Sexuality 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, Gender & Sexuality 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 WGSS 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, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program in 2011 - 2012!

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.
Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
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__ Kristie Ann Wood Scholarship in Women’s Studies, #31237  __ I’d like more information on Planned Giving Opportunities
__ My/My spouse’s/partner’s employer will match my gift.  __ I wish for my/our gift to remain anonymous

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3. ONLINE GIVING: http://www.foundation.uconn.edu, choose Give Now option. As you complete the donation page, Select Other Purpose & enter a WGSS account (listed above) to ensure that your donation goes to the account of your choice.

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