

## New online 'zine highlights feminist activism for social justice

Julie Tippey first got the idea for *Hissy Fit*, a student-run online magazine during a project she was working on for her Women, Gender and Society class. She was also inspired by her work with E.L.A.M.E and other feminist publications such as *Bitch and Jezebel*. According to Tippey, *Hissy Fit's* goal is to make readers "aware of daily oppression and to [offer] them a forum for discussion and for learning about these issues."



Following the aesthetic practices of the 1980s and 1990s punk-era Riot Grrrl movement, Tippey created special patches to promote the online 'zine.

Topics addressed in previous publications have included sexual harassment, domestic violence, androgyny, preferred gender pronouns, women in gaming, and music scene cultures. Check it out: [isuhissyfit.blogspot.com](http://isuhissyfit.blogspot.com).

## Erin Durban-Albrecht to join WGS-SOA faculty this fall

Last fall the WGS search committee partnered with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology to create a joint tenure-track appointment. The committee reviewed more than 100 applications until we found the perfect fit for both programs.

We are thrilled to announce that Erin L. Durban-Albrecht will be joining us this fall as an assistant professor of WGS and cultural anthropology. She holds a Ph.D. in Gender and Women's Studies from the University of Arizona. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on the gender and sexual politics of U.S. imperialism in Haiti. Durban-Albrecht's areas of specialization are transnational feminisms, LGBTQ studies, Caribbean and Latin American cultural studies, and social movements. She will be teaching ANT 270: The Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality; WGS 292: Introduction to LGBT/Queer Studies, and WGS 392: LGBT/Queer Studies and Theory. Welcome Erin!



## Update from new WGS assistant director

Greetings WGS Alumni! I enjoyed my first year as the WGS assistant director. As you all know, WGS is an amazing, dynamic program and one I am happy to call home.

In my role, I advise our undergraduate minors and graduate certificate students. A key focus this year was revamping our internship course for students. Internships are wonderful opportunities for students to learn skills related to their professional and personal aspirations. If you work for an organization/company that offers internships to students, let me know. I am eager to make connections with groups outside the Bloomington/Normal area.

Another focus was expanding our job and graduate school advising to students interested in employment and graduate studies related to WGS. A crucial part of this initiative is offering perspective from alumni who utilize their WGS degrees in their current positions. If you use your WGS background in your job and would like to share your story, let me know. I am also collecting alumni advice about job searching, professional development, and following your passion – I welcome any words of wisdom you have for our students.

Cheers to a great year!  
Stacia Kock  
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Visit us at [WGS.IllinoisState.edu](http://WGS.IllinoisState.edu)

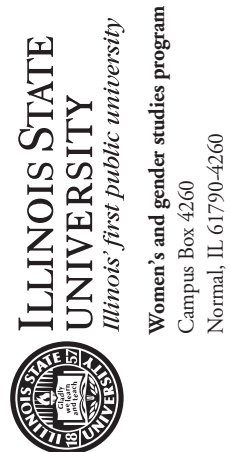


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Follow us on Twitter @ISUWGS

The WGS website and social media pages are great ways to keep up with the program, see what our students are doing and check out some good reads. Come find us!

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## From the director

Dearest Alumni,

You will not believe the year we have had. Our program is growing in leaps and bounds. Last year the dean gave WGS our first joint tenure-track line with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. We are pleased to announce after a very long, but very successful search that Erin Durban-Albrecht will be joining our faculty in the fall. She earned her Ph.D. in Gender and Women's Studies from the University of Arizona. She has specializations in transnational feminisms, LGBTQ studies, queer theory, and Haiti and the Haitian diaspora.

With this historic hire the WGS Program is now in a good place to begin discussing the possibility of both a WGS major and a Queer Studies certificate. The core faculty will be meeting this fall to begin the process of exploring these possibilities. This year Illinois State University hosted its first Lavender Graduation for LGBTQ students and their friends and family. Thanks to Mandy Dartt, WGS office manager, and Aric Faulkner, WGS program graduate assistant, for being part of the team that made that happen.

Our new assistant director, Stacia Kock, has been busy promoting the program and developing internship opportunities in the community. As of May, we currently have 55 minors and 34 graduate certificate students. We are also growing our certificate partnership with social work!

Our most exciting news, however, is hearing about your accomplishments. You've been working at publishing houses, starting families, finishing dissertations, entering academia as new professors, writing for online publications, directing theater productions, and even returning to ISU to work with our students. It's so wonderful to see how your WGS Program education is playing out in the world. Please know that you all make a difference and that we are so proud the work you are doing. And, please keep in touch and let us know if you are ever back on campus!

In solidarity,

Alison Bailey  
Director

## Alumni News



Devon Hartwig

**Devon Rae Hartwig '14** is a correspondent for the Avaaz Foundation, an online social justice organization. Hartwig is also expecting a baby (Josephine June) with her partner, Will, on June 8. They are living in St. Louis, Mo., and love it. She wears her WGS pin proudly on her favorite jacket.

**Erin Frost '13** is happy to announce that her dissertation "Theorizing an Apparent Feminism in Technical Communication" was awarded the 2015 CCCC Outstanding Dissertation Award in Technical Communication. See: [www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/techcommdissertation](http://www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/techcommdissertation). She said her

WGS graduate certificate work heavily influenced the dissertation and is grateful for her time at ISU.

**Danny Mathews '11** is a Redbird who came back home. After a year of serving the Virginia Tech campus community as LGBTQ coordinator, he is now the specialist for advising and leadership development in ISU's Diversity Advocacy office. Mathews enjoys advising the Association of Latin American Students, Asian Pacific American Coalition, Black Student Union, and PRIDE. He loves his work, and being a part of the WGS family again.



Danny Mathews with Laverne Cox

**Julia Drauden O'Dell '10** was promoted to associate editor of the Business, Marketing, and Career Education Department at Goodheart-Willcox publishing. In November, she returned to ISU to present "Skills for a Publishing Career" at the Publications Unit Professional Speaker Series. Drauden also gave birth to a son in February. Congrats!

**Kathy Erick '10** is in her "all-but-dissertation" stage in the Rhetorics, Communication and Information Design program at Clemson University. Erick has been a graduate teacher of rhetoric, teaching Accelerated Composition for three years. She made a few public research presentations and has submitted a chapter to *Irony and Postmodernism*.

**Annaliisa Alman '08** has been promoted. She is teaching more theatre classes and directing more productions at Niles North High School, where she has been since 2009. In January she coordinated the box office at the annual Illinois High School Theatre Festival. She is working on her master's degree in theatre directing at Roosevelt University in Chicago. She and her partner, Georgette Kell, are engaged to be married next year.

**Stephanie Braun '07** is beginning her doctoral program in education at the University of St. Francis this summer. Her kids are growing. Xander starts first grade in the fall; Sebastian starts preschool, and Aksel and Zackary (twins!) will be two years old. Her husband, Andrew, is working as a home health nurse.

**Andrew Anastasia '06** successfully defended his dissertation in April. On March 24, he and his partner welcomed into the world their daughter, Isadora Sempos Anastasia. They live in Frostburg, Md., where Anastasia is an assistant professor of Rhetoric and Composition. He will be presenting at the 2015 NWSA conference this fall.

**Sarah Ehlers '04** relocated to Houston, Texas, this year to start a new job as an assistant professor in the English Department at the University of Houston. She specializes in 20th century American literature, poetry, and poetics, and is in the process of finishing her first book manuscript, a study of Depression-era poetic culture.

## WGS staff assists with ISU's inaugural Lavender Graduation

ISU is proud to join the list of over 80 U.S. college campuses holding Lavender Graduation ceremonies. Lavender Graduation is a pre-commencement ceremony celebrating the accomplishments and successes of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) and allied college students. The event was originally created by Ronni Sanlo, a Jewish lesbian who was denied the chance to attend her biological children's commencement because of her sexual orientation. As a result she worked with the University of Michigan to design the first Lavender Graduation Ceremony in 1995.

Thanks to Mandy Dartt, office manager, and Aric Faulkner, graduate assistant, for their work on the organizing committee that brought this event to our campus.

## WGS program celebrates scholarship recipients at symposium

The Anne M. Semlak Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Cynthia Jagodzinski**, who is working towards her master's degree in social work and her WGS graduate certificate.

She also received the 2014 WINGS award from the Bloomington/Normal YWCA. With a passion for social justice and promoting the advancement of women, she hopes to work as a victim's advocate for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors.

The Dorothy E. Lee Scholarship was awarded to **Cara Kerchner**, a senior majoring in fine art with a minor in art history. As a founding member of the Inter[D]isciplinary Enrichment of the Arts (I.D.E.A.), a registered student organization at ISU, she works to bring together artists working in all mediums for interdisciplinary critiques. Kerchner plans to earn her master's degree and be involved in nonprofit arts and community-based organizations.

The Luellen Laurenti Scholarship was awarded to **Kevin Mell**, a junior majoring in political science with a WGS minor. Mell was drawn to the richness of ideas in the WGS Program and plans to go to graduate school to study political theory with an emphasis on gender studies. He will continue to be an advocate for social justice.

**Emma Belz** was honored with the WGS Achievement Award. Belz is a senior majoring in community health education with the WGS minor. Her passion and commitment to women's health and reproductive justice began at age 14. She was part of the Planned Parenthood Team Awareness Group in Bloomington, Ill. She served as president of the Feminist Led Activist Movement to Empower (F.L.A.M.E.) and volunteered as a member of the Student Wellness Ambassador Team (S.W.A.T.).



Scholarship recipients were honored at the 20th Annual WGS Symposium.

## Symposium keynote engages #BlackLivesMatter campaign

What if we thought about #BlackLivesMatter intersectionally? Thinking about the lives of young black girls the same way we think about the lives of young black boys like Tamir Rice? How about the lives of black women like Miriam Carey? Or black transwomen like Nizah Morris? What about the police who beat Pearl Pearson for disobeying orders he could not hear because he was deaf?

Jennifer Lisa Vest's keynote spoken word performance "Peculiar Requests for Peculiar Bodies: Black Lives Matter, [Trans] Gendered Violence, Disability, and Women in a 'Post-Racial,' 'Post-Sexist' Present" asked audience members to mindfully consider how sexuality, gender, and ability intersect with race in cases of police violence. As one faculty member remarked, "This was one of the most powerful keynote speeches I've every heard (and I've heard a lot!). Really a truly phenomenal event."

Vest is a mixed-race queer, philosopher, poet and spoken word artist. Vest had many opportunities to interact with our students. She gave a Philopoetics class, a poetry reading at University Galleries, recorded some of her work for WGLT's Poetry Radio, and guest lectured in Angela Haas's Native Rhetorics class.

This year we welcomed student presenters from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Toby Beauchamp moderated the "Queering Bodies-Blurring Boundaries" panel with two presentations. Stephanie Skora spoke on Australia's use of third-option gender markers, and Matthew Speck offered a comparison between transgender pornography and freak shows.

A morning panel focused on disability and acceptance. Amy Fitzjarrald presented "Being Overweight and the College Environment," and Dalton Stevens presented his work on disabled masculinities. Topics addressed in other morning panels included sexuality, challenging social norms, and testimonies. Kass Fleisher's writing students presented their latest work on creative writing resistance to dominant disability discourses.

Pamela Twyman Hoff moderated the afternoon panel "The Reconceptualization and Reclamation of Black Motherhood as a Site for Transformative Resistance." The panel included three student reflections on the unique and challenging experiences of black women as mothers. Flourice Richardson's presentation addressed reclaiming one's own identity as a black woman; Tuwana Wingfield shared her work on resistance of women and children of African descent in a post-racial society, and Venise Keys presented her artwork focusing on African-American maternal aesthetics.

Other panels focused on misogyny in video gaming culture, queer bodies, theater and literature, and the intersections of gender with law and public policy.

## F.L.A.M.E. keeps feminism alive on campus

The students in F.L.A.M.E continue to impress us. As usual our annual Take Back the Night march kicked off the fall semester. This year ISU President Larry Dietz attended the event and marched with the students! He told us, "I could have been anywhere tonight, but I chose to be here." The Clothesline Project graced our Quad twice this year, once in preparation for the march and again in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Other highlights include F.L.A.M.E.'s spring production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. The troupe performed the play for the 2015 Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC) in February. And, there was a community performance in March. Proceeds from the event were donated to the YWCA's Stepping Stones program and the Neville House. F.L.A.M.E also hosted "Life Interrupted: Women Incarcerated," a panel discussion of the truths of the criminal justice system and its effects on women during and after their stays.