

“Symposium” continued

and Civil Rights movement have been achieved, so now we can go back to being sex objects, eye candy, mommies, helpmates, and housewives whose value is defined by our appearance and reproductive capacities.

Another eventful year for F.L.A.M.E.

Take Back the Night kicked off the year in October. The Clothesline Project on the Illinois State Quad to raise awareness of sexual assault and domestic violence was held in both the fall and spring semesters. This has become a biannual community event. We hope



these events will garner more attention in light of President Barack Obama’s recent public service announcement calling for campuses to seriously survey their students on the issues of sexual assault and the campus climate.

The spring semester began with F.L.A.M.E.’s 2014 production of Eve Ensler’s *The Vagina Monologues*. The event

raised close to \$5,000 for the YWCA’s Stepping Stones program, Neville House domestic violence shelter, Illinois State University Student Counseling Services’ Sexual Assault Prevention and Survivor Services, V-Day, and Planned Parenthood Teen Awareness.

Mandy Dartt joins the WGS staff

Mandy Dartt ’03 joined our staff in late June 2013 as our new office manager. Dartt is pursuing a master’s degree in college student personnel administration. She brings her trademark optimism, humor, and love of working with our students to this position. She has reached out to new prospective students in the College of Education and through her work with diversity issues. Way to go, Mandy!

WGS welcomes new assistant director!

Our program is excited to welcome Stacia Kock to the Illinois State University family. Kock will serve as our new assistant director. In addition to teaching two courses per semester, she



Stacia Kock

will also serve as advisor for the program and will coordinate outreach efforts on campus and in the community.

Kock received her Ph.D. in women’s studies from The Ohio State University. She has experience as a first-year student advisor at The Ohio State University and has taught courses including Introduction to Women’s Gender and Sexuality; Feminist Methodologies; Sociology of Gender; and Gender, Race, and Poverty in the U.S. Kock’s research interests focus on gender and political economy; women, race, and poverty; 20th-century social movements; and gender and public policy.

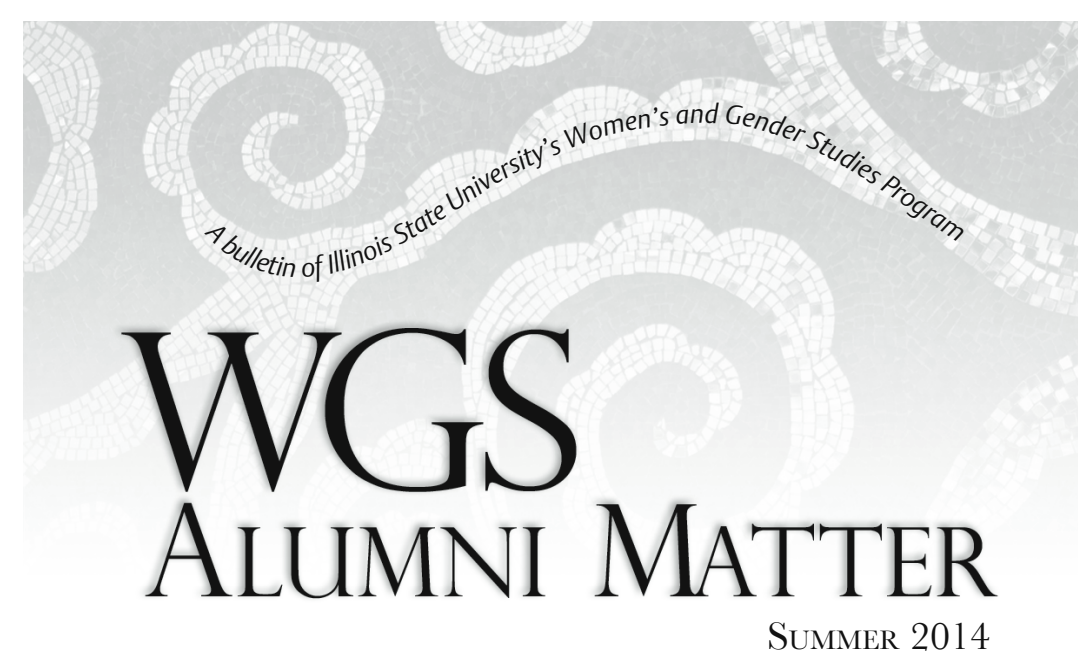
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Join us on Facebook

The WGS Facebook page is a great way to keep up with the program, see what our students are doing and check out some good reads. Come find us at Facebook.com/ISUWGS.



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From the director

Dear Alumni,

As always a huge round of applause is in order for this year’s women’s and gender studies (WGS) program graduates, some of whom are going on to do graduate work at top-notch universities such as the University of Colorado Boulder, the University of Pittsburgh, Northwestern University, and the University of Louisville. Every year I am humbled and amazed at the stories I hear from our alums about the differences you are making in your communities, families, and workplaces.

You are raising a new generation, working at domestic violence shelters, mentoring girls, becoming lawyers, working for NARAL and other advocacy groups, practicing the healing arts, travelling to distant lands for research and adventure, entering the academy as lecturers and professors, advocating for LGBT causes, caring for your elders, teaching at community colleges, writing novels and poetry, creating art, finishing Ph.D.s, writing blogs, singing, administering, and starting your own businesses. You are amazing! You are inspiring!

The WGS program continues to grow and change in new and positive ways. Tom Gerschick has completed his term as acting advisor. He will be passing the torch to our new assistant director and advisor, Stacia Kock, who will join us in July.

The number of minors and certificate students continues to grow. We now have almost 30 certificate students. We have welcomed more four new affiliated faculty: Shelly Clevenger (Department of Criminal Justice Sciences), Gina Schouten (Department of Philosophy), Liv Stone (Department of Sociology and Anthropology), and Vanessa Schulman (School of Art).

This year our 19th annual student research symposium featured a wide variety of presentations by our undergraduate and graduate students. There were staged performances, poetry and fiction readings, presentations on new iPhone apps for expecting parents, and panels showcasing recent student research.

Susan Douglas delivered her keynote address, “Enlightened Sexism: The Seductive Message That Feminism’s Work Is Done,” to an engaged audience of about 200 people.

We are currently expanding our curriculum this year by offering WGS 292: Introduction to LGBT Studies (a new course) along with our existing WGS 392: Topics in LGBT Studies and Theory. We have also requested a new joint faculty line in WGS and sociology. We ask you to keep your fingers crossed that this comes through.

Thanks to those of you who have kept in touch and have shared your accomplishments and updates with us over the year. I wish you continued success and joy in all you do. And remember, if you are ever in town, please let us know!

In solidarity,

Alison Bailey

Alumni News

Charlotte Adams '11, M.S. '13, has accepted a position as the communications assistant intern at the Illinois Center for School Improvement (CSI), which is a startup group within the American Institutes for Research (AIR). The group's main focus is to help Illinois school districts identify their needs, find resources, and connect the dots.

Nicole Lask Aitken '00, M.S. '03, Ph.D. '08, lives in Bloomington-Normal with her husband and two daughters, Katie (6) and Hope (2). She is a full professor at Illinois Central College, where she teaches developmental reading and writing and has chartered a chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta, the English honor society for two-year colleges. She recently edited a new textbook, *Real Essays With Readings: Writing for Success in College, Work, and Everyday Life*.



Andrew Anastasia

Andrew Anastasia '06 has accepted an assistant professorship at Frostburg State University, where he will coordinate the basic writing courses for the department of English. He is currently finishing his dissertation, "Teaching Discomfort: A Qualitative, Multicase Study of Teachers' and Students' Descriptions of Discomfort in First-Year Composition."

Meghan Bosko, M.A. '13, received the James Fisher Outstanding Thesis Award for "The Re-Visioning of Argentina's Disappeared: Strategies of Representation and Resistance." She is planning to continue her research in Argentina this year.



Meghan Bosko



Braun children

Stephanie Braun '05, M.S. '07, is now the director of academic intervention and accommodation services at Joliet Junior College, where she oversees the tutoring and learning center. She and her husband, Andrew, have four boys: Xander (5), Sebastian (3), and twins Aksel and Zackary (1).

Julie Drauden O'Dell '10 works at Goodheart-Willcox Publisher in Tinley Park. She was promoted to associate editor in April. She also got married to Timothy O'Dell, on September 7, 2013.



Mallie Feltner

Le'Mil Eiland '14 received a scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh to pursue his Ph.D.

Mallie Feltner '14 is headed to the University of Louisville to complete her master's degree in women's and gender studies. She will hold an assistantship in the women's and gender studies program office.

Jenna Goldsmith '08, M.A. '10, received the University of Kentucky College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. Her article "Landing on the Patio: Landscape Ecology and the Architecture of Identity in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*" was published in *disClosure: A Journal of Social Theory*.

Delali Kumavie, M.S. '12, is finishing her AAUW fellowship. She will be interning for a women's organization in Ghana this summer before she starts her Ph.D. studies in English and African studies at Northwestern University this fall.



Jenna Goldsmith



Josette Lorig

Josette Lorig '14 is off to University of Colorado Boulder to complete her Ph.D. in English with a focus on 20th-century American literature and women's and gender studies.

Sarah Lushia, M.S. '05, Ph.D. '10, earned the equivalent of tenure this year at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. She has also been working on a variety of professional projects in the composition and honors programs, and producing a Japanese documentary titled *-1287*. See her e-portfolio at slushia.wordpress.com.

Talia Menachem '06 has been living in Israel and working for Points of You for the last seven years. The company creates tools for personal and professional development. These are hand-on games (based on phototherapy principles) that social workers, psychologists, trainers, group facilitators, coaches, and educators love. She is getting married this September and is the proud mama to a sweet dog named Foxy.

Courtney McKinney-Whitaker, M.A. '09, is about to publish her first novel, *The Last Sister*, with Young Palmetto Books, in October. It's a young adult historical novel set in the southeast during the Anglo-Cherokee War of 1759–1761. See her author website, courtneymckinneywhitaker.com. She and her husband are expecting their first child (a daughter!) in September.

Jason Wilkins '10 has completed his law degree at Northern Illinois University's college of law and is working as an associate attorney in Sycamore.

WGS program honors scholarship recipients at Symposium

We have been honored this year to be part of the lives of so many outstanding students. The following scholarship recipients were honored April 25 at the 2014 WGS Symposium.

The Dorothy E. Lee Scholarship is awarded annually to a promising nontraditional student who is returning to the University to complete her degree. This year we were excited to award the scholarship to Joanne Calmese, a junior special education (deaf and hard of hearing) major, who hopes to teach at a residential school for the deaf.



Joanne Calmese, Victoria Parra, and Brooke Barnhart

of Latin American Students, Friendly Faces, and the Social Justice Institute. Despite her busy schedule, she frequently can be found in the women's and gender studies resource room!

The WGS Achievement Award and the Anne Semlak Memorial Scholarship were both awarded to Brooke Barnhart. Barnhart is a senior politics and government major with a minor in women's and gender studies. She has volunteered with Planned Parenthood and served as co-president of our registered student organization, Feminist Lead Activist Movement to Empower (F.L.A.M.E.). On campus she was responsible for co-organizing campus events such as Take Back the Night, *The Vagina Monologues*, and the Clothesline Project. Her parents were able to attend the awards ceremony at the WGS Symposium.

19th Annual Research Symposium was a success!

For the past 19 years the Women's and Gender Studies Research Symposium has showcased student interdisciplinary work. This year our students presented their research papers, works of creative nonfiction, theatrical performances, and even software applications to an enthusiastic crowd on April 25! The event packed two full rooms and featured 28 student presentations.

This year was especially fun. Twenty-two honor students from Simeon Career Academy High School took a bus from Chicago to attend the sessions and have lunch with our presenters. Their questions and comments helped the audience to recognize the real-life applications of these topics and how they impact younger generations.

This year's student presentations were as good as many of the faculty presentations at academic conferences. The presenters were confident and professional, and their research was deeply engaging. A few of the highlights included Flourice Richardson's talk on Saartjie "Sarah" Baartman, an enslaved Khoisan woman who was brought to England, and later France, as an "exotic exhibit." Richardson tied the images of Baartman's body that were later included in *Illustrations of Natural History of Mammals* to current tropes used in the exploitation of African-American women's bodies.

Other presentations focused on gender and its intersections in virtual worlds. Taylor Arndt's study explored accepted norms of sexual harassment and rape culture in the boy's club that is online gaming. Lily Andersen and Chris Lackey unveiled their new "Oh Baby!" app, which turns tablets and smartphones into a virtual baby who cries, needs rocking, and needs changing.

The Feminist Director in Contemporary Theater Group staged four short pieces, including "Romance" and "The Moon Please." The pieces were followed by an energetic "talk back" session.

Afternoon sessions included Professor Maura Toro-Morn's "Feminist Autobiography" panel, which included five selections from student narrative autobiographical works. Presentations highlighted particular lived experiences such as being a legally blind first-generation feminist, contracting a gestational surrogate mother, reflections from a budding Latina feminist, and thoughts on feminist consciousness raising in Ghana. Associate Professor Kass Fleisher assembled a three-student panel highlighting recent works of creative nonfiction. These included Eric Longfellow's "Excerpts from 'If it's Harmless, Even More,'" Lasantha Rodrigo's "In the Spotlight," and Irene Taylor's "Excerpts from 'Suppos'd to.'"

The Symposium ended with a dynamic panel on "Black Feminist Thought," which included LaPortia Jones's research on deconstructing the black superwoman, and Muriel Dorsey's groundbreaking reflections on how black feminist thought might be used for therapeutic practices.

Susan J. Douglas was our keynote speaker this year. During her two-day visit Douglas had a mentoring lunch with members of F.L.A.M.E, WGS graduate students, and other activists on campus. She gave a Milner Library-sponsored book talk to a full house on April 24. Her symposium address, "Enlightened Sexism: The Seductive Message That Feminism's Work Is Done," brought to focus the mixed messages young women receive today about feminism. The message is that the gains of the feminist