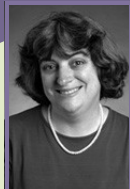


WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES AT LSU

at Louisiana State University



Director's Notes
with
Kate Bratton

As we approach a new semester, I find myself reflecting on our mission at WGS: to provide students with an appreciation of the importance of gender, to foster interdisciplinary teaching and research related to women's and gender studies, and to contribute to a better understanding of diversity. Our accomplishments this semester truly reflect our shared commitment to this mission. As the items in this newsletter clearly demonstrate, we have so much to be proud of—innovative teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate level, manuscripts published and in progress, awards, presentations, reading groups, and engagement with the community around us. I want to express my appreciation to all of the faculty, students, staff, and administrative support that make WGS what it is.

We have much to look forward to in the spring semester. We will be offering several undergraduate courses, including *Gender & Popular Culture*; several sections of both *Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies* and *Gender, Race, and Nation*; *Feminist Theory*; and two sections of our special topics course (Dana Berkowitz's *Men & Masculinities* and Laura Choate's *Girls, Women, and Wellness*.) Thanks to all who are contributing, and thanks very much to the departments who made this possible (including the Departments of English, History, Political Science, Sociology, and the College of Education). We also have several courses of related interest offered across departments and colleges.

I also want to remind everyone of some really exciting events for the spring. Loretta Pecchioni is organizing the spring retreat (February); please think about themes or topics for the retreat. Michael Kimmel will be speaking at LSU in March (many thanks, Dana Berkowitz!). The graduate minors / WSGSO are working on a series of events related to a screening of *MissRepresentation* (by Jennifer Siebel Newsom). Many thanks to Maud Walsh for coordinating fall awards—and we should all begin thinking about nominees for our spring WGS awards for undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty.

I hope you had a very restful and happy winter break!

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Fall 2011

Currents in WGS on Campus & in the Community

Food Writing of WGS Graduate Minor Leads to Cookbook Deal



Helana Brigman, a doctoral student in English and Women's & Gender Studies, is quite busy these days. In addition to her doctoral work, widely viewed food blog "Clearly Delicious," and bi-monthly food column in *The Advocate*, she is now under advance contract to write her first cookbook with LSU Press for Spring 2013. Tentatively titled *The Fresh Table: Cooking Louisiana All the Year Round*, the seasonally structured cookbook will feature around 80-90 Louisiana produce-based recipes.

Thrilled about the project, Helana credited Alisa Plant, Acquisitions Editor at LSU Press, with approaching her about the idea of writing a cookbook, something Helana had contemplated for quite some time. Plant, who had been reading Helana's food blog and column, contacted her about her work, and, as Helana states, "One thing led to another."

In fact, the decision to develop a food blog is what generated the opportunity to write for *The Advocate*. As someone who has always been obsessed with food, Helana has also enjoyed sharing her recipes with family and friends. Initially, she sent out her tasty creations as email attachments but then began to see the possibilities in food blogs, websites dedicated to learning and sharing recipes. According to Helana, "The concept of food blogging just seemed really doable and easy," and in 2008, she developed "Clearly Delicious," a food, cooking, and recipe blog.

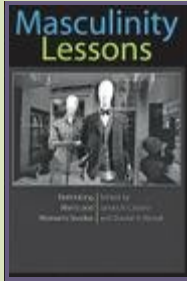
In discussing the chance to write for *The Advocate*, Helana compared it to the 2009 film *Julie & Julia*, explaining "It was similar to when someone discovered Julie Powell online and was like 'I'm going to make you a star'." In an effort to bring *The Advocate's* food section into the new age, Stephanie Riegel, the new food editor, wrote a story on Baton Rouge food bloggers, which featured Helana and two other bloggers. Riegel liked Helana's food writing and blog so much she posted two of Helana's recipes with the column. Needless to say, the recipes were a big hit with the food editing crew, and Helana was asked to do the bi-monthly column.

When asked where she finds the inspiration for her delectables, Helana revealed that at first she recreated others' recipes but eventually started developing her own as she became more comfortable with food. "The desire to develop my own creations," she added, "is a creative element sparked by my interest in food and pleasure and also a requirement for writing a cookbook."

Helana admitted her food writing interests at the moment have nothing to do with her dissertation topic but is excited about uncovering this relationship. Interested in Victorian reading and Victorian women, she looks forward to exploring how the experiences of women of the Victorian period can be more understood through the triangulation of food, pleasure, and bodies. For now though, she is elated to be associated with LSU Press, one of the oldest scholarly presses in the south, for her first book project.

For more information about Helana's cookbook project, follow the "My Book" link at <http://www.clearlydeliciousfoodblog.com/>.

New Books by WGS Faculty



James Catano and David Novak

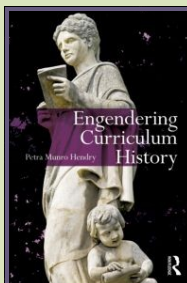
In November 2011 Johns Hopkins University Press published an edited collection by James Catano and Daniel Novak entitled *Masculinity Lessons: Rethinking Men's and Women's Studies*. The essays in the anthology provide specific insight into critical conversations on masculinity as they have unfolded over time and in the pages of the NWSA journal (now *Feminist Formations*).



Elsie Michie

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press (2011), *The Vulgar Question of Money: Heiresses, Materialism, and the Novel of Manners from Jane Austen to Henry James* examines the frequently employed marriage plot and what it tells us about changing reactions to money in British culture. Each chapter examines a novelist and a contemporary thinker

(Jane Austen and Adam Smith and the rise of commercialism; Frances Trollope and Thomas Robert Malthus and industrialism; Anthony Trollope and Walter Bagehot and the role of money in politics; Margaret Oliphant and John Stuart Mill and professionalism and managerial capitalism; and Henry James and George Simmel and the shift of economic power from Great Britain to the U.S.). Of interest to a broad range of scholars across disciplines, Dr. Michie's work provides new interdisciplinary perspectives on the intersection of the economic, social, and political worlds as revealed by nineteenth century British literature.

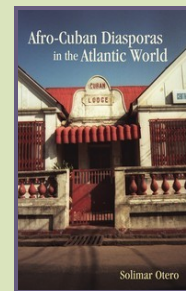


Petra Munro-Hendry

How can curriculum history be re-envisioned from a feminist, poststructuralist perspective? *Engendering Curriculum History*, published by Routledge in March 2011, disrupts dominant notions of history as linear, as inevitable progress, and as embedded in the individual. This conversation requires a history that seeks *remembrance* not representation, *reflexivity* not linearity, and *responsibility* not truth. Rejecting a compensatory approach to rewriting history, which leaves dominant historical categories and periodization intact, Hendry examines how the narrative structures of curriculum histories are implicated in the construction of gendered subjects. Five central chapters take up a particular discourse (wisdom, the body, colonization, progressivism and pragmatism) to excavate the subject

identities made possible across time and space. Curriculum history is understood as an emergent, not a finished, process - as an unending dialogue that creates spaces for a finished, process - as an unending dialogue that creates spaces for conversation in which multiple, conflicting, paradoxical and contradictory interpretations can be generated as a means to stimulate more questions, not grand narratives.

Published by University of Rochester Press in July 2010, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas in the Atlantic World* explores how Yoruba and Afro-Cuban communities moved across the Atlantic between the Americas and Africa in successive waves in the nineteenth century. In Havana, Yoruba slaves from Lagos banded together to buy their freedom and sail home to Nigeria. Once in Lagos, this Cuban repatriate community became known as the Aguda. This community built their own neighborhood that celebrated their Afrolatino heritage. For these Yoruba and Afro-Cuban diasporic populations, nostalgic constructions of family and community play the role of narrating and locating a longed-for home. By providing a link between the workings of nostalgia and the construction of home, this volume re-theorizes cultural imaginaries as a source for diasporic community reinvention. Through ethnographic fieldwork and research in folkloristics, Otero reveals that the Aguda identify strongly with their Afro-Cuban roots in contemporary times. Their fluid identity moves from Yoruba to Cuban, and back again, in a manner that illustrates the truly cyclical nature of transnational Atlantic community affiliation.



Solimar Otero

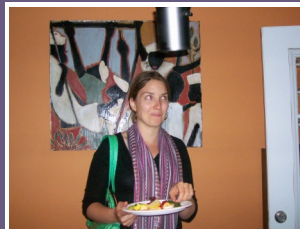
Interested in Joining the WGSGO Writing Group?

Beginning January 20, 2012, the WGSGO Writing Group will meet each Friday, 2-4 pm, in 129 Himes.

For more information, contact Cara Jones at www.cjone69@tigers.lsu.edu.

WGS Welcome to the Fall Semester Party

WGS faculty, students, friends, and family gathered at the home of Marybeth Lima and Lynn Hathaway for the program's annual back-to-school celebration.



Coordinating Council News & Notes

An enormous thank you to the Coordinating Council members for all of their hard work and service to WGS this semester.

WGS Director
Kathleen Bratton

Awards
Maud Walsh

Curriculum
James Rocha

Faculty Development
Loretta Pecchioni

Joints Appointments
Sarah Becker

Programs
Dana Berkowitz

Undergraduate Program Advisor
Solimar Otero

**WGS Graduate Assistant
Programs & Curriculum**
Yvette Hyde

In the Classroom

Special Topics WGS Courses for Spring



WGS 4500-1: Dana Berkowitz, Assistant Professor in Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies, will offer this special topics course on **Men and Masculinities**. The course examines males' diverse experiences as boys/men and public discourses about masculinities in the U.S. The major thrust of the course is to examine how the gendered social order influences men's actions and the way men perceive themselves, other men, women, and social situations. We will be using an intersectionality perspective to explore the relationships between multiple dimensions of social relations and inequalities: gender, race/ethnicity, class, and sexuality. We will also explore the ways that masculinity can be accomplished and performed by women.



WGS 4500-3 (double-listed as EDCI 4900): Laura Choate, Associate Professor in the College of Education, will offer this special topics course on **Girls' and Women's Wellness**. This course is designed to increase students' knowledge of biological, psychological, and social issues that disproportionately impact girls' and women's wellness; to assist students in developing effective prevention/interventions that are tailored to the unique needs of girls and women; and to promote student understanding of advocacy processes needed to address the institutional and social barriers that may impact girls' and women's access, equity, and suc-

Out of the Classroom

WGS Engendering Scholarship Fall 2011 Lecture Series



Solimar Otero



Dorota Heneghan

This semester WGS brought the scholarship of faculty to the university community through two lectures organized by Dana Berkowitz. Associate Professor and Folklorist Solimar Otero kicked off the series with “Gender, Embodiment and Subjectivity in Afro-Cuban Religious Culture,” in which she compared how ritual and ethnographic writing contain codes that remark on Santería’s shifting attitude towards gender and queerness. Associate Professor Dorota Heneghan finished out the series with “To Shop or Not to Shop: Fashioning the Womanhood and Making the Modernity in Galdós’s *La desheredada*.” Dr. Heneghan examined how the author’s representations of the rapidly changing commercial world in nineteenth-century Madrid and his descriptions of the Spanish bourgeoisie’s frenzy for dressing stylishly were tied to changes in the dominant ideologies of domesticity in Spain. She also highlighted the ways in which Galdós used the sartorial descriptions of his protagonist to explore the problematic nature of the late nineteenth-century Spanish bourgeois womanhood in the context of the consumerists’ debate on female consumption of fashion as presented not only from the point of view of the anti-consumerists, but also from the standpoint of their opponents and those who sought to reconcile the modern consumer values with domestic ideology.

Look forward to Michael Kimmel in Spring 2012!

Michael Kimmel, internationally recognized scholar of gender and masculinities, is coming to LSU this March. Dr. Kimmel will be talking about one of his most recent books, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (2008). In 1950, most Americans had completed the transition from adolescence to adulthood by age 21 or so. Today that transition is more likely to be by age 30. It’s a new stage of development, and Kimmel is our tour guide in this presentation based on his best-selling book. He offers a glimpse of why so many guys are adrift through their 20s and a road map towards a more conscious adulthood.

WGS Graduate Minor Alicia Nance Presents at First WGSGO Graduate Research Spotlight



This past November WGSGO sponsored its first research spotlight. Alicia Nance, a doctoral student in Education and WGS, presented her work on Kreayshawn, a white female rapper and music video director. According to Alicia, while significant attention has been drawn to Kreayshawn’s (as well as White Girl Mob member V-Nasty’s) propensity to pepper her raps with all sorts of racist and misogynist imagery, there has been hardly any critical analysis that contextualizes Kreayshawn’s (mis)appropriation of black forms amid the consolidation of whiteness and womanhood. Kreayshawn and the White Girl Mob are particularly offensive but they are not alone in their problematic performances and appropriations of blackness.

Alicia’s paper historicizes, defines and expands the “white girl mob” to illuminate American pop culture’s current (not to mention ongoing) investment in white women’s efforts to construct, wield and warp blackness—specifically black womanhood (or the virulent denunciation of it)—to bulwark hegemonic and heteronormative narratives informing the vicious intersection of race, class, gender and sexuality within American political economy. She engages sites of inquiry focusing on Kreayshawn, The White Girl Mob, and SlutWalk NYC to demonstrate the varied and pervasive ways that whiteness and womanhood converge to perform, co-opt and commodify blackness in ways that buttress status quo power relations while proving that Zora Neale Hurston’s understanding of black women as “de mule uh de world” still reverberates with a haunting truth.

With regard to the experience of presenting her working paper to friends, professors, and colleagues, Alicia states, “It really helped in the development of my thoughts. The space was welcoming and very supportive while providing critical feedback necessary in honing my skills as a presenter and scholar.” She suggests all WGS scholars take advantage of the opportunity to present at a brown bag forum.

For information concerning opportunities to present during a WGSGO Graduate Research Spotlight, contact Ashley Baggett (aallen9@lsu.edu).

Selected Faculty & Graduate Student Accomplishments

Dana Berkowitz recently published two papers: "Maternal Urges, Biological Clocks, and Soccer Moms: Gay Men's Procreative and Fathering Narratives" (2011) in *Symbolic Interactions*, 34, pp. 514-535, and "Bathrooms, Baseball, and Bra-Shopping: Gay Fathers and Lesbian Mothers Talk About Engendering their Children" (2011) in *Sociological Perspective*, 54, pp. 320-350.

Andrea Berringer, PhD candidate in political science with a Women's & Gender Studies minor, served as associate editor for an issue of the *International Journal of Climate Change: Impacts and Responses* and published an essay in it as well. Andrea was an invited delegate to the June 2011 Nansen Conference, Climate Change and Displacement in the 21st Century, in Oslo, Norway. Andrea also successfully defended her dissertation in December 2011. Congratulations, Andrea!

This semester **Wendy Braun**, WGS Graduate Minor, implemented several initiatives as Graduate School Council President, including research to increase teaching stipends that are below the Louisiana living wage, requesting more transparency for administrative processes that affect graduate students, and fostering a sense a community among diverse graduate students. In addition, she hosted a mixer that attracted nearly 300 graduate students. Wendy was also nominated for a Tom W. Dutton Service Award for the second year in a row after winning last year for her dedication to community service (winners have yet to be announced for this year). Over the summer Wendy also published a blog post on Viva La Feminista about the current state of Latina Feminism (<http://www.vivalafeminista.com/2011/06/summer-of-feminista-in-search-of.html>).

Kate Jensen was elected to the Editorial Board for the *Publications in Modern Language* in fall 2010 for a two-year term. She also gave an invited talk, "Daughters as Maternal Masterpieces: The Search for Recognition in Mme de Lafayette and Colette," at Bucknell University in March 2011 and organized a panel, "Working Women and Modernity in 18th-19th Century France and Britain" at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference in April 2011. In addition, Kate's essay, "Daughters as Maternal Masterpieces: Teaching Mother-Daughter Relations in Lafayette and Vigée Lebrun" was published in *Teaching Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century French Women Writers*, edited by Faith E. Beasley (New York: Modern Language Association, 2011).

Benjy Kahan's book *Celibacies: American Modernism and Sexual Life* is now under contract with Duke University Press.

Jenna Tedrick Kuttruff is curator for the exhibition *Dressed for Eternity: Mid-Nineteenth Century Burial Dress in Louisiana*, which opened September 25, 2011, in the LSU Textile and Costume Museum and will run through May 31, 2012. The exhibition, based on Kuttruff's research and that of seven of her graduate students, seeks to answer the question "How were the deceased dressed for eternity?" It features original examples of mid-nineteenth century burial dress recovered from cast iron coffin burials in South Louisiana as well as replication garments based on archaeological evidence. American postmodern photographs along with historical documents and information on the culture, funerary industry and burial practices common in the mid-nineteenth century South augment artifactual remains of coffins, burial-specific textiles and burial garments.

Michelle Linschoten, an LSU graduate in Psychology and WGS, is now a graduate student in the MSW program at Washington University in St. Louis, the #1 social work school in the states.

Elaine Maccio and Kevin Serrin, Executive Director of Capital City Alliance, were on the Jim Engster Show (89.3 WRKF) on October 27 for their work on a service-learning project. Elaine teaches an elective in the School of Social Work, "Social Work with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People," which has a service-learning partnership Capital City Alliance. The project is a survey of quality of life among LGBT residents of Greater Baton Rouge. A podcast of the show can be downloaded at <http://www.wrkf.org/multimedia/index.php?id=1>. Elaine also received the Torchbearer Award for Leadership, which recognizes a student, staff or faculty member who has greatly assisted Information Technology Services in successfully deploying a new service or resource during the past year.

Laura Mullen's poetry ("The Surface," "A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody," "Secrets," "35", and "Circles") will be published in *Eleven More American Women Poets in the 21st Century: Poetics Across North America*, edited by C. Rankine and L. Sewell (X, X: Wesleyan University Press, expected in February 2012).

Heather Ondercin won the Marion Irish award for the best paper in women and politics presented at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association for her paper "The Changing Meaning of Being a Man or a Woman."

Solimar Otero won a Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund Fellowship to do research in Cuba for her book *Coming Home: Nation, Gender, and Diaspora in Afro-Cuban Religion*. The fellowship is given in the name of feminist anthropologist Ruth Landes and grants Solimar a semester off and \$40,000.

Le'Brian Patrick, a doctoral student in Sociology and WGS, appeared in the 2011 Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre's Louisiana-themed production of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" in December. Le'Brian began dance instruction at LSU in a class taught by Sharon Mathews, Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre's co-artistic director. When the class ended, Mathews asked him to continue his training at the ballet theatre's studios. Encouraged by Mathews and other instructors, Le'Brian's hard work has paid off. He is now an official member of the company and took the stage as both the Nutcracker and the Arabian in the 2011 production.

June Pulliam is one of the new co-editors of *Dead Reckonings: A Review of Horror Literature*.

Maud Walsh is working with LSU's Barry Dellinger, Patrick F. Taylor Chair for the Environmental Impact of Hazardous Waste in the LSU Department of Chemistry, who recently received a National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences-funded grant. The grant will continue the LSU Superfund Research Center and focus its research on Environmentally-Persistent Free Radicals. Maud's work is involved with the research translation core to communicate with health and environmental professionals, regulatory agencies, and communities.

ALSO, see Kaleidoscope (<http://hss.lsu.edu/files/Kaleidoscopes/item40107.pdf>) for profiles on WGS faculty Jim Catano's Film and Media Arts Program and Alecia Long's Oral History Project on Louisiana women and recognition on the achievements of WGS Graduate Minors Monica Miller, Le'Brian Patrick, and Martha Pitts and WGS faculty Sarah Becker, Dydia DeLyser, Kate Jensen, Benji Kahan, and Heather Ondercin.

WGSGO Fall Events

Coupling community engagement and activism with professional development, this was an active fall for WGSGO!

Graduate Research Panels

WGSGO kicked off our first round of Graduate Research Panels, which give graduate students the chance to present work to peers and faculty. On Friday, October 7, we held the first Graduate Gender Scholars Brown Bag Lunch. Monica Miller presented her paper "Cloche Call: Material Matters and Millinery Work in *The House of Mirth*," Ashley Baggett presented on "Gender, Medicine, and Modernity," and Cara Jones presented "Social and Emotional Unrest: The Wandering Womb from Hysteria to Endometriosis." On Friday, November 11, Alicia Nance presented her work on "Kreayshawn & Other Wack White Girls" in an hour-long research spotlight.

WGSGO Reading Group

This fall WGSGO's reading group met several times to discuss books related to gender, queer, and disability studies: Rosemarie Garland-Thomas's *Staring: How We Look* and Lee Edelman's *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*.

Gender on Film

WGSGO members Laura Helen Marks and Ashley Baggett facilitated discussion on *The Warrior* and *I Don't Know How She Does It* at Rave Motion Pictures.

WGSGO Community Moodle

Due to popular request, WGSGO has started a Community Moodle page to share files and documents. Email Cara Jones (cjone69@lsu.edu) to be added to the group!

Take Back the Night

On Sunday, October 23, WGSGO members teamed up with Capital Area Family Violence Intervention Center, LSU Women's Center, LSU Student Health Center, Psi Chi at Southern, and others to honor victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence at the 25th Annual Take Back the Night Candlelight March.

Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for our exciting professional development, activism, and reading group opportunities for Spring! We're planning CV/Teaching Portfolio Workshops, a screening of *Miss Representation*, more research panels, a continuation of our reading group with exciting new texts, and exciting activism opportunities like the Clothesline Project. Let us know if there's anything else you'd like from WGSGO! Stay tuned via our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2601515843/>) and WGS listserv!

Four WGS Graduate Minors Present at Fall Conferences

WGS Graduate Minors Cara Jones, Penelope Dane, Kirsten T. Edwards, and Monica Miller will receive \$100 WGS travel awards for presentations related to women's and gender studies at fall conferences.

Cara presented at the Women & Society Conference at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Cara's presentation "Social and Emotional Unrest: The Wandering Womb from Hysteria to Endometriosis" examined causes of endometriosis in the context of the history of women diagnosed with "hysteria".

Penelope also presented at the Women & Society Conference at Marist College. Her work, "The Problematic Use of the Term Hag in the 'Wife of Bath's Tale' Criticism" focused on the use of the term "hag" in criticism of the "Wife of Bath's Tale."

Kirsten presented at the Curriculum & Pedagogy Conference in Akron, Ohio. Her work, "Silver and Gold and 'Sapphire Bound!': Critical Race Theory as Method in Uncovering Multiple Forms of Black Intellectual Resistance," focused on multiple forms of resistance/epistemology for Black women intellectuals.

Monica presented her work, "No Man with a Good Car Needs to be Justified: Ministry's 'Jesus Built My Hotrod' as a Counterpoint for Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*," on the link between the nihilism of masculine space in Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* and the performative masculinity of the song "Jesus Built My Hotrod" (and of car culture in general) at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association in Atlanta, Georgia.

WGS will again be able to offer travel awards for WGS Graduate Minors in the spring to present on topics related to women's and gender studies. Keep your eyes open for another chance this spring!

WGS Graduate Minors Seek Mentors

Please consider serving as a mentor to one of our WGS Graduate Minors. They are a great group and eager to have a feminist mentor outside their home department.

For more information, contact Kate Jensen, Director of Graduate Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, at kjensen@lsu.edu.