The War Against Women: Women’s Studies Hosts a Forum on Gender Politics

The Center for the Study of Women and Society and the office of State Senator Liz Kruger hosted a packed house in the Elebash Recital Hall in late April to discuss the ‘war on women,’ seen in current legislative efforts across the nation during this election year. The event included a panel discussion and a Q & A with an audience of 180 people. The event was co-sponsored by 24 local women’s organizations, including the National Organization for Women-NY, the New York Abortion Access Fund, the New York Women’s Bar Association and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Eleven elected officials in New York State, including Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and Congressman Jerrold Nadler, also cosponsored the event. The event was covered by a number of news outlets, including Meagan Finnegan Bungeroth of the New York Press, who provided some of the quotes below. (For her full article go to http://nypress.com/krueger-takes-on-the-war-on-women/)

Senator Liz Krueger moderated the discussion. She was first elected to the New York State Senate in a Special Election in February 2002, and is currently the ranking minority member of the Senate Finance Committee. A champion of women’s rights, she is currently the co-chair of the NYS Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus and co-sponsor of the Reproductive Health Act. Krueger was motivated to organize the event with the Center for the Study of Women and Society because of current threats to women’s health and reproductive rights. “We should take nothing for granted,” Krueger told the audience. “If we don’t make a stand, if we don’t push the envelope as far as we can back in the opposite direction, if we don’t continue our fight to make progress, then we could wake up another year and a half from now in this country going; ‘Oh my god, we thought 2012 was bad, who imagined this could happen here?’ But this can happen here.”

The panelists included Amy Richards, Joe Rollins, Shelby Knox, and Jamia Wilson.

Amy Richards addressed current issues in masculinity that effect women. “As much as there’s a war on women, there’s a protection of men and a protection of masculinity,” she said. Richards, a graduate of Barnard College, works as a writer, consultant, producer and activist. Most recently Amy was a producer on the HBO documentary Gloria Steinem: In Her Own Words and is consultant on a forthcoming PBS documentary, Makers, on the women’s movement in America. Amy was also a convener of the October, 2011 conference honoring Anita Hill and she is now editing an anthology based on that historical gathering (to be published by The Feminist Press). Amy is the author of several award winning books, including Opting In: Having a Child Without Losing Yourself, Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and the Future and Grassroots: A Field Guide to Feminist Activism, and numerous anthologies.

Joe Rollins addressed recent legal cases that seek to police sexuality in discriminatory ways, including a ‘sexting’ case where a Pennsylvania prosecutor charged teenage girls with possession of child pornography for sending semi-nude photos of themselves to each other. The photos were distributed without their consent by their male classmates, who were not charged with any crime. “What these cases illustrate are the ways that women are punished for exercising agency and taking control of their own bodies, and in the circulate representations thereof,” said Rollins. “The bigger problem here lies with the question of who gets to control the terms of that circulation.” Rollins is the Executive Officer of the Political Science Department at the CUNY Graduate Center. His fields of specialization are public law, gender and sexuality, and research methods. His first book, AIDS and the Sexuality… continued on page 11
Letter from the Director

Women's Studies at the Graduate Center covers both the Women's Studies Doctoral Certificate Program (WSCP) and the Center for the Study of Women and Society (CSWS). We are happy to note that WSCP continues to grow; at last count we had 180 students enrolled, and last year our courses were filled beyond capacity. In the fall, we will again offer two of our core courses, Feminist Texts and Theories and Global Feminisms, both of which quickly filled and now have waiting lists. Due to overwhelming demand, will be able to offer an additional section of Feminist Texts and Theories in the Spring 2013. Please see our website for details at http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies/ While these may seem like mundane matters, we highlight them because we continue to be impressed with the growth of women's studies in a supposedly post-feminist age. A quick look at the work our students and faculty are undertaking suggests that the field is in a good state of health.

Our students working on doctorates continue to produce impressive scholarship on a wide range of subjects related to women and gender. We are pleased to announce that 9 of our students graduated with Doctoral Certificates in February and May 2012, and that another 5 completed their coursework for the certificate, which they will receive upon earning their PhDs. Our students and alum have won a range of awards, detailed in this newsletter. Please join us in congratulating them on their scholarship and hard work. In December 2012, we will host a luncheon to recognize our newest crop of students and award winners. We invite you all to join us.

We have been incredibly busy at the Center for the Study of Women and Society. CSWS organizes a range of events meant to promote scholarship in women's and gender studies. Looking back at the past year, one of the most exciting programs was our conference in October 2011 called Masculinities, Complex, which was organized in conjunction with the journal Studies in Gender and Sexuality. We hope that this event will soon culminate in an anthology of papers on the topic of masculinities. More recently, we held an event with State Senator Liz Krueger called The War Against Women. Co-sponsored by 24 sister organizations and 11 elected officials, the event highlighted recent legislation that undermines women's (and everyone's) health and sexual freedom. We were motivated by current events and put it together in only 3 weeks. Over 180 people from across the city came to the Elebash Recital Hall to discuss the current political climate and to share ideas on how to make an impact this election year.

Over the past two years, CSWS has organized 16 lectures in our Neurocultures Lecture Series, co-sponsored with the Center for Humanities. This very successful series hosted prominent scholars and artists writing about the neurosciences from interdisciplinary perspectives. Speakers from the world of women's studies included psychologist Elizabeth Wilson and neuroendocrinologist Deboleena Roy from Emory University, anthropologists Emily Martin and Rayna Rapp from NYU, Rebecca Jordan-Young from Socio-medical Sciences at Barnard, and feminist authors Alix Kates Shulman and Siri Husstedt. We also hosted a range of speakers from analytic philosophy, bioethics, visual arts, English literature, and disability studies, asking them to critically engage with feminist concerns. The series came to an end with our last talk on May 8th by Lenard Davis. However, we are excited that our graduate students continue to gather in the Bio Cultures Writing Group, co-organized by WSCP students Kim Cunningham and Alyson Spurgas. We are also happy to announce that Cunningham and Spurgas, along with myself, Deboleena Roy from Emory University, philosophy Jesse Prinz published a group of interdisciplinary papers on the subject in Social Text's online journal Periscope. You can find it at http://www.socialtextjournal.org/periscope/neuroculture/.

CSWS continues to host our Gender and Sexuality Seminar series, which will run for its fourth year in the fall. This series highlights scholarship on a range of issues related to gender and sexuality. Please join

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us as we gather once a month, this year on Wednesdays, to eat lunch (provided by us) and listen to lectures from established and emerging scholars. In the Fall 2012, we are excited to welcome a group of scholars in body studies, queer theory, and critical race studies. We open with Lisa Duggan in September, and later in the semester host Alondra Nelson, Kathleen LeBesco, and Jessie Daniels. In addition, we are pleased to host a special afternoon lecture in September by Alison Wylie, co-editor of the journal *Hypatia* and a scholar of feminist science studies and archaeology. She will discuss standpoint theory, arguing despite controversies that it is still relevant and can address contemporary epistemological concerns.

There are numerous other events at the GC dedicated to women’s studies scholarship. CSWS regularly provides organizational support for a range of projects organized by faculty and our sister organizations. In 2012, we will cosponsor events organized with the Women Writing Lives collective (the Dorothy O. Helly Lecture), the Society for Women in Philosophy, the Society for the Study of Women in the Renaissance, IRADAC, and the Feminist Press. See our website for details. Looking ahead to the Spring of 2013, CSWS will organize a major conference on feminism and science with the Graduate Center’s Committee for Interdisciplinary Science Studies. We recommend that you ‘like’ our Facebook page, The Center for the Study of Women and Society at the Graduate Center, to get regular updates on this and other news.

Last year, CSWS hosted 2 undergraduate interns from the women’s studies program at Hunter College, Maple Wu and Lauren Manley, who participated in many of our scholarly events and wrote much of the copy in this newsletter. We thank them for their service. We would also like to thank our Assistant Program Officer, Elizabeth Small, who recently received a plaque from the Graduate Center noting her 20 years of service. Elizabeth has offered unyielding energy and support to our faculty and students and we are very grateful to her.

Victoria Pitts-Taylor

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**Women’s Studies Certificate Program Fall 2012 Courses**

The Certificate in Women’s Studies is available to students matriculated in the Ph.D. programs at The Graduate Center. Women’s Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to research and scholarship that draws on various disciplines, while challenging disciplinary boundaries. The general aim of the program is to offer critical reflection on the experience of both women and men in terms of gender, sexuality, race, class, ethnicity, and nation. Students are prepared to teach courses and to do research in Women’s Studies and related critical approaches to the disciplines, such as those developed in Queer Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Cultural Studies. Besides focused course work and guidance in research, Women’s Studies offers participation in a wide range of graduate students and faculty activities, including lecture series and forums. Students are also invited to participate in the research programs and seminars at the Center for Women and Society at The Graduate Center.

Please see http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies/courses/Courses_Fall12.html for full descriptions and updates.

- **Global Feminisms**
  - Prof. Rupal Oza

- **Feminist Texts and Theories**
  - Prof. Victoria Pitts-Taylor
  - Prof. Talia Schaffer

- **Protests of the Body**
  - Prof. Setha Low

- **The Worth of Women: Writing and Gender in Italy**
  - Prof. Eugenia Paulicelli

- **Materializing “The Good Life”**
  - Prof. Kandice Chuh

- **Literature of the Great War: Modernism, Memory, and the Poetics of History**
  - Prof. Richard Kaye

- **Experiments in Art Writing**
  - Prof. Wayne Koestenbaum

- **Postwar Women Writers and Intellectuals**
  - Prof. Nancy K. Miller

- **Readings in African American Literary and Cultural Theory**
  - Prof. Robert Reid-Pharr

- **Representations et Theories de L’hystérie**
  - Prof. Evelyne Ender

- **(Un)Classical Bodies in 17th Century France**
  - Prof. Domna Stanton

- **Readings in U.S. Women's History**
  - Prof. Kathleen McCarthy

- **Gender Theory for Historians**
  - Prof. Dagmar Herzog

- **Neos & Isms**
  - (read Obama, the Cosmopolitan, Goes Abroad)
  - Prof. Ruth O’Brien

- **Social Welfare Policy**
  - Prof. Janet Carol Gornick

- **Feminist Political Theory**
  - Prof. Rosalind Petchesky

- **Occupying Home: Housing and Community Development During Global Crisis**
  - Prof. Susan Sagar

- **Supportive Settings and Restorative Environments**
  - David Chapin

- **International and Liberation Social-Community Psychology**
  - Prof. Roderick Watts

- **Ethnography of Space and Place**
  - Prof. Setha Low

- **Sociology of Gender**
  - Hester Eisenstein

- **Sociology of Homosexuality**
  - Prof. Juan Battle

- **Social Welfare Policy and Planning I**
  - Prof. Mimi Abramovitz
Masculinity, Complex Conference and Forthcoming Book

Last October, CSWS cosponsored the conference Masculinity, Complex, which sought to investigate masculinity as a site of critical inquiry. The two-day conference, which was organized with the journal Studies in Gender and Sexuality, featured panels on Second Wave Masculinity, The Violent Constitution of Masculinity, Diasporic Masculinities, and Trans Masculinities. Judith Butler’s Opening Keynote served to be a highlight of the conference, drawing a large crowd. Butler spoke about masculinity as written by Proust in “Swann’s Way.” She delivered her paper with humor and fervor, generating many laughs as well as looks of deep contemplation.


Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tony Kushner delivered the well-received Closing Keynote. Exploring masculinity through drama, Kushner directed four actors who read his play Terminating, or Lass Meine Schmerzen Nicht Verloren Sein, or Ambivalence, in Love’s Fire, which was first performed in 1998 in Minneapolis and in New York at the Joseph Papp Public Theater.

The play investigates the themes of psychotherapy, gender, masculinity, love, and the human condition. Through the eyes of a gay man and his lesbian psychotherapist, the audience was exposed to the inner workings of both character’s minds and were left to wonder who was embodying what. This deeply moving, well-acted piece served as the perfect closing to a thought-provoking two days of panels and talks.

Ken Corbett, one of the co-chairs of the event (along with Muriel Dimen, Katie Gentile and Victoria Pitts-Taylor) is currently putting together an anthology of the works presented at the conference and other papers on masculinity themes. “The conference remains one of the best I have ever attended, and people remark on it all the time,” Corbett said recently. “It is my sincere hope to bring that creativity to the book, and produce something about which we can all be proud.” Ken Corbett is Clinical Assistant Professor at the New York University Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis and an analyst in practice with adults and children in New York City. He is author of Boyhoods: Rethinking Masculinity (Yale University Press, 2009).

NeuroCulture Lecture Series

The was the final semester of the highly popular NeuroCulture Lecture Series, cosponsored by The Center for the Study of Women and Society and the Center for the Humanities. The final year of the series featured a broad range of artists, scholars, writers and others taking up the neuro and brain sciences and engaging such issues as the brain, mind, body, nature, culture, technology, and subjectivity. Faculty members Victoria Pitts-Taylor and Jason Tougaw, and doctoral student Rachel Liebert chaired the series.

The fall series began with Cathy N. Davidson, John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Duke University. In her talk entitled, “Now You See It: How the Brain Science of Attention Will Transform the Way We Live,” Davidson explored the ways in which new digital technologies can open new ways of working and learning. Victoria Pitts-Taylor served as discussant. The next event in the series featured Rayna Rapp, Professor of Anthropology at New York University, speaking on “A Child Surrounds This Brain: Negotiating Neurodiversity and Science.” Ann Jurecic, assistant professor of English at Rutgers University, and Kate Jenkins doctoral candidate of Sociology, served as discussants. Alva Noë, distinguished professor of Philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center, closed out the NeuroCultures series for the fall semester with his talk entitled “See Me If You Can! A Meditation on Art, Choreography and the Limits of Neuroscience.” Noë argued that consciousness is more than just the product of the firing of neurons in our brains but rather arises from interactions within the environment. Maria Brincker, post-doctoral fellow at Columbia University, served as discussant.

The spring series kicked off with G. Gabrielle Starr’s talk, “Feeling Beauty: A Neuroscientific Framework for Understanding why the Arts may be Sisters.” Starr, a professor of English and Acting Dean of the Col-
The two-year lecture series concluded with a talk by Lennard Davis, Professor of English, Disability and Medical Education at University of Illinois-Chicago on May 8th. Professor Davis is Director of Project Biocultures and author of Obsession: a History, Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness and the Body, and other books, including a memoir and a novel. He is Editor of The Disability Studies Reader and co-Editor of The Disability Handbook and Disability and Social Theory. His talk, “Disability and Depression” raised serious questions about the ontological status of depression as a disease. Davis questions the theory of chemical imbalance, the problematic nature of scoring depression, and the deep uncertainty about controlled studies of SSRIs as cures for the illness. He argued that if depression is considered a disability, we must change our ideas about what constitutes a disability. Professor Davis’ forthcoming book is called The End of Normal. Rachel Liebert, a doctoral student in Psychology, served as discussant. Liebert is writing her dissertation on the diagnosis and pharmaceutical-ization of biopolar disorder.

The NeuroCultures Lecture Series was co-sponsored by the Center for Humanities.

Seminar in Gender and Sexuality Monthly Speaker Series

2011-2012

For the third year, the Center for the Study of Women and Society sponsored the lunchtime seminar in Gender and Sexuality. The seminar addresses a broad range of topics, including the sexed and gendered body in medicine, technology, science, culture, media and law.

The Fall 2011 series began in September with an opening party and a screening of the 1993 film Zero Patience. The film, an experimental musical written and directed by John Greyson, examines the urban legend about Patient Zero, the Canadian who allegedly brought HIV to North America. The film is considered an important part of the New Queer Cinema movement of the 1990s. Paisley Currah, professor of Political Science at Brooklyn College, gave the first lecture of the semester. Currah is a founding member of the Transgender Law and Policy Institute and co-editor of Transgender Rights (University of Minnesota Press 2006) and Corpus: An Interdisciplinary Reader on Bodies and Knowledge (Palgrave 2011). His forthcoming book with NYU Press is called The...
“Seminar in Gender and Sexuality” continued

United States of Gender. In his talk, Currah contrasted state constructions of sex, that are used for the purposes of identifying persons, with national projects that use gender as a distributive mechanism. This talk was followed by Katie Gentile, director of Gender Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and co-editor of the journal Studies in Gender and Sexuality. Gentile is also a training psychoanalyst at the Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy. In her talk “Babies as Fetish Objects for a Traumatized Cultural Body,” Gentile argued that pressures to have children at younger ages produces a form of anxiety which is helping to increase the biomedical surveillance of women’s bodies. Alyson Spurgas, doctoral candidate in Sociology at the Graduate Center, served as discussant.

During the Spring 2012 semester, The Sexuality and Gender Series centered around the topic of BioFeminisms and related issues. The series began in February with Michael Chorust, author of Rebuilt: How Becoming Part Computer Made Me More Human, which won the PEN/USA Book Award for Creative Nonfiction, and World Wide Mind: The Coming Integration of Humanity, Machines, and the Internet. Chorust explored how new technologies, such as cochlear implants, are changing the embodied experience of disabled individuals. Sociology doctoral student Laura Mauldin, who graduated in May, served as discussant.

In March, Maria Brincker, an Arts and Neuroscience Fellow at the Italian Academy at Columbia University, gave a talk entitled “The Illusion of Domestic Bliss and the Dynamics of Relational Minds.” Brincker discussed the ways in which marginalized groups are forced to develop greater degrees of empathy in order to navigate unequal relations of power. Brincker is a recent graduate of the PhD program in Philosophy at the Graduate Center. She begins her job as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at UMass-Boston in Fall 2012. Philosophy doctoral student Gina Campelia served as discussant.

The continued in April with a talk by Barbara Katz Rothman, Sociology, GC and Baruch College, and author and co-author of many books in medical sociology, bioethics, gender and the sociology of kno

edge. Her books have been translated into many languages, including Japanese and Finnish. Katz Rothman is past president of two national sociological professional associations, Sociologists for Women in Society, from which she won the Mentoring Award, and the Society for the Study of Social Problems, which has awarded her the Lee Founders Award. She addressed the topic of midwives, framing them as artisanal workers, and contrasting the practice of midwifery to medicalized forms of childbirthing.

Fall 2012

Talks in the series for Fall 2012 will take place once a month on Wednesdays from noon to 2:00 PM in room 612, the Sociology Department Lounge, and will include lunchtime refreshments. All talks are free and open to the public. The talks will cover a range of topics, including homonormativity and neoliberalism, race and the genome, fat studies, and digital media. On September 26, Lisa Duggan will present “Feeling Neoliberal: Homonormative Desires, Imperial Dreams.” Duggan is Professor of American Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies, Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University. Professor Duggan will explore the ways in which frameworks for LGBT/Q politics in the United States have varied by geographical and demographic location and how they have shifted over time. She considers the legacy of empire and colonialism on current U.S. domestic equality politics and queer transnational interventions. Professor Duggan is the author of Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Diversity (Beacon Press 2004) and Sapphic Slavers: Sex, Violence and American Modernity, which won the John Boswell Prize of the American Historical Association in 2001.

On November 7, Jessie Daniels will give a talk entitled ‘Our version of consciousness raising groups: Gender, Trace and the Political Economy of Feminist Blogging.’ DANIELS is Professor of Urban Public Health, Graduate Center and Hunter College /CUNY. Professor Daniels will discuss how the emergence of digital media, particularly blogs, represents a new mode of civic participation – one that holds the potential to destabilize old hierarchies, but can also reinscribe hegemonic discourses of gender and race. Professor Daniels is author of White Lies (1997) and Cyber Racism (2009). Her book Google Bombs, Astroturf and cloaked sites, which examines propaganda in the digital era, is forthcoming from Routledge. She blogs with Joe Faegin at RacismReview and is a lead researcher on the Social Justice Sexuality Project.

On November 28, the Seminar will host the lecture “On Fatness and Fluidity: A Rehabilitation,” by Kathleen LeBesco, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Professor Gender Studies and Communications, Marymount College. Professor LeBesco considers why notions of fluidity, frequently applied to gender and sexuality, are not applied to the bodily state of fatness. In her talk she makes the case for rehabilitating the concept of fluidity as it pertains to fatness. LeBesco is author of Revolting Bodies? The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity (University of Massachusetts Press, 2003.) She is also co-editor of three books, Edible Ideologies: Representing Food and Meaning (2008), The Drag King Anthology (2003), and Bodies Out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression (2001).

On Wednesday, December 5, Alondra Nelson will speak on “The Postgenomic Family.” Nelson is Associate Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies, Columbia University. Nelson will discuss the state of the family after the genome. She addresses the paradox of how ‘postgenomic’ can be seen as both denoting a marker of the proliferation of the logics and techniques of genetic science, and a historical and socio-technical juncture in which the family becomes simultaneously highly flexible and deeply intractable. She will discuss this paradox in the context of kin-keeping practices, novel affiliations, and views of kinship as both a health risk and health resource. Nelson is the author of Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination (University of Minnesota Press, 2011), which received the Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award from the Race, Gender, and Class section of the American Sociological Association. Nelson is also co-editor of Genetics and the Unsettled Past: The Collision of DNA, Race, and History (Rutgers University Press 2012) and Technicolor: Race, Technology, and Everyday Life (New York University Press, 2001).
Celebrating Women's Studies Students and Faculty

WSCP Students

Erin Kaplan published her play *Collateral Bodies*. Her work explores the human rights violations that happen specifically to women, also known as “femicide”. Kaplan says that the purpose of this performance is to open a frank and honest discussion about the role that human rights (or the lack thereof) play in the lives of women in six specific cultures; American, Mexican, Indian, Arab, Somali and Eastern European all of which are emblematic of the collective disregard for the lives and bodies of women regardless of international borders. In essence, Kaplan states, *Collateral Bodies* is about our universal humanity despite inhumane circumstances.

Molly Pulda co-edited a special issue on Doris Lessing Studies, focusing on the subject of gender and sexualities. She also has an article forthcoming in *Contemporary Women’s Writing*, entitled “A Feminist Compact: Jean Rhys’ Smile Please and Life Writing Theory.”

Zoe Meleo-Erwin won two pre-doctoral fellowships, an IRADAC Fellowship and the Committee for Interdisciplinary Science Studies Mellon Fellowship.

Ornaith O’Dowd defended her dissertation in the summer of 2011 and graduated with a PhD in Philosophy and Certificate in Women’s Studies. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of philosophy at the College of Charleston, with affiliate faculty status in the Women’s and Gender Studies Program.


Doug Meyer, a recent WSCP graduate, has an article forthcoming in the journal *Gender & Society* entitled An Intersectional Analysis of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) People’s Evaluations of Anti-Queer Violence.

Women’s Studies Faculty

Patricia Clough completed a two-year term as President of the Cultural Studies Association. She gave the presidential address at the annual conference in March 2012, held at the University of California San Diego. Her address was entitled “After Culture: Bodies, Experience and Media.”


Joyce Gelb was a keynote speaker at the SOFERS International Accomplishment Report Symposium: Gender Equal Participation for Science and Technology Innovation at Tokyo City University, discussing affirmative action policy in the US. She is an editor of the Encyclopedia of Political Science, published by the CQ Press and APSA in 2012.

Dagmar Herzog received a 2012 Guggenheim Fellowship. Prof. Herzog will be a Visiting Research Scholar at the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University in 2013, working with other scholars on the theme of “Belief and Unbelief.” Also receiving a Guggenheim this year from the Graduate Center is Joan Richardson, Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and American Studies.

Cindi Katz spent 2011-2012 as the Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professor at the Centre for Gender Studies at Cambridge. She was featured on a recent cover of the University of Cambridge Alumni Magazine. While in the U.K., Professor Katz gave a talk in at the University of London’s Birkbeck Institute for Contemporary Arts and Culture at the 2011 American Psychological Association annual convention in Washington, D.C. Her talk, “The Science of Advocacy: What Psychological Research Might Tell Us About the How-To of Influencing Policy,” drew on the psychology of storytelling and the power of narrative to influence public policy. She is the current President of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, the oldest psychological association dedicated to social justice concerns.

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**Women's Studies Students Investigate Gender, Politics and the Body**

This month we spotlight the work of current and incoming Women’s Studies students who engage themes of gender, politics and the body.

**Aaron Slodounik** is a doctoral student in the Art History program and is earning a certificate in Women's Studies. His research focuses on late-nineteenth century French painting, and includes photography and architecture during the long nineteenth century.

Representations of bodies have been a recurring interest in his research to date, both in early-twentieth-century French photography and in the work of the late-nineteenth-century painter Gustave Caillebotte, the latter of which was presented to the New York Public Library and the Princeton University Graduate Women and Studies Colloquium. Current research also includes an investigation into the queer imagery of Gauguin from his first Tahitian sojourn. Aaron is also interested in finding ways of applying the insights of New Materialism to Art History along with the discourses of ecocriticism and sustainability.

Aaron received his Bachelors in Art History from Oberlin College where he studied with feminist art historian Patricia Mathews. After spending a decade working in the fields of architecture and the non-profit visual arts, he is now an adjunct lecturer at Queensborough Community College and at Parsons The New School for Design, where he teaches introductory courses. Aaron teaches a writing-intensive class at QCC and has received training at the Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking, which inspires his pedagogical interest in compositional rhetoric in the undergraduate art history classroom.

**Christin Bowman** is a doctoral student in the Social-Personality Psychology program, and is earning a Women's Studies Doctoral Certificate. Her research explores female sexuality with a particular focus on embodiment and gendered ideological discourses. She is interested in the ways in which women’s bodies can themselves be sites for subjectivity and agency and the implications of this theoretical perspective for investigations into desire, pleasure, and power.

Christin's research currently focuses on understanding the function and meaning of masturbation for women. In a recent national survey of over 750 women, Christin found that women feel far less shame regarding masturbation than is commonly assumed, and that, surprisingly, masturbation can actually make women feel subjectively empowered. Christin presented her findings from this project at the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS) national conference this past fall. She is also working on a collaborative mixed methods project with Deborah Tolman, Ed.D., which is meant to analyze gendered ideological discourses within adolescent narratives regarding relationships and sex. That is, how do teenagers make sense of and navigate the restrictive norms of masculinity and femininity, and how do they, in some cases, resist?

Christin is a proud participant in SPARK (Sexualization Protest: Action, Resistance, Knowledge), which is a girl-centered activist movement aimed at resisting the sexualization of girls and women in the media. She writes the Research Blog for SPARK, which “translates” jargon-laden feminist research about sexualization into simpler language suitable for the common reader. She received her B.S. from the University of Michigan in Biopsychology and Cognitive Science, and her M.S. in Teaching from Pace University, while teaching high school science at a small high school in the Bronx. She has most recently published a co-authored chapter with Deborah Tolman and Lyn Mikel Brown in Girls' Sexuality and the Media (K. Harper, Y. Katsulis, V. Lopez, & G. S. Gilles [Eds.]). In 2009, she received a five-year Science Fellowship to support her studies at the Graduate Center.

**Joanna Tice** is a doctoral candidate in the Political Science program finishing work on the doctoral certificate from the Women's Studies program. Her research explores the intersection of Western political theory, comparative political thought and feminist and queer theory, in an attempt to trace the genealogies of these systems of thought as they apply to women's movements, sexuality, immigration, the environment, reproductive rights, and media discourses. Her work is deeply influenced by poststructuralist/postmodern and theories of intersectionality.

Joanna's current work is engaged with the “pseudo-feminisms” identified across the conservative movements in the United States, including the shift she observes in the movement-countermovement dynamics between the pro-life and pro-choice movements...
and their framing of the Planned Parenthood funding debate as “pro-woman,” as opposed to “pro-fetus.” In her dissertation work, she hopes to explore the comparative genealogies of feminism in the context of religious nationalisms (e.g., Iran, Pakistan, Palestine, India, Brazil, Mexico, U.S., Poland).

Joanna received her BA from Wesleyan University in Connecticut where she also served as the 2007-2008 Russell House Writing Fellow. She currently teaches in the Political Science Department at Brooklyn College and serves on the Doctoral Student Council of the CUNY Graduate Center as the Political Science Program Representative.

R. Joshua Scannell is a doctoral student in the CUNY Graduate Center Sociology program. His research explores the dynamic relationship between rapidly changing technologies and mutating understandings of the body. Working at the juncture of technology studies, gender studies, critical race, historical and social analyses of capital and governance’s changing commitments to bodies and “the body”, Scannell maintains an interdisciplinary approach to (di)entangling the status of the body.

Scannell is deeply influenced by poststructuralist, speculative realist, affective and psychoanalytic theories of embodiment, governance, technology and capital. His current work is especially interested in the impact that so-called “big data” has had on presumptions of corporeality, and the increasingly unclear distinctions between human and data bodies and populations. He is particularly interested in how the mutual commitments between trends towards financialization, securitization and militarization have produced new, perpetually unstable modes of future-oriented methodologies that inextricably links the datalogical, technological and organic.

Scannell received his BA from Wesleyan University in 2008 and is currently teaching in the Sociology department at Queens College. His book, Cities: Unauthorized Resistances and Uncertain Sovereignty in the Urban World has recently been published by Paradigm Press.

In our upcoming issues we will continue to highlight the work of Women’s Studies Certificate Program students. Stay tuned!

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NEW FACULTY BOOKS


**Frances Fox Piven**, *Who’s Afraid of Frances Fox Piven: the Essential Writings of the Professor Glenn Beck Loves to Hate*, The New Press, 2011.


Caroline Heilbrun Dissertation Prize Winner

Dr. Stacie McCormick, English.
Dissertation title: “The Open Wound: Writing Black Female Bodies”

Nina Fortin Dissertation Proposal Award

Leah Souffrant, English.
Dissertation title: “The Caring Precariat: Home-Based Care Work in America’s Three Largest Cities”

Sue Zalk Travel Award Winner

Natascia Boeri, Sociology.

Koonja Mitchell Memorial Prize Winner

Puleng Segalo, Psychology.
Dissertation title: “In our own voices: Black women’s narratives of conflict and post-conflict experiences”

Koonja Mitchell Memorial Honorable Mention

Sandra Trapan, Sociology.
Dissertation title: “The Surgical Imagination.”

Certificate of Completion

The following students completed the course requirements for the Doctoral Certificate in Women’s Studies, and will receive the certificate upon completing their PhDs.

John D. Boy, Sociology
Trang Kelly, Social Welfare
Rachel Liebert, Social Personality/ Psychology
Antonia Levy, Sociology
Livia Woods, English

2011–2012 WSCP Graduates

Nazreen Bacchus, Sociology
Maria Biskup, Sociology
Jessica Wells Cantello, English
Kery Chez, English
Valerie Francisco, Sociology
Lauren Jade Martin, Sociology
Ornaith O’Dowd, Philosophy
Rachel Vemi, Social Personality Psychology
Joylette E. Williams, English

Announcing 2012-2013 Women’s Studies Award Competitions

The Sue Rosenberg Zalk Travel Award

The Sue Rosenberg Zalk Travel Award of $500.00 will be awarded to a student enrolled in the Women’s Studies Certificate Program who needs to travel to an archive, library, or other source in order to complete his or her research. Preference will be given to students who are at the dissertation stage. Students who wish to be considered for the award should submit a copy of your transcript, a description of your project and the travel that is necessary for its completion (five pages maximum), and a recommendation from your advisor.

Deadline for submissions for the Fall 2012 award is November 1, 2012

For further information, contact the Graduate Center Women’s Studies Office at 212-817-8905, e-mail Elizabeth Small: esmall@gc.cuny.edu, or see the CSWS website: http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies/center/fellowships.html

Submissions for all awards should be sent in hard copy or by email to: Elizabeth Small at Women’s Studies Certificate Program, The Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, Room 5116, New York, NY 10016-4309 or esmall@gc.cuny.edu

Koonja Mitchell Memorial Prize

The Koonja Mitchell Memorial Prize will be awarded to any PhD Program at the Graduate Center working on a dissertation concerned with issues of social justice. Special consideration will be given to work on militarism and trauma.

To be considered for the prize, candidates must submit a 10-page dissertation prospectus, a letter of recommendation from their dissertation advisor, and a CV.

The deadline for proposals is November 1, 2012.

For further information, contact the Graduate Center Women’s Studies Office at 212-817-8905, e-mail Elizabeth Small: esmall@gc.cuny.edu, or see the CSWS website: http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies/center/fellowships.html

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The Newsletter of the Center for the Study of Women and Society • FALL 2012
WSQ Current and Upcoming Issues

**VIRAL**

WSQ Volume 40
Numbers 1&2
Spring/Summer 2012
Edited by Patricia Clough & Jasbir Puar

When we think of something as “viral,” we often think of the transit of electronic information at an intensified speed and reach. Viral also refers to indiscriminate exchanges, often linked with notions of bodily contamination, uncontainability, and unwelcome transgression of border and boundaries. In this issue of WSQ, the editors invite a rethinking of institutions of education, family, religion, health, military, media, and law to inaugurate an inventive cultural critique on topics ranging from social media, hacking, clouding, and financial markets to pollution, genetics, and robotics. Viral will also include interdisciplinary artists’ projects, each exploring the technological, political, and biological registers of viral culture. These include a meditation on the US military’s use of PowerPoint slides and an experiment involving the artist’s own hepatitis C-infected blood and plant life. An ongoing social media campaign is being created with input from media maven Johanna Blakley, managing director of research at the Norman Lear Center, University of Southern California, and will continue after the issue is published.

Patricia Clough is a professor of sociology, women’s studies & intercultural studies at Queens College, CUNY & the Graduate Center, University of New York. Patricia Clough & Jasbir Puar are a professor of women’s & gender studies at Rutgers University.

**RUIN**

Volume 39,
Numbers 3&4
Fall/Winter 2011
Edited by Sarah Chinn & Rupal Oza

From lost kingdoms to modern-day disasters, from economic meltdowns to political unrest, from bad reputations to cinematic flops, the specter of ruin is omnipresent and never ending. Often, ruin evokes feelings of nostalgia for good times long gone. Ruin poses the sometimes unthinkable question: What is so bad about ruin and why do we fear it so?

Shelby Knox and Jamia Wilson spoke as ‘fourth wave’ feminists who focus on media activism. Blogging is their version of consciousness raising. “If you want to see young feminists,” Knox said, “go online.” Knox was the subject of the Sundance award-winning film, The Education of Shelby Knox, a 2005 documentary about her teenage activism for sex education and gay rights in her Southern Baptist community. She is a media activist and blogs for the Huffington Post. Jamia Wilson is Vice President of Programs at the Women’s Media Center, where she works on amplifying women’s voices and changing the conversation in the media. She trains women and girls so they are media-ready and media-savvy, exposes sexism in the media, and directs the WMC’s social media strategy.

WSQ has many exciting things to announce. We continue to thrive under the general editorship of Amy Herzog and Joe Rollins, with the help of our editorial assistants, Meredith Benjamin and Elena Cohen.

We are thrilled to report back on the immense success of the launch event for our Safe issue, guest-edited by Kyoo Lee and Alyson M. Cole. Held this past February, and based on the MTA’s public safety campaign: “If You See Something, Say Something,” “Safe/Shimmy/Slay” focused on the posture of heightened scrutiny and perpetual estrangement as an expression of our continued concern with matters of safety and securitization. The unconventional gathering, resembling a poetry slam more than an academic panel, featured Linda Alcoff, Patricia Clough, Hamid Dabashi, Elena Glasberg, Brenda Iijima, Delores Jones-Brown, Jasbir Puar, Avital Ronell, Ann Snitow and Jack Tchen, who reflected on what they have seen and “said something.” The prose and poetry was accompanied by interpretative neo-burlesque performances, featuring Nasty Canasta’s car alarm dance and The Lady Aye’s sword swallowing.

We are also delighted to announce the release of our Ruin issue this past November, guest-edited by Sarah Chinn and Rupal Oza, and in May, we released Viral in May, which was guest-edited by Patricia Clough and Jasbir Puar. Exciting launch events are currently being planned for both!

We are hard at work on our next three issues. Enchantment, which is being guest-edited by Ann Burlein and Jackie Orr, is in the latter stages of production and will be released this fall. The call for papers, poetry, prose and artwork has just closed for Fashion, guest-edited by Eugenia Paulicelli and Elizabeth Wissinger. We recently send out the call for papers for Engage, which is being guest edited by David Gerstner and Cynthia Chris. That CFP can be found here: http://www.feministpress.org/wsq/current-call-papers. The deadline is October 1st.

“The War Against Women” continued

of Law: Ironic Jurisprudence, was published by Palgrave/MacMillan in 2004. Joe’s current project examines changes taking place in the legal language of sexuality. He is examining recent legislation in a number of states and litigation in the courts that threaten to challenge Roe v. Wade. His forthcoming book, entitled Legally Straight, will be published by New York University Press.

*The Newsletter of the Center for the Study of Women and Society * - FALL 2012
FALL 2012 EVENTS

Tuesday, September 18, 2012
4:00–6:00 PM • Room 9204

Why Standpoint Still Matters

ALISON WYLE, Professor of Philosophy and Anthropology, University of Washington. In this talk Professor Wylie will address standpoint theory’s contentious history as an explicitly political as well as a social epistemology. Professor Wylie will respond to two standard critiques – that feminist standpoint theories are inescapably essentialist, and entail a corrosive relativism – and make the case for a constructive reformulation. The challenge, she argues, is to understand how we can best mobilize the resources of situated knowledge, specifically those that arise from socially marginal standpoints. Professor Wylie is Co-Editor of the feminist philosophy journal *Hypatia.* She is also author of *Thinking from Things: Essays in the Philosophy of Archaeology* (University of California Press 2002) and many articles on feminist philosophy, epistemology and philosophy of science. She is co-editor with Lori Gruen of *Hypatia’s* special issue on Feminist Science Studies (2004). Wylie is currently President of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association.

Wednesday, September 26, 2012
12:00–2:00 PM • Room 6112 (Sociology Lounge)

Seminar in Gender and Sexuality:
Feeling Neoliberal: Homonormative Desires, Imperial Dreams

LISA DUGGAN, Professor of American Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies, Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University. Professor Duggan will explore the ways in which frameworks for LGBT/Q politics in the United States have varied by geographical and demographic location and how they have shifted over time. She considers the legacy of empire and colonialism on current U.S. domestic equality politics and queer transnational interventions. Professor Duggan is the author of *Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Diversity* (Beacon Press 2004) and *Sapphic Slasbers: Sex, Violence and American Modernity,* which won the John Boswell Prize of the American Historical Association in 2001.

Wednesday, November 7, 2012
12:00–2:00 PM • Room 6112 (Sociology Lounge)

Seminar in Gender and Sexuality:
‘Our version of consciousness raising groups’: Gender, Trace and the Political Economy of Feminist Blogging

JESSIE DANIELS, Professor of Urban Public Health, Graduate Center and Hunter College/CUNY. Professor Daniels will discuss how the emergence of digital media, particularly blogs, represents a new mode of civic participation – one that holds the potential to destabilize old hierarchies, but can also reinscribe hegemonic discourses of gender and race. Professor Daniels is author of *White Lies* (1997) and *Cyber Racism* (2009). Her book *Google Bombs, Astroturf and cloaked sites,* which examines propaganda in the digital era, is forthcoming from Routledge. She blogs with Joe Faegin at *RacismReview* and is a lead researcher on the Social Justice Sexuality Project.

Wednesday, November 28, 2012
12:00–2:00 PM • Room 6112 (Sociology Lounge)

Seminar in Gender and Sexuality:
On Fatness and Fluidity: A Rehabilitation

KATHLEEN LeBESCO, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Professor Gender Studies and Communications, Marymount College. Professor LeBesco considers why notions of fluidity, frequently applied to gender and sexuality, are not applied to the bodily state of fatness. In her talk she makes the case for rehabilitating the concept of fluidity as it pertains to fatness. LeBesco is author of *Revolving Bodies: The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2003) and is also co-editor of three books, *Edible Ideologies: Representing Food and Meaning* (2008), *The Drag King Anthology* (2003), and *Bodies Out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression* (2001).

Wednesday, December 5, 2012
12:00–2:00 PM • Room 6112 (Sociology Lounge)

Seminar in Gender and Sexuality:
The Postgenomic Family

ALONDRA NELSON, Associate Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies, Columbia University. Professor Nelson will discuss the state of the family after the genome. Nelson addresses the paradox of how ‘postgenomic’ can be seen as both denoting a marker of the proliferation of the logics and techniques of genetic science, and a historical and socio-technical juncture in which the family becomes simultaneously highly flexible and deeply intractable. She will discuss this paradox in the context of kin-keeping practices, novel affiliations, and views of kinship as both a health risk and health resource. Nelson is author of *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011), which received the Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award from the Race, Gender, and Class section of the American Sociological Association. Nelson is also co-editor of *Genetics and the Unsettled Past: The Collision of DNA, Race, and History* (Rutgers University Press 2012) and *Technicolor: Race, Technology, and Everyday Life* (New York University Press, 2001).

See our website for a full calendar of events at http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies/center/events.html or like us on Facebook to get updates. Our page is Center for the Study of Women and Society at the Graduate Center.