

CONSORTIUM FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN GENDER, CULTURE, WOMEN, AND SEXUALITY (GCWS)

HOSTED AT MIT



2015-2016 Annual
Report

Boston College * Boston University* Brandeis University
* Harvard University * MIT * Northeastern University *
Simmons College * Tufts University * UMass Boston

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 in Gender, Culture, Women, and
 Sexuality (GCWS)**

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Brandeis University

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Tufts University

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University of Massachusetts, Boston

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2015-2016 Board of Directors, Co-Chairs

Sabina Vaught, Education and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Tufts University, Senior Co-Chair

Jo Trigilio, Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies, Simmons College, Junior Co-Chair

GCWS Program Manager

Andi Sutton

The Mother Board & Past Faculty

The ‘Mother Board’ consists of the six founders, feminist faculty who conceptualized and brought the GCWS into existence: Carol Hurd Green (BC), Joyce Antler (Brandeis), Alice Jardine (Harvard), Ruth Perry (MIT), Laura Frader (NEU), and Christiane Romero (Tufts). We continue to rely on their institutional knowledge, insight, and expertise in feminist scholarship as the GCWS evolves. We draw on the Mother Board and other past faculty members as we continue to respond to the changing needs and opportunities within the field of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

GCWS Mission Statement

The Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality housed at MIT brings together feminist scholars and teachers from nine Boston area institutions for the purpose of advancing interdisciplinary, intersectional feminist scholarship and teaching in the areas of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies. The consortium is committed to the following:

- Exploring the intersections of power and identity, including but not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, class, physical ability, nationality, religion, and language
- Cultivating collaborative intellectual communities across fields and disciplines
- Supporting innovative pedagogical practices
- Contributing to the professional development of students and faculty
- Providing a sustainable model of institutional collaboration

In line with the history of women’s studies, GCWS relies on shared expertise, wisdom, and vision to work toward a more just and equitable future for all people.

Faculty comment:

“The students in the class were a large and diverse group and seemed to enjoy the challenges of doing interdisciplinary work. ... I absolutely would teach again in the GCWS: the experience was exciting intellectually, and I learned a lot about pedagogy by watching my co-teachers.”

2015-2016 Courses

Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

Fall and Spring semesters: Tuesdays 5:30-8:30 PM

September 8, 2015 – May 10, 2016

Taught by Lisa Lowe, Professor of English and American Studies, Tufts University

Understanding the Pornographic and the Obscene

Fall semester: Tuesdays 2:00 – 5:00 PM

September 15, 2015 – December 15, 2015

Taught by Sarah Leonard, Associate Professor of History, Simmons College

Burlin Barr, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of Cinema Studies at Central Connecticut State University

Madeline Caviness, Mary Richardson Professor Emeritus of Medieval Art and Gender Studies, Tufts University

American Motherhood and Mothering: Theory, Discourse, Practice, and Change

Fall semester: Wednesdays 5:00-8:00 PM

September 9, 2015 – December 16, 2015

Taught by Lynn O'Brien Hallstein, Associate Professor of Rhetoric, Boston University

Ana Villalobos, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Brandeis

Feminist Inquiry

Spring semester: Tuesdays 5:30 – 8:30 PM

February 2, 2016 – May 10, 2016

Taught by Linda Blum, Associate Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University

Karl Surkan, Lecturer in Women's and Gender Studies Program, MIT

The Secret Sex Life of Anthropological Artifacts: Gender and Race in the Museum

Spring semester: Thursdays 4:00-7:00 PM

February 4, 2016 – May 12, 2016

Taught by Caroline Light, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Harvard

Meredith Reiches, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Boston

Student comment

“The teaching team is so knowledgeable and diverse – it is truly brilliant. They discuss these topics without portraying their own personal bias or feelings. The ability to have such an interdisciplinary class is amazing and phenomenal.”

Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

FALL AND SPRING: Tuesdays 5:30 – 8:30 PM

September 8, 2015 – May 10, 2016

This is a writing workshop for graduate students at the dissertation level. Classes will include presentations and discussions of dissertation writers' work-in-progress. Discussions will include both theoretical considerations and practical ones as we address feminist research in historical archives, feminist fieldwork, feminist interpretation of literary, visual and material culture, and feminist research that theorizes the political. Students will be asked to reflect on their understandings of feminist research, and on the ways that feminism and gender studies have affected their views of what materials, archives, and methods are relevant, worthy, and timely. We will also consider issues of scholarly voice, clarity, and vision. The course will consider how dissertation writers address disciplinary and interdisciplinary readerships while maintaining a core feminist engagement. Students will also prepare oral presentations of their work.

Faculty

Lisa Lowe is a Professor of English and American Studies at Tufts University, and a member of the Consortium of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora. She works in the fields of comparative literature, comparative colonialisms, and the cultural politics of encounter. She has authored books on orientalism, immigration and globalization. Her most recent book, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, is a study of settler colonialism, transatlantic African slavery, and the East Indies and China trades, as the conditions for modern liberalism (Duke University Press, 2015).

Student comment

“This course was FANTASTIC and exactly what I needed to get through the dissertation. I loved working with the professor, and my peers were so supportive. Everyone’s feedback was critical to the project’s development, and the space was SO supportive.”

Understanding the Pornographic and the Obscene

FALL: Tuesdays 2:00 – 5:00 PM

September 8, 2015 – December 15, 2015

Expressions, images, and narratives labeled "obscene" and "pornographic" are often deeply charged. Pornography appears in a broad range of historical periods and cultural contexts; it varies drastically; and it is often influential in the way people define, think about, and understand sexuality. Both feminists and non-feminists from a range of disciplines, and outside the academy, have taken up the topic of pornography, producing dynamic debate but little consensus.

This course explores what feminist scholars in multiple disciplines have said about the pornographic and the obscene. We will explore criticisms of pornography and celebrations of it, as well as more ecumenical efforts to study and understand what pornography is and has been. We will look at its adjacency to other genres and media (including websites, fan fiction, and romance novels) and will discuss recent examples of sexually explicit media that can be placed in dialogue with the pornography (including works by Sally Mann, Robert Mapplethorpe, Lars Von Trier, and others). As a class, we will work to understand how pornography has been defined by various cultures and across time periods throughout history, how it is produced and consumed and by whom, the impacts of pornography consumption on individuals, families, communities, and societal norms, and—importantly—how pornography interacts with the multiple forms of oppression and expression, based on race, class, national identity, gender and sexual identities. Students can expect readings and topics from various disciplines, including history, literature, cinema and media studies, and the social sciences.

Faculty

Sarah L. Leonard is Associate Professor of History at Simmons College. She is the author of several articles situating pornography in a historical context. Her book, *Fragile Minds and Vulnerable Souls: The Matter of Obscenity in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, was recently published by University of Pennsylvania Press.

Burlin Barr is Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of Cinema Studies at Central Connecticut State University. He has published articles in *Camera Obscura*, *Screen*, *Jump Cut*, and other journals. His scholarly interests concern the constructions of gender in film, as well as the intersection of film form and cultural politics.

Madeline Caviness is Mary Richardson Professor Emeritus of Tufts University where she taught Medieval Art and Gender Studies. She is the author of *Visualizing Women in the Middle Ages: Sight, Spectacle and Scopio Economy*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001, *Reframing Medieval Art: Difference, Margins, Boundaries*, Tufts University electronic book, 2001, and numerous articles on the history and reception of European art from the pre-modern era.

Student comment:

“The mixture of film, peer-reviewed literature, and more ‘pop’ style readings gave a unique variety to the course that I enjoyed.”

American Motherhood and Mothering: Theory, Discourse, Practice, and Change

FALL: Wednesdays, 5:00-8:00 PM
September 9, 2015 – December 16, 2015

Motherhood is often lauded as the most important job, and Americans regularly talk about valuing family. However, as it tends to be women who are primarily responsible for caregiving in the family, the work is systematically devalued economically, socially, and legally. The gendered nature of mothering also has a profound influence on women's and men's lives outside of the family, especially at work. To explore the complex intellectual and practical issues contemporary American motherhood raises for feminist scholars, this course draws on the strengths of two disciplines—rhetoric and sociology—to examine motherhood as an intellectual concern, a social institution, and a site of competing discourses. The course structure interweaves theory, discourse, practice, and change as we explore a variety of approaches to motherhood and mothering as key theoretical concerns and as pivotal sites of women's resistance, social action, and change.

Faculty

Lynn O'Brien Hallstein, Associate Professor of Rhetoric at Boston University, is an award-winning teacher, and has published multiple journal essays and book chapters on contemporary motherhood. Her recent book, *Bikini-Ready Moms: Celebrity Profiles, Motherhood, and the Body* is to be published by SUNY Press in Fall 2015. The book investigates mediated motherhood at the intersection of post-second-wave gender, neoliberalism, and celebrity mom profiles.

Ana Villalobos, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Brandeis University, is a multiple award-winning teacher with courses focusing on parenting, work, gender, and identity. Her recent book, *Motherload: Making it all Better in Insecure Times*, published by University of California Press in 2014, investigates mothering within the context of various social, cultural, and economic pressures.

Student Comments:

“Readings were well thought out and covered a broad range while still in depth. There was a ton of great support for final paper.”

“I think the interdisciplinary nature of the course was the best part. The professors and all the students brought our strengths from various fields to the course.”

Feminist Inquiry

SPRING: Tuesdays 5:30-8:30 PM
February 2, 2016 – May 10, 2016

This course investigates theories and practices of feminist inquiry across a range of disciplines by studying a series of pairings of humanist and social science works by feminist scholars. It is not intended as a survey course on feminist theory, although students will recognize many pivotal thinkers included in our reading list. As an interdisciplinary course, Feminist Inquiry also cannot offer a strict "how-to" approach to research, but instead will engage students in questioning disciplinary assumptions and methodologies, seeking new ways to frame scholarly questions, and reconsidering the relationship between subjects and objects of study. Feminist Inquiry is simultaneously challenging and creative, as disciplines are revised by the analysis of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, both embedded within and shaping particular historical, national, and cultural contexts. Students will also have the opportunity to engage in two "hands-on" research inquiries of their own.

This course will proceed, after a brief framing of the issues, by closely analyzing pairings of humanist and social science "case studies" of feminist scholars and their work. Several of these feminist scholars will visit the class or speak with us remotely during the semester. Our aim is to allow seminar participants to think deeply about specific theoretical and methodological choices as these are evidenced in practice. We will also reflect on the ways that feminist inquiry/ies transform knowledge and inform varied forms of activism.

Faculty

Linda M. Blum is Associate Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University. She is the author of *Between Feminism and Labor: The Significance of the Comparable Worth Movement*, *At the Breast: Ideologies of Breastfeeding and Motherhood in the Contemporary United States*, and *Raising Generation Rx: Mothering Kids with Invisible Disabilities in an Age of Inequality*.

Student comment:

"Among the strengths of the course is the selection of readings/text itself. It has been very helpful to read different disciplinary works that demonstrate the use of particular feminist methodologies. It was also nice to have so many authors visit the class."

Karl Surkan has taught in the Women's and Gender Studies Program at MIT since 2005. Dr. Surkan does interdisciplinary work in queer, feminist, and new media studies with a humanities focus, and is currently writing a series of articles on technology and the (trans)gendered body.

The Secret Sex Life of Anthropological Artifacts: Gender and Race in the Museum

SPRING: Thursdays 4:00-7:00 PM
February 4, 2016 – May 12, 2016

Objects in museum collections lead secret lives. Enmeshed in webs of sexed and gendered significance, they speak to hidden relations of desire and the erotics of power. There is a given-ness to museum display—to the selection of objects, the breadth of their claims for representativeness, the manner of their acquisition—that this course challenges using an interdisciplinary feminist lens. What does it mean to collect human cultural and biological history? What are the roles of gender, sex, and race in shaping the politics of anthropological collection and study? How are human differences measured, and what do these systems of measurement say about the process of scientific knowledge production?

Convened at Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology, this course invites students interested in gender, race, power, anthropology, history, biology, evolution, development, and public health, among other areas, to explore the ways in which notions of human difference influence and are shaped by the practices of anthropological study. We will examine how historical relations of gender, sex, sexuality, and imperial/racialized power continue to be narrativized, hidden, and excavated in historical and contemporary anthropological projects, exploring sex and sexuality as constitutive of other questions of inequality and violence that comprise feminist investigative enterprises.

We will ground our investigation in the *objects* of anthropological analysis, the artifacts whose “face values” as things of interest to the scientific community conceal a history of struggle that includes eroticization of and violence against indigenous and colonized peoples. Chief among our goals is to work together to lay that complex, multilayered history bare. Our critique will extend to anthropology's deployment in contemporary contexts of international development, where the legacy of largely unidirectional scrutiny and classifications of bodies and peoples continues to haunt our present.

Faculty

Meredith Reiches is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Following undergraduate work in comparative literature, Meredith received a PhD in human evolutionary biology. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on human reproductive life, from the physiology of puberty to the inequalities that shape peoples' reproductive constraints and opportunities.

Caroline Light is the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Harvard's Program in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She has a PhD in history, and her research and teaching address historical intersections of gender, race, sexuality, and region as they shape immigration, labor, consumption, and self-defense in the U.S.

Breakdown of Student Participants

By Institution

Boston College	5
Boston University	8
Brandeis University	2
Harvard University	7
MIT	6
Northeastern University	13
Simmons College	12
Tufts University	2
UMass Boston	14
Total Enrollment	69

By Discipline

African and African American Studies	1	Irish Literature and Culture	1
American Studies	3	Law	1
Anthropology	4	Library Science	3
Applied Development/ Educational Psychology	1	New England Studies	1
Comparative Media Studies	1	New Testament and Early Christianity	1
Drama	1	Nursing	1
Electrical Engineering	1	Organizations and Social Change	1
English	3	Public Health	1
Fine Art	2	Public Humanities	1
Gender/Cultural Studies	8	Public Policy	1
Higher Education Administration	1	Religious Studies	1
History	4	Sociology	11
History and Anthropology of Science, Technology, and Society	1	Theology	1
Human Evolutionary Biology	1	Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies	5

Breakdown of Faculty Participants

By Institution

Boston College	0
Boston University	1
Brandeis University	1
Harvard University	1
MIT	1
Northeastern University	1
Simmons College	1
Tufts University	2
UMass Boston	1
Total Teaching Faculty	9

By Discipline

American Studies	1
Anthropology	1
English	1
History	1
Medieval Art	1
Rhetoric	1
Sociology	2
Women's, Gender, Sexuality Studies	3

2015-2016 Workshops, Events, and Initiatives

Feminisms Unbound

The GCWS hosted the second year of Feminisms Unbound. This series, organized by GCWS affiliated faculty, features debates that focus on feminist concerns, theories, and practices in this contemporary moment. The goal of Feminisms Unbound was to foster conversations and community among Boston-area feminist intellectuals and activists. The series, in its open configuration, endeavored to allow the greatest measure of engagement across multiple disciplinary trajectories, and a full array of feminist investments. All three discussions were hosted at MIT. Over 100 people attended the series, including faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as members of the public. The series continues to be a success and will be continuing into the 2016-2017 academic year.

The event organizers, GCWS affiliated faculty **Kimberly Juanita Brown**, Assistant Professor of English and Africana Studies, Mount Holyoke College, **Lisa Lowe**, Professor of English and American Studies, Tufts University, and **Jyoti Puri**, Professor of Sociology, Simmons College, programmed three topic-based discussions in this series:

Public Feminisms: Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges - September 16, 2015

- Amahl Bishara, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Tufts University
- Caroline Light, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Program in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Harvard University
- Karl Surkan, Lecturer, Women's and Gender Studies Program, MIT
- Moderated by Jyoti Puri, Professor of Sociology, Simmons College

Queer Diasporas and Futurities - November 18, 2015

- Feng-Mei Heberer, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, MIT
- Fatima El-Tayeb, Professor of African American Literature and Culture, UC San Diego
- Umayyah Cable, PhD Candidate, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California
- Moderated by Lisa Lowe, Professor of English and Humanities, Tufts University

New Terms in Feminist Studies - February 10, 2016

- Moya Bailey, Postdoctoral Fellow, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program and Digital Humanities, Northeastern University
- Pooja Rangan, Assistant Professor of English and Film and Media Studies, Amherst College
- Jasmine Elizabeth Johnson, Assistant Professor of African and Afro-American and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Brandeis University
- Moderated by Kimberly Juanita Brown, Assistant Professor of English and Africana Studies, Mount Holyoke College

Public Feminisms: Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges

Feminisms Unbound

September 16, 2015: 5:30-7:30 PM

Held at a moment when feminism's relevance to the public sphere seemed more urgent but also more contested than ever, this roundtable reflected on the promises and pitfalls of public feminisms. Bringing to bear their expertise, the invited participants addressed the possibilities of using film, social media, and popular writing as public forms of feminist intervention. In so doing, the discussion complicated questions of feminist engagements, their modalities, their "proper objects," as well as troubles which feminisms stand in for Feminism proper and what counts as the public sphere.

Roundtable discussion participants:

Amahl Bishara, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Tufts University

Amahl Bishara's research revolves around expression, space, media, and settler colonialism. She is currently working on two book projects. The first, tentatively entitled "Permission to Converse: Laws, Bullets, and other Roadblocks to a Palestinian Exchange," addresses the relationship between Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinians in the West Bank, two groups that are positioned slightly differently in relation to Israeli settler-colonialism. The second ongoing project examines Palestinian popular politics in a West Bank refugee camp. It examines how Palestinians in this refugee camp strive to resist three authorities, the Israeli occupation, the Palestinian Authority administration, and the United Nations Relief Works Agency, through struggles over land, water, bodies, and expression. She is the author of *Back Stories: U.S. News Production and Palestinian Politics* (Stanford University Press 2013) and regularly writes for such outlets as *Jadaliyya* and *Middle East Report*. She has produced the documentary, *Degrees of Incarceration* (2010), an hour-long documentary that explores how, with creativity and love, a Palestinian community responds to the crisis of political imprisonment and has been involved with the production of bilingual Arabic and English children's books about refugee lives, including *The Boy and the Wall*.

Caroline Light, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Program in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Harvard University

Caroline Light is Director of Undergraduate Studies in Harvard's Program in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Her doctorate is in U.S. history, with particular focus on gender, race, and sexuality in immigration and consumer culture. She is the author of *That Pride of Race and Character: The Roots of Jewish Benevolence in the Jim Crow South* (NYU Press, 2014), which explores how a southern, Jewish benevolent empire emerged in response to the combined pressures of post-Civil War devastation and the simultaneous influx of eastern European immigration. Light is currently working on a critical genealogy of contemporary "Stand Your Ground" (SYG) laws. The book (under contract with Beacon Press) explores the history of deadly self-defense in the United States, and the race and gender implications of our nation's radical departure from English common law mandates to retreat in the face of danger.

Karl Surkan, Lecturer, Women's and Gender Studies Program, MIT

Karl Surkan has taught in the Women's and Gender Studies Program at MIT since 2005. Dr. Surkan does interdisciplinary work in queer, feminist, and new media studies with a humanities focus, and is currently writing a series of articles on technology and the (trans)gendered body.

Moderated by:

Jyoti Puri, Professor of Sociology, Simmons College

Jyoti Puri works at the crossroads of sociology, sexuality and queer studies, and postcolonial feminist theory. Her book, *Sexual States: Governance and the Struggle against the Antisodomy Law in India*, was recently published by Duke University Press (February 2016). She has also published books including *Woman, Body, Desire in Post-colonial India* (Routledge 1999) and *Encountering Nationalism* (Blackwell Publishers 2004), as well as articles, chapters, and journal special issues on sexuality, state, gender, and nationalism. She is a co-editor for the journal *Foucault Studies*.

Queer Diasporas and Futurities

Feminisms Unbound

November 18, 2015 5:30-7:30 PM

This roundtable explored the ways in which both "queerness" and "diaspora" each displace normative classifications of sexuality and nationality, with consequences for the imagination of "futurity" in literature, visual culture, and cultural politics. As queerness complicates the boundedness of an ethnic, national or religious collectivity that desires to reproduce its own identity, so may diaspora unsettle the normative white Europeaness of conceptions of same-sex desire. Presenters discussed how diaspora figures both geographical displacement and the crossing of figurative boundaries of person, culture, society, and state, and they elaborated ways that queering describes not only different embodiments of gender and sexuality, but also a skewing of normative epistemology and social organization.

Roundtable discussion participants:

Feng-Mei Heberer, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, MIT

Feng-Mei Heberer studied film and comparative literature in Germany, France, China, and the US. Her research explores Asian and Asian diasporic media cultures, in particular how they partake in and represent contemporary conditions of globalization. She is currently working on her book manuscript on Asian diasporic video in North America, Western Europe, and East Asia, examining how these visual works stage and theorize new forms of minoritarian belonging. In addition, Feng-Mei is involved in programming for several Asian diasporic film festivals.

Fatima El Tayeb, Professor of African American Literature and Culture, UC San Diego

Fatima El-Tayeb is a scholar of African and comparative diaspora, critical gender studies, queer of color critique, visual culture studies, and media theory. She is the author of *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (U Minnesota, 2011) and articles on topics such as queer heterotopia, queer Muslims in Europe, and transnational feminism. She is also a filmmaker, and with Angela Maccarone, made *Alles vird gut/Everything will be fine* (1997).

Umayyah Cable, PhD Candidate, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California

Umayyah Cable has a BA in American studies from Smith College and is currently a doctoral candidate in the department of American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. Her dissertation, "Cinematic Activism: Palestinian Cultural Politics in Diaspora," focuses on how and why Palestinian cinema—through films and film festivals—has emerged as a site around which Palestinians in the US organize their social justice activism and assert their diasporic identification with Palestine. Umayyah is the recipient of the USC Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship and was recently cited as an Emerging Diversity Scholar by the National Center for Institutional Diversity.

Moderated by:

Lisa Lowe, Professor of English and Humanities, Tufts University

Lisa Lowe works in the fields of comparative literature, comparative colonialisms, and the cultural politics of race and migration. She has authored books on orientalism, immigration, and globalization. Her most recent, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Duke UP, 2015), is a study of settler colonialism, transatlantic African slavery, and the East Indies and China trades. With Jack Halberstam, she coedits the book series *Perverse Modernities* for Duke University Press.

New Terms in Feminist Studies

Feminisms Unbound

February 10, 2016 5:30 – 7:30 PM

This panel featured three feminist scholars who are conceptualizing new and evolving terminologies for the discourse of race, gender, and sexuality studies. The panelists, each trained interdisciplinarily, considered the expansiveness of emerging language in the field along with the fraught limitations of contemporary keywords within feminism. The scholars offered new terms for contemporary feminist studies, across and beyond disciplinary frameworks. Specifically, this event utilized the multi-valent rubrics of digital media, film, and dance to participate in new ways of seeing and thinking through the field.

Roundtable discussion participants:

Moya Bailey, Postdoctoral Fellow, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program & Digital Humanities, Northeastern University

Moya Bailey is a postdoctoral scholar of Women's Studies and Digital Humanities at Northeastern University. Her work focuses on marginalized groups' use of digital media to promote social justice as acts of self-affirmation and health promotion. She is interested in how race, gender, and sexuality are represented in media and medicine. She currently curates the #transformDH Tumblr initiative in Digital Humanities. She is also the digital alchemist for the Octavia E. Butler Legacy Network.

Pooja Rangan, Assistant Professor of English and Film and Media Studies, Amherst College

Pooja Rangan is Assistant Professor of English and Film and Media Studies at Amherst College. Her book, *Immediations* (Duke University Press, forthcoming 2017), examines the humanitarian impulse in documentary, with a special focus on questions of childhood, animality, ethnicity, and disability. Rangan's writing has been published in *differences*, *Camera Obscura*, *Film Quarterly*, *Feminist Media Histories*, *South Asian Popular Culture*, *World Picture*, and other anthologies and journals. She serves on the board of the Flaherty Film Seminar.

Jasmine Elizabeth Johnson, Assistant Professor of African and Afro-American and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Brandeis University

A Ford Foundation Diversity Fellow, she earned her Ph.D. in African Diaspora Studies at UC Berkeley and served as the Postdoctoral Fellow in African American Studies at Northwestern University. Johnson's work examines the politics of black movement, including dance, diasporic travel, and gentrification. Interdisciplinary in nature, her work is situated at the intersection of diaspora theory, dance and performance studies, ethnography, and black feminism. Currently, Johnson is working on her book manuscript "Rhythm Nation: West African Dance and the Politics of Diaspora," forthcoming from Oxford University Press. Johnson is a founding member of The Collegium for African Diaspora Dance. She is also a dancer, and performs internationally.

Moderated by:

Kimberly Juanita Brown, Assistant Professor of English and Africana Studies, Mount Holyoke College.

Kimberly Juanita Brown's research gathers at the intersection of contemporary black diasporic literature, critical race theory and visual culture studies. Her book *The Repeating Body: Slavery's Visual Resonance in the Contemporary* (Duke University Press) examines contemporary representations of slavery that emphasize the repetition of black women's corporeal practices in the aftermath of the event of slavery. She is currently at work on a second project examining images of the dead on the cover of the *New York Times* in 1994. Tentatively titled "Their Dead Among Us: Photography, Melancholy, and the Politics of the Visual," this project explores the photographic dispossession of the body of the other and the patterns of exclusion engendered by these ocular practices.

A Celebration of Books by GCWS Authors

April 13, 2016 5:30-7:30 PM

This event was a reception to celebrate local faculty who have recently published books on topics in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. The evening included short book talks by the featured authors and a book table for guests to peruse their recent works.

- **Thomas Abowd:** *Colonial Jerusalem: The Spatial Construction of Identity and Difference in a City of Myth* (Syracuse University Press, 2014)
- **Kimberly Juanita Brown:** *The Repeating Body: Slavery's Visual Resonance in the Contemporary* (Duke University Press, 2015)
- **Abigail Child:** *Mouth to Mouth* (EOAGH Press, 2016)
- **Catherine Connell:** *School's Out: Gay and Lesbian Teachers in the Classroom* (University of California Press, 2014)
- **Sasha Costanza-Chock:** "Towards Transformative Media Organizing: LGBTQ and Two-Spirit Media Work in the United States," report through the Ford Foundation (2015)
- **Lisa Cuklanz and Heather McIntosh:** *Documenting Gendered Violence: Representations, Collaborations, and Movements* (Bloomsbury, 2015)
- **Jamie Hagen:** "Queering Women, Peace and Security" in *International Affairs* (Volume 92, Number 2) and "The Revolutionary Possibilities of Online Trans and Queer Communities" in *Gender, Sex, and Politics: In the Streets and Between the Sheets in the 21st Century*, Ed. Shira Tarrant (Routledge, 2016)
- **Diana Henderson:** "Tempestuous Transitions and Double Vision: From early to late modern gendered performances on stage, film, and in higher education" in *Rethinking Feminism in Early Modern Studies: Gender, Race and Sexuality*, eds. Ania Loomba and Melissa Sanchez (Ashgate, 2016)
- **Ranjoo Herr:** "Can Transnational Feminist Solidarity Accommodate Nationalism? Reflections from the Case Study of Korean "Comfort Women"" in *Hypatia* (Vol. 31, Issue 1, 2016) and "Reclaiming Third World Feminism: Or Why Transnational Feminism Needs Third World Feminism" in *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* (Vol 12, Issue 1, 2014)

- **Christine Hoff Kraemer:** *Eros and Touch from a Pagan Perspective: Divided for Love's Sake* (Routledge, 2014) and *Pagan Consent Culture: Building Communities of Empathy and Autonomy*, Eds. Christine Hoff Kraemer and Yvonne Aburrow (Asphodel Press, 2016)
- **Lisa Lowe:** *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Duke University Press, 2015)
- **Susan Marine:** “‘I’m in this for real’: Revisiting Young Women’s Feminism” in *Women’s Studies International Form* (Vol. 47, 2014)
- **Susan Marine and Ruth Lewis:** “Weaving a tapestry, compassionately: Toward an understanding of young women’s feminisms” in *Feminist Formations: The Journal of the National Women’s Studies Association* (Vol. 27, Issue 1, 2015)
- **Kristine M. Molina, Tariana V. Little, and Milagros C. Rosal:** “Everyday Discrimination, Family Context, and Psychological Distress among Latino Adults in the United States” in the *Journal of Community Psychology* (Vol. 44, Issue 2, 2016)
- **Jeanne Marie Penvenne:** *Women, Migration and the Cashew Economy in Southern Mozambique, 1945-1975* (James Currey / Boydell Brewer / NY UK, 2015)
- **Bruno Perreau:** *The Politics of Adoption: Gender and the Making of French Citizenship* (MIT Press, 2014)
- **Laura Prieto:** "Bibles, Baseball, and Butterfly Sleeves: Filipina Women and American Protestant Missions, 1900-1930," in *Paradoxes of Domesticity: Christian Missionaries and Women in Asia and the Pacific*, eds. Hyaewool Choi and Margaret Jolly (Canberra: Australia National University Press, 2014)
- **Jyoti Puri:** *Sexual States: Governance and the Struggle Against Antisodomy Law in India* (Duke University Press, 2016)
- **Smitha Radhakrishnan and Cinzia Solari:** “Empowered Women, Failed Patriarchs: Neoliberalism and Global Gender Anxieties” in *Sociology Compass* (Vol. 9, Issue 9, 2015)
- **Caryl Rivers and Rosalind C. Barnett:** *The New Soft War On Women: How the myth of female ascendance is hurting women, men – and our economy* (TarcherPerigee, 2013)
- **Harleen Singh:** *The Rani of Jhansi: Gender, History, and Fable in India* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)
- **Judith Smith:** “Civil Rights, Labor, and Sexual Politics on Screen in *Nothing but a Man*” (1964), in *The Politics and Poetics of Black Film: Nothing But a Man*, ed. David C. Wall and Michael T. Martin (University of Indiana Press, 2015)

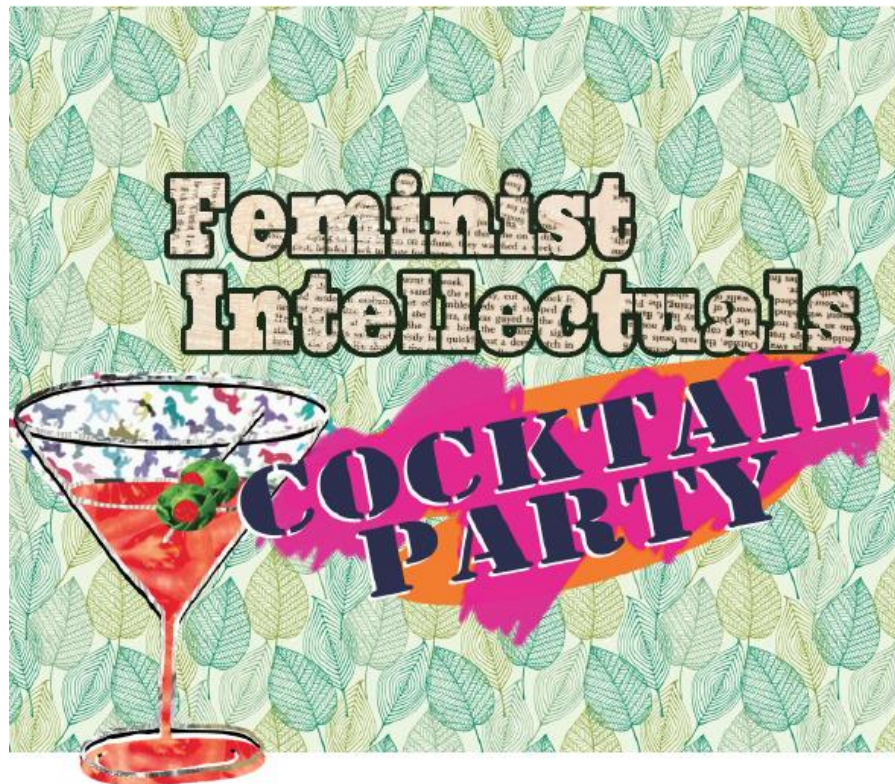
- **Lizzie Stark:** *Pandora's DNA: Tracing the Breast Cancer Genes through History, Science, and One Family Tree* (Chicago Review Press, 2014) and *#Feminism: A Nano-Game Anthology* (Fea Livia, 2016)
- **K. J. Surkan:** "That Fat Man is Giving Birth: Gender and the Pregnant Body" in *Natal Signs: Cultural Representations of Pregnancy, Birth and Parenting*, ed. Nadya Burton (Demeter Press, 2015)
- **Monica White Ndounou:** *Shaping the Future of African American Film: Color-Coded Economics and the Story Behind the Numbers* (Rutgers, 2014)
- **Sindiso Mnisi Weeks:** "Women Seeking Justice At the Intersection Between Vernacular and State Laws and Courts in Rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa" in *The New Legal Realism, Vol. II: Studying Law Globally*, eds. Heinz Klug and Sally Engle Merry (Cambridge University Press, 2016) and "Customary Succession and the Development of Customary Law: The Bhe Legacy" in *A Transformative Justice: Essays in Honour of Pius Langa*, eds. Michael Bishop and Alistair Price (Juta, 2015)
- **Elizabeth A. Wood:** William E. Pomeranz, E. Wayne Merry, and Maxim Trudolyubov: *Roots of Russia's War in Ukraine* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press / Columbia University Press, 2015)
- **Asli Zengin:** "Sex for Law, Sex for Therapy: Pre-Sex Reassignment Surgical Therapy Sessions of Trans People in Istanbul" in *Anthropologica* (Vol. 56, Issue 1, 2014)

Feminist Intellectuals Dinner

February 24, 2016
R&D Pub
MIT

Following our mission to build a feminist intellectual community across disciplines and institutions, GCWS hosted its annual Feminist Intellectuals Dinner at MIT. The dinner is a tradition of the GCWS, normally hosted once a year to nourish conversation among the diverse faculty communities at our member schools who do work in the field of Women's and Gender Studies. This year we included Feminist Speed Networking, a fast and structured activity where participants shared their work, interests, learned about others, and made new research and teaching connections.

More than 50 faculty members who represented all nine of our member institutions attended the event. Interested in expanding our reach, we asked attendees to bring a colleague who does work on Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies issues but who is not already connected to our faculty network.



Women Take the Reel: A Film Festival Celebrating Women’s History Month

March 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016

THEME: Activism

This annual film festival, now in its sixth year, is a collaborative effort among Women’s and Gender Studies departments involved in the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality (as well as select institutions/universities aligned with its mission) that features films directed by women and about issues relating to gender, race, sexuality, class, and/or feminism.

The focus on intellectual investigation of these issues, as well as visibility for women directors, meant most films are accompanied by a Q&A and discussion with either the film director, producer, or a faculty member from the film screening’s host institution. All films were free and open to the public.



Screenings of Films by GCWS Institutions

Co-sponsored Opening Event

Black Lives Through the Arts

Films:

Black Men Dream by Shikeith

black./womyn by Tiona McClodden

Performances:

Castle of our Skins

Lenelle Moïse

March 3, 2016 at 4:00 PM

Cosponsored by UMass Boston WGS,

BU WGSS, Simmons GCS,

Northeastern WGSS

Discussion with Tiona McClodden,

Lenelle Moïse, Shikeith, Seychelle

Dunn, Adreienne Baker followed

Boston College

The Price of Sex

Directed by Mimi Chakarova

March 30, 2016 at 6:00 PM

McGuinn Auditorium Room 121

Discussion with Professor Betty Blythe followed

Brandeis

The Hunting Ground

Directed by Kirby Dirk

March 2, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Discussion with Brandeis Rape Crisis Center followed

MIT

The Second Mother

Directed by: Anna Muylaert

March 2, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Building 6 Room 120

Discussion with film director, Anna Muylaert followed

Speed Sisters

Directed by Amber Fares

March 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Building 6 Room 120

Discussion with Dr. Seakale, Assistant Professor in History at University of California Santa Barbara followed

Regarding Susan Sontag

Directed by Nancy Kates

March 17, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Bartos Theatre

Discussion with director, Nancy Kates, followed

Oriented

Directed by Jake Witzenfeld

April 1, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Building 6 Room 120

Northeastern University

She's Beautiful When She's Angry

Directed by: Mary Dore

March 1, 2016 at 6:00 PM

135 Shillman Hall

Discussion with Our Bodies Ourselves founders Joan Ditzion, Judy Norsigian, and Wendy Sanford followed

Simmons College

Mutantes: Punk Porn Feminism

Directed by: Virginie Despantes

March 15, 2016 at 6:00 PM

SOM Building M501

Discussion with Sarah Leonard, Associate Professor of History at Simmons and Jo Trigilio, Program Director of the Gender & Cultural Studies, Simmons College followed

Tufts University

Half the History: Tell Her Story and
Half the History: Belinda's Petition

Directed by Jennifer Burton

March 10, 2016 at 7:00 PM

*Discussion with filmmaker, Jennifer
Burton, followed*

Her Story

Directed by Kate Fisher

March 16, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Barnum Hall

*Discussion with stars, Angelica Ross
and Laura Zak followed*

Additional Films by Other Participating Institutions

Emerson College

Rebel

Directed by Maria Agui Carter

March 22, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Bright Family Screening Room

Discussion with producer, director, and VMA professor, Maria Agui Carter followed

An Open Secret

Directed by Amy J. Berg

March 24, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Bright Family Screening Room

Discussion with producer, Matt Valentina, followed

Lesley University

They Call Me a Muslim

Directed by: Diana Ferrero

March 8, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Lesley University Library

Public Talks by GCWS Dissertation Workshop Participants: Women's and Gender Studies Dissertation Works in Progress

*May 10, 2016 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Building 4 Room 146
MIT*

At this public event, students from the GCWS Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies formally presented their dissertation works in progress. Over the course of two workshop sessions, each student participant gave a brief Q&A period. In addition to workshop participants, several graduate students and faculty from member institutions attended, offering feedback on students' works in progress. Participants commented that this was an excellent opportunity to publicly share work, get feedback on research and methodologies, and practices for future conferences, the dissertation defense, and future job talks. Supporting dissertation level writers is important for the GCWS as we aid graduate students in their work to complete their degrees and shorten the time for completion for our GCWS member institutions.

Presentations included:

Deanna Malvesti Danforth, "Disguised in Words and Apparel: The Transformation of Pyrocles/Zelmane from Prose Romance to Drama"

Cristina Jo Pérez, "Violent Poetics: The Sensate Nation and the Wounding Migrant"

Oyenike Balogun-Mwangi, "Embracing the Hottentot Venus: An Examination of Body Image among African Women"

Amanda Blair Runyan, "Staging Colonialism in Contemporary Art"

Ryan David Weberling, "Race and Empire in the Age of the Wilde Picture"

Asimina Ino Nikolopoulou, "Graph-ing the Female In Flight: Ruminations on Citizenship and Abjection from Persepolis to the Syrian Refugee Crisis"

Julianne Siegfriedt, "From Victim to Volunteer: Institutional Influences Throughout the Life Course for Those Who Have Sold Sex"

The Mother Board Writing Prize

In 2006 – 2007, the GCWS Board proposed an annual student support initiative: The Mother Board Writing Prize. The Prize commemorates the founders of the GCWS: carrying on the spirit of intellectual leadership that the mother Board modeled when they created the GCWS in 1992. It is awarded annually for outstanding student research and writing in the field of Women’s and Gender Studies. All graduate students matriculated in GCWS member institutions and who have taken or are currently taking a GCWS seminar are eligible for this prize.

The 2015-2016 prize was awarded to the following student:

Burcu Mtulu, MIT

“Morally Accounting for Sex Selection Online in Turkey”

Feminist Strategies in the Classroom and Beyond

April 9, 2016 9:00 – 5:00 PM

Brandeis University campus

In 2016, the GCWS organized and convened a graduate symposium. This event took place on April 9, 2016 on the Brandeis University campus. The conference, organized by faculty from GCWS member institutions, provided an opportunity to hear presenters from a variety of disciplines and build a network for feminist intellectuals.

Feminist Strategies in the Classroom and Beyond was a daylong, multi-disciplinary symposium. Approximately 90 people registered for the symposium and more than 70 people attended. The purpose of the symposium was to elicit practical advice from faculty members and graduate students across the disciplines - as well as writers and activists - about feminist, hands-on approaches to learning, teaching, knowledge production, and publishing. The symposium included lunch and opportunities for peers interested in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies to network. We featured four 90-minute roundtable discussions.

Roundtable topics and presenters included:

- How to Do Feminist Scholarship Anywhere
 - Mary Baine Campbell, Professor of English, Brandeis University
 - Circe Le Compte, PhD Candidate, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Harvard School of Public Health
 - Saher Selod, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Simmons College
 - Sabine von Mering, Professor of German and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Director, Center for German and European Studies, Brandeis University
 - Moderated by Sarah Pinto, Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Tufts University.
- How to Teach Feminism Today
 - Kimberly Juanita Brown, Assistant Professor of English and Africana Studies, Mount Holyoke College
 - Jennifer Musto, Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, Wellesley College
 - Laurie Nsiah-Jeffereson, Senior Scientist and Senior Lecturer, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University.
 - Moderated by Jo Trigilio, Director of Gender and Cultural Studies, Simmons College

- How to Start New Feminist Research
 - Nicole Aljoe, Associate Professor of English, Northeastern University
 - Linda Blum, Associate Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University
 - Kia Hall, Independent Researcher and Research Associate, Five Colleges Consortium Women's Studies Research Center
 - Asimina Ino Nikolopoulo, PhD Candidate, English, Northeastern University
 - Moderated by Nada Mustafa Ali, Lecturer in Women's and Gender Studies, UMass Boston
- How to Publish Feminist Scholarship Everywhere
 - Bernadette J. Brooten, Kraft-Hiatt Professor of Christian Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Classical Studies, and of Religious Studies at Brandeis University
 - Cristina Pérez, Predoctoral Fellow, Women's and Gender Studies Program, MIT
 - Heike Schotten, Associate Professor of Political Science, UMass Boston
 - Suzanna Walters, Professor of Sociology, Director of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program and Editor-in-Chief of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*
 - Moderated by Sandy Alexandre, Associate Professor of Literature, MIT

Attendees

Boston College	1
Boston University	5
Brandeis University	11
Harvard University	7
MIT	7
Northeastern University	2
Simmons College	6
Tufts University	3
UMass Boston	11
Other	12
Total	65

Presenters

Boston College	0
Boston University	0
Brandeis University	5
Harvard University	1
MIT	1
Northeastern University	4
Simmons College	1
Tufts University	0
UMass Boston	1
Other	3
Total	16

Organizers and Volunteers

Boston College	0
Boston University	0
Brandeis University	1
Harvard University	1
MIT	1
Northeastern University	1
Simmons College	1
Tufts University	0
UMass Boston	3
Other	0
Total	8

CONSORTIUM FOR
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