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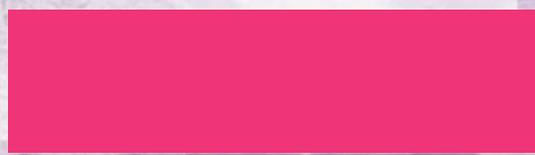
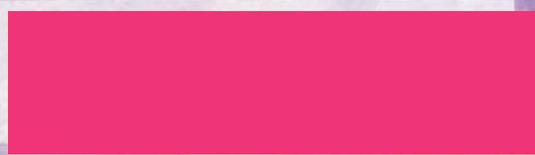
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MARY & WILLIAM NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Current and Former Students, Faculty, and Friends of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies,

Spring 2014 is bringing drastic and multiple changes in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program. A legendary faculty member, Nancy Gray, Professor Emeritus, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, and English, will retire this spring after 20 years at William and Mary. A new director, Jenny Putzi (jointly appointed by GSWS and English), will start leading the program on July 1. A brilliant scholar and teacher, Jenny has innovative curriculum and programming ideas and through new lenses, she will further expand and grow the program. Last but not least, our Academic Program Coordinator Jenny Holly is leaving the Program to take a creative job as a Park Guide at Yorktown Battlefield with a cool uniform and to eventually pursue a graduate degree in public history, subject of her passion.

Like countless numbers of her students and colleagues, we regard Nancy Gray not only as a brilliant teacher-scholar but a special, transformative educator whose contribution to both depth and diversity of interdisciplinary curriculum at the College has been peerless. In many ways Nancy, since arriving on William and Mary's campus in 1994, has been the driving force for Women's Studies (now GSWS) to thrive as a distinct interdisciplinary intellectual enterprise and organizational structure. Immersed in many specific areas of GSWS, she has been a key actor in building the Women's Studies Program as the Program director (1995-98, 2001-2) and the chair of curriculum committee in Women's Studies over a decade as well as in her service in Faculty Assembly (2002-05, 2011-2014) and the Educational Policy Committee, in addition to a long list of other committees and curriculum-related venues and seminars. Not only has she excelled in the development of a vibrant interdisciplinary program but she designed and taught highly innovative courses that became inspirational for other faculty across campus and opened new worlds to students. Her widely popular *Rhymes with Witch: Sexual Politics in Contemporary Culture* is such an example. In this issue, some of Nancy's former and current students describe her influence on them. We also include in this issue an interview with Nancy on interdisciplinary teaching and pedagogy which she provocatively calls teaching "without a net." Even though we will no longer be able to offer *Rhymes with Witch* as a course, *Rhymes with Witch* in another guise will



Director Gul Ozyegin, GSWS Academic Program Coordinator Jenny Holly, and Student Editor Faith Barton all say goodbye to the newsletter this spring.

continue to inspire student research and writing on subjects in sexual politics. I proudly announce the creation of a new prize for student scholarship in GSWS which will be named Nancy Gray Rhymes with Witch Best Student Paper Prize on a subject in sexual politics. A donation made by Nancy to GSWS will fund the initial endowment of this award. Nancy's much admired wit and playfulness in speech will also live on through bumper stickers we have created featuring some of her memorable phrases. Nancy Gray will be terribly missed at William and Mary. We wish her the best for her new life in her beloved city of Seattle. She will be inspired plenty by Seattle while penning her book: *My Life, Based on a True Story: Fact, Fiction and What Lies Between*.

I thank all of you—near and far away—for helping me making our program strong and meaningful to students. My collaboration with Jenny Holly was short, but her fresh approach to all facets of the Academic Coordinator's job and her wonderful rapport with students made all the difference. It was a pleasure to work with such a superb professional with uncommon abilities. My other collaborator Faith Barton, the student editor, and I worked together in different capacities since 2011. Most creative

and intellectually powerful, Faith has a demanding mind, political lucidity, and a kind, compassionate personality. She exemplifies the best of our feminist futures. I owe her enormous thanks for bridging generational differences in feminism with humor and her creativity in different realms.

I cannot wait to celebrate our graduates at the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, May 10th!

With best wishes,

Gul Ozyegin

Gul Ozyegin

Director, William and Mary Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program

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EDITOR'S NOTE

What a whirlwind these last two years have been. I came into this position as Newsletter Editor with little idea of what I was doing, and am leaving with a wealth of experiences, memories, and knowledge about the importance of copy-editing; strategically hassling people to return emails and send in submissions; the power of a feminist collective; managing image and marketing; and the joy (and occasional confusion) of wearing many different hats (and being part of many unofficial committees). I am grateful to everyone I've worked with on this newsletter and who has submitted in the last two years; you are the ones who make this possible. I would like to extend a special thank you to Jenny Holly, our Academic Program Coordinator, for being such a fantastic person to work with and for! She is creative and bright, and has done a lot of hard work to usher in the new era of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies with grace and humor. I can't imagine working in the GSWS office without her, and I wish her the best of luck and joy in her new (dream) job as a Park Ranger. She's helped me with so many things these last two years, and it has truly been a wonderful experience of women mentoring women in the workplace (and it's thanks to Gul's Comparative Studies in Gender and Work class that I understand things like this now!).

This brings me to the third in our GSWS trifecta – Professor Gul Ozyegin. She has been the driving force

behind this newsletter since day one, from its first manifestation under the editorship of Mira Nair, to this last and special edition under her directorship. Gul, our fearless leader, has guided the WMST and now GSWS program for the past three years, inspiring all of us to work harder, think harder, and do all of it better. She has been a huge part of my experience in GSWS, and it has been a fantastic adventure. This newsletter is the one of the results of her hard work and dedication to the GSWS program, and I am delighted that I've been able to share the journey with her.

The future of this newsletter is open now to new possibilities and transformations as Professor Jenny Putzi takes on the role of director next year. Best wishes to her as well, and to the lucky student who will next take on the role of student editor! To whomever that may be, I leave you these words of advice: always get it done earlier than you think you need to, and never underestimate the power of persistence.

Fondly yours,
Faith Barton
Student Editor



GSWS EVENTS



This year's Braithwaite lecture featured Professor Robyn Weigman from Duke University, on "Without Guarantee: On the Future of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies."



Faculty, staff, students, and friends all gathered to celebrate Professor Gul Ozyegin at the end of her three year term as Women's Studies, now Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Director.



Gul's End of Directorship Party was accompanied with great speeches and fantastic food!



TEACHING WITHOUT A NET

An Interview on Interdisciplinary Teaching between Professors Gul Ozyegin and Nancy Gray



Professor Nancy Gray

GUL: Nancy, you have been a major figure in building our interdisciplinary program as the Program director and the Chair of Curriculum Committee in GSWS over a decade. You also designed and taught highly innovative interdisciplinary courses, such as your widely popular course *Rhymes with Witch*. How do you define interdisciplinary teaching?

NANCY: Directing the Program, chairing the Curriculum Committee, and teaching courses in Women's Studies, now Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, each involve a somewhat different relationship with interdisciplinary education. Let me start with the teaching. I came to William and Mary in 1994 to fill a "joint appointment" in English and Women's Studies, meaning that my course assignments have been divided (more often than joined) between the two. Before that, I taught literature elsewhere, but with a feminist perspective. The question for me, then, is what's the difference between teaching interdisciplinary courses in feminism and teaching courses in a discipline "with a feminist perspective"?

Most of us who teach have been trained in particular disciplinary codes of knowledge that "authorize" certain objects of study requiring specially designed methodologies and discourses. It's a way of dividing up the human sciences, and it determines where and

how we are employed in the academy. So in the literature classroom, feminist views are generally seen as "extra," not necessary to the study of literature but at times useful to it. In the feminist interdisciplinary classroom, all the liberal arts must come into play – all the forms of knowledge that populate our universities and, just as importantly, our lives. As far as I'm concerned, even though I may emphasize somewhat different vocabularies and thematic paradigms depending on whether I'm teaching in English or in GSWS, I'm the same person with the same kinds of questions about the social, intellectual, artistic, and natural systems in which we live. In my case, I'm not teaching "only" fiction or theory or culture, for instance, but the relationships among them. The idea is to get as wide and complex a perspective as possible. So I have to rely on my ability to ask questions, and to resist phrasing them as answers. I guess in a way, interdisciplinary teaching is teaching without a net – or, to use my literary taste for metaphor and borrow from the writer Julian Barnes, to see nets less as instruments designed to catch fish and more as collections of holes tied together with string.

Turning to Program design and administration, I would say that Women's Studies (by any of its names) is already, by definition, interdisciplinary.

This applies as well to the kinds of decisions the Curriculum Committee makes about what courses to put on our books, what student requests for independent scholarship to approve, what counts as part of a student's major or minor requirements, or what updates and changes our overall curriculum should incorporate. A feminist interdisciplinary approach is not one that examines an issue from several different disciplinary perspectives so much as it understands all perspectives as already intertwined and accountable to one another – that is, we need all conceptual frameworks, epistemological discourses, and the tools we use to understand them, all together and all at once, in order to tell the largest possible story of the world and the human condition. To be sure, feminist thinking will always take gender, sexuality, and race as its key, if not foundational, components. But since all humans have some sort of relation to gender, sexuality, and race – whether delivered to us as givens or social constructs – then all human endeavors and forms of knowledge are in some way related to the attitudes, ideologies, or assumptions we make about who and how we are. To a feminist mind, even the most "objective" ways of knowing carry embedded within them, to borrow loosely from Marx, the thoughts that are thinkable in our time and society. In other words, none of us is free from the conditions and contexts that shape our lives and our minds.

I remember a comment made to me years ago by a colleague in a literary theory study group when my approach kept slipping the bonds of "literature." She said, "I keep forgetting, you study 'culture,' not 'just' literature." I spent a lot of time pondering that comment. In the end it became as good a touchstone as any for me as an interdisciplinary teacher, especially if we regard "culture" in the broadest possible sense. No matter what I'm teaching, no matter the specific topic, it's never unmoored from the cultural narratives (a.k.a. belief systems, histories of knowledge, relations to material conditions) that tell us what counts as meaningful and how to recognize it. The form that recognition takes will vary over time and in relation to subject matter. It is in the flux and movement that variation generates that I find the most exciting possibilities for interdisciplinary thinking and teaching.

That's the long answer. The short answer is that there is no "definition" of interdisciplinary teaching. It is not an "exact" science in quest of "exact meaning," but a dynamic process of questioning what we

know, how we know it, and how we can use it to remain open to the future. A simple task for which we need everything.

GUL: I love the metaphor of “interdisciplinary teaching is teaching without a net.” I can see this becoming the title of this conversation [headline: teaching without a net]—unless you produce even a more compelling metaphor in the rest of our conversation! What this visualization foremost conveys to me is risk associated with losing control of conversation as a teacher in an interdisciplinary classroom. Embracing a pedagogical disposition to openness to all perspectives, ways of knowing and interpretation is a risky business! Of course there is this great promise of thrill, not guaranteed, but may come with losing control. For many of us who were trained in singular disciplines, openness/keeping your boundaries permeable is not necessarily a source of excitement and thrill for obvious reasons. Positioning oneself as a co-learner (acknowledging your partial knowledge and perspective) requires that we move into a terrain that has been foreclosed by our own disciplinary training and gatekeeping theories and methods. How do you position yourself as a co-learner in classroom? Are there specific techniques you employ? Are there topics you teach that lend themselves more easily to this task of (partial or strategic) disinheritance? What topics in GSWS (and what classroom configurations) tend to create richer environments for crossing disciplinary boundaries and interpretations? Or help you expand understanding of multiple sites of knowledge production?

NANCY: Insofar as I do position myself as a co-learner in the classroom, it generally happens in a couple of ways. First, since most our classes are made up of majors in various fields in addition to GSWS, I often rely on and ask for their expertise in particular avenues of inquiry. For instance, in discussions of how feminism attempts to determine what’s “natural” and what’s “cultural” about gender and sex, those students who have been taking courses in biology, psychology, sociology (to name a few) bring invaluable perspectives into the mix. I’ve learned quite a bit from such moments. They also offer wonderful opportunities for the whole class to expand its database of information (so to speak) and weigh in on the debates inevitably generated. Second, when I myself am new to some of the material I’m assigning (e.g. something relevant to the course topic that has recently been published),

I ask that we figure it out together as we go. Lively discussions usually come from such instances, and I find that my own intellectual senses (as it were) are freshly stimulated by being a learner and teacher at the same time. Since in all my classes I rely a great deal on being able to respond to and build on what students have to say, both these techniques (if that’s what they are) fit well with into my pedagogical comfort zone.

As for topics that best lend themselves to these strategies, I’d say pretty much anything does. I’ve used these approaches not only in GSWS courses like *Rhymes with Witch* or *Gender and Sexuality: Feminist Interrogations*, but also in literature seminars. Having said that, I’d add that theory courses, because of the density and specialization of the discourse, tend to require more pedagogical guidance from me -- not exactly “lecture,” but certainly more “explanation.” However, there too I find the classroom experience most valuable when students are invited to help me find connections between theory and real life, and use them to debate the benefits and limitations of particular theoretical concepts.

In terms of crossing disciplinary boundaries and locating multiple sites of knowledge production, we’re lucky as GSWS faculty members in that our “discipline” already does that by definition. It’s not as if gender and sex and race (for instance) exist

separately from each other in our lives, nor as if one can gain a complex understanding of them by studying them as if they are not simultaneously shaped by culture, history, science, the arts, etc. So it’s just a matter of making the intersections visible by speaking them out into the open. This often produces questions in class that open up the blind spots we’ve all learned, one way and another, depending on how we’re positioned in relation to the privileged “centers” of knowledge. These are invaluable moments, for they teach us all—sitting there together, facing each other, each in possession of our own fears about what we don’t know as well as our confidence in what we do know—a few things about how “knowledge” and “truth” are produced in the first place, how promisingly vulnerable their boundaries can be, and what can be gained from informed exposure to our inherent diversities. When it works well, we are challenged to question what we think we know about ourselves and each other, as well as about our world. That, I would say, is why most of us are in the feminist education biz in the first place.



Professors, feminists, and best of friends Gul Ozyegin and Nancy Gray.



THE KNOWLEDGE AND PASSION OF NANCY GREY

Saying Goodbye to Nancy

ASHLEY PETERSON '04 *Women's Studies and Art History Double Major*

What I remember most about Nancy Gray is the way she bore her formidable intelligence with such kindness and grace. Over a decade ago, when I enrolled for every one of her classes that my schedule allowed, I would have said that I most appreciated her ability to render dense feminist postmodern theory into lucid and lively classroom discussion. Now I would say that Nancy's impact

went far beyond making Judith Butler intelligible; in the end she taught me that the ultimate purpose of knowledge and passion is to share it.

PATTI NELSON '08 *English and Women's Studies Double Major*

The fall semester of my junior year I took Nancy's Modern Fiction class, and from the very first day I remember being struck by how smart, confident, put-together, and kind this professor was. Throughout the semester, Nancy's generous comments on my papers and her openness to my ideas in class and in office hours made me feel like I had truly found a role model and a mentor. For the rest of my time at W&M, I proceeded to take every class that she offered, whatever the title or subject, aiming to soak up every bit of knowledge and inspiration I possibly could from this feminist superhero. In large part due to Nancy's encouragement, I wrote an honors thesis in Women's Studies, and then went on to pursue a master's degree in Gender Studies and eventually a PhD in English. In pursuing an academic career, I have hoped, I think, to develop some of Nancy's grace and eloquence in talking about issues that really

matter and the way that we can find answers – or, perhaps more important, ever more questions – in literature. When I think of William and Mary Women's Studies, I think of Nancy's knowledge and passion. I feel very fortunate to have had the chance to learn from her.

ELIZABETH MILLER '07 *Women's Studies Major*

Nancy Gray once wrote "dandy argument" in the margin of my paper, and I was so proud, I kept the page. Even before becoming a major, I had heard of Nancy's incredible wit, brilliance, and style. All the WMST students knew taking Fem Theory with her was a requirement both of the major and of knowing you had made it because hearing her dissection of Butler or RadicalLesbians was the big time. From Feminist Theory to my thesis defense, I valued every opportunity to learn from Nancy, and even as she leaves William and Mary, I hope I have more opportunities to do so. Beyond nurturing my intellect and deepening my commitment to feminism, Nancy has always been willing to provide support and encouragement for all of my endeavors. Her advice always points me in the right direction. Nancy Gray will forever be a defining part of my William and Mary experience, and when anyone asks me about being a feminist, she will always be a part of my answer. Thank you Nancy, for all you continue to teach me.



Daniel, Faith, Helis, and Jenny at Nancy's retirement party; the food was great and the wine was plenty.

JULIAN LONG (NÉ CARR) '04 *Women's Studies Major*

I had Prof. Gray for Feminist Theory in either my junior or senior year at the College. (It's been a while since I've harked upon the gale, and my memory's a bit rusty!) I loved the class, and I loved having Prof. Gray as an instructor. I will always remember how brilliant she was in class, the thoughtful discussions she helped lead, and her wonderfully dry sense of humor and wit. The GSWS department was my home away from home during my four years as an undergraduate at the College, and all of the professors and students there were like a second family to me. The College of William & Mary and the GSWS department are both lucky to have had Prof. Gray as long as they did, and I wish her all the happiness in whatever comes next for her.

ASHLEY GLACEL '02 *Public Policy Major and Women's Studies Minor*

Professor Gray, you taught my single most favorite class at William & Mary, Rhymes with Witch. This class exposed me to a kind of syllabus that embraced all manner of intellectual work beyond standard scholarly writing. My enthusiasm for atypical academic fare, which began with you, ultimately led me to interdisciplinary Masters and PhD programs that encourage the use of an array of cultural productions and materials as part of my research. In this way you were tremendously influential in my life. And of course I owe you a debt of gratitude for your assistance in gaining entrance to these programs! As my professor (three times, I believe), you provided steady and measured insight into earth-shattering topics, offering lessons that will stay with me forever. And as my advisor, your advice and support has been just as meaningful to me post-graduation as it was prior. Thank you so much and best of luck in retirement!

FAITH BARTON '14 *Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies and Art Double Major*

My first semester sophomore year here at W&M, I decided to jump right off of the high of Intro to Women's Studies into Feminist Theory with Professor Nancy Gray, little realizing it was actually a 400 level class and I was the only sophomore amongst mostly upperclassmen. And to this day it remains one of my favorite classes I've ever taken here; I was challenged, I was forced to slow down and think about things I've never considered before in ways I didn't even know existed, and I had the good fortune to do it with a professor who insists on taking the journey along with her students, who never stops questioning and never stops encouraging us to continue asking questions. Shortly after that class, I asked Nancy to become my major adviser, and later my thesis-turned-independent-study adviser. She has been a huge part of my feminist education here, and was the first to introduce me to what is now one of my primary loves: theory. I've had the pleasure of picking apart Judith Butler and Derrida to discussing French existentialist cat videos with her, and she's been there with me through the ups and downs of thesis writing.

It's hard to separate feelings from academia, and when I once expressed my bemusement at this strange reality, Nancy told me, "I don't know about academia not having all these feelings that get brought to the surface. It goes around pretending to be all objective, but I've often found that the connections we make in this environment matter so much to us - they're unlike most others we find in life, maybe because the intellectual and personal are so intertwined." The personal is political is intellectual is personal. GSWS won't be the same without you, Nancy, but I'm glad you're going back to the city that you love.

MORGAN BERMAN '08 *Women's Studies Major and Anthropology Minor.*

Nancy was an inspiring teacher, always pushing us to become better thinkers and writers but above all, better people. On the last day of Feminist Theory, which was also my last semester at William and Mary, Nancy said "If you remember nothing else, remember this: don't have more than two children." Her point was to not exceed the natural human replacement rate and to avoid further population growth because of the effects on our society and the planet. Of course as good feminists we don't want to dictate other women's reproductive choices and this was meant partially in jest, but the point was our ever day choices and our big life choices are all connected to our collective experience on this planet, and that we owe it to each other and ourselves to be thoughtful in how we live our lives.

LAURA ANDREW '12 *Women's Studies Major*

Two years after graduation, I find my "adult" life randomly and unexpectedly punctured with "ah-HA" moments so intense they cause visceral reactions. Scenes in 'Rhymes with Witch' and 'Feminist Theory' appear so clearly I feel like I'm in one of those cheesy movie flashbacks. That conversation on identity politics, the assigned reading I didn't understand, the theory that went over my head: with increasing life experience playing the role of missing puzzle pieces, the sum impact of Nancy Gray on my life is vast and still revealing itself.

Nancy Gray is the feminist I model myself after, which feels like an inside joke because I distinctly remember her never saying anything about how she feels but instead turning questions right back around onto the rest of us. A great professor: Nancy Gray could steer a discussion on Moses and Miley Cyrus back to her lesson plan and make everyone in the room feel like it was their idea. A community leader: from her attendance at LGBTIQ Pride to her visible and crucial support for the Living Wage Campaign, Professor Gray will never shy away from a fight. A thoughtful advisor: the fourth (and last time) I changed my life goals in her office, she met my new plan with the same enthusiasm and support that she had for the first.

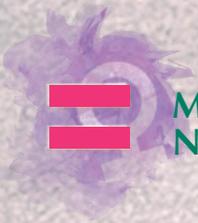
Thank you, Professor Gray, for shaping the path of my life, for deepening my understanding of relationships and intersectionality, and for never letting me or anyone else take the easy way out. Wishing you the happiest retirement!

AUDREY GLASEBROOK '12 *Women's Studies and Psychology Double Major.*

Nancy Gray was one of the most influential professors I had at William & Mary. With her open attitude and discussion-style classroom, she created an environment where we all felt comfortable expressing ourselves, questioning ourselves, and challenging one another. Her wit and occasional sarcasm made it a pleasure to come to class and (gasp!) stay completely engaged through an entire hour and half block. She empowers her students to define their own feminism and stay open to others'. Professor Gray is a big part of why I have Tribe Pride and as I've moved out of the undergrad world, I take those discussions, readings, and paper prompts with me. Her influence has extended, for me, beyond the classroom and into the ways I interact with and think about the world.

JAMIE HOOD '09 *Women's Studies and English Double Major.*

The first time I met Nancy, I'd popped by her office to ask special permission to take her much-lauded Feminist Theory course (it was recommended for advanced students, and I was just finishing my freshman year). Naturally, I was anxious, both because I'd already heard widespread Nancy-acclaim, but also because feminist scholarship was as yet a novel passion striking sparks in me still.



MARY & WILLIAM NEWSLETTER



Nancy Gray and Susan Grover, law professor and Vice President of the Faculty Assembly at Nancy's retirement part.

Turned out this anxiety was all on me. Nancy is the last person to intimidate or rattle nerves, despite her tremendous intelligence, generous dry wit, and incredible professionalism. (Unrelated: I maintain she's also the most stylish professor I've known.) An inspiration on all fabulous fronts.

Three and a half years later, I'd worked with her in three or four seminars, asked her to be my academic advisor – and finally, most importantly, to be my senior thesis advisor. For a year, we worked closely on that project - considering feminist revisionary approaches to fairy tales, including a chapter on Angela Carter, to whom Nancy had directed my attention in her own phenomenal fairy tale seminar – and that time remains my most cherished scholarly and professional memory. Nancy is an impeccable mentor; warm and thoughtful, but not one to suffer laziness, either. And indeed, she pushed me to excel in the best way – by empowering me to want to produce my best work, in part because I found the idea of offering something subpar to Nancy offensive to my intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities.

I should avoid hyperbole, but I confess: I can't imagine anymore more deserving of this special recognition, and I can only hope that in retirement she'll have the opportunity to reward herself as much as she has been a reward for innumerable students and colleagues. I also hope she and Gul Ozyegin will continue riding around in that fabulous red-hot convertible! My very, very best to her.

MIRA NAIR '12 *Women's Studies Major*

Professor Gray teaches with both a deep academic understanding of feminist theory as well as a wealth of relevant life experience, which she employs to enrich and clarify often complex theoretical material. Her assignments reflect her dedication to help students truly understand the utility of feminist theory, asking students to analytically reflect on how theoretical concepts relate to our everyday life. One of the most exceptional characteristics of her as a teacher



The English Department and GSWS organized a sumptuous spread to send

is her ability to cater to a diversity of students. When coming into a feminist theory class, students range in race, class, gender, sexual orientation, academic major, and personality. She doesn't force shy or quiet students to talk in class but designs assignments to give them the opportunity to express their voice and personal reaction to the material.

She demonstrates in her lectures and assignments that her key concern is to engage students. She makes as much of an effort to learn from students as she does to teach them what she knows. She employs humor regularly in appropriate and affective ways, transforming difficult or controversial material into accessible ideas. Her class discussions completely transformed my understanding of gender and feminism. Because every class she challenged us to find ways to relate to the material on a personal level, I experienced a lot of self growth. I will take what knowledge I learned from her class with me throughout my entire life. I will take the critical thinking skills I gained from her class throughout my life as well, and employ them to question and enrich my worldview. Nancy Gray gave me and the other students a "feminist curiosity" about our daily practices, conversations, and social norms.

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF FEMINISM, WOMEN'S STUDIES, AND THE FUTURE

An Interview with Professor Robyn Weigman and Newsletter Editor Faith Barton

Robyn Weigman is Professor of Literature and Women's Studies at Duke University, and former director of Women's Studies at both Duke and UC-Irvine. She has published *Object Lessons* (2012) and *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (1995), and numerous anthologies, including *Women's Studies on Its Own* (2002) and *Feminism Beside Itself* (1995). She was this year's Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Braithwaite Lecturer.

FB: Your talk for the Braithwaite lecture is titled, "Without Guarantee: On the Future of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies." Can you talk a little about what the future might look like? What do you think our object, or subject, of study should be?

RW: I'm always nervous about the 'should' question. It asks us to decide so much in advance, without attention to different institutional contexts. I've always been in favor of interrupting our habit of trying to resolve the problems of the field by designating a proper object of study or changing the field's name. Your program at William and Mary recently changed its name. Where were you in the debate? Did you think 'women's studies' was old-fashioned?

FB: It was a difficult question to think about, because on the one hand, considering the recent proliferation of even mainstream discussions about trans people and non-gender binary conforming people, I definitely had an interest in seeing the field of study making a greater acknowledgment of the fact that we do talk about things besides women, and wanting to see that in the name change partly for the purpose of getting more people to come to the program. That was part of the discussion, appealing to a wider audience, but on the other hand it's like, why should we have to tailor ourselves to fit the people who don't think that this is a valid area of study in and of itself to begin with? With all the discussions about whether or not feminism is a dirty word, there have been so many defenses that say, no it's not a dirty word, and some sound almost apologetic and some are not. But it's interesting that there's this consciousness of becoming more marketable and being able to appeal to a wider audience – which is about extending the field's reach, which we all want to happen, but it came at the compromise of the image.

RW: What compromise?

FB: I don't want to let go of women's studies because I don't want to let go of the history; but there is sometimes the thought of, why can't women in and of themselves 'count' as a valid field of study unrelated to other things? How do you talk about women without talking about men? That's something that's really difficult to do, and why is it difficult? Is it



Faith Barton and Robyn Weigman

because we don't have the language, the grammar, the vocabulary? I'm happy about the name change, I think it's exciting that there is change, but what is the curriculum going to be and how is the curriculum going to change? The thing that I've thought about specifically for here is that I wish we talked about race more; race and class are the two other things that get mentioned a lot, right after gender, it's race and class.

RW: In the 70s and 80s it was gender, race, and class – that's the trifecta that came out of socialist feminism – and now we talk about it as intersectionality. And then in the 90s it started to be gender, sexuality, women, sometimes race, sexuality, gender, and class. Class is interesting: Wendy Brown talks about in her essay, "The Impossibility of Women's Studies," and I think she's right about this, that the different categories are not equivalent to one another. Their social formation or identity implications or histories need to be accounted for in discrete ways before you can even try to start thinking about how they might intersect. Intersectionality insists, methodologically, that they are coeval, which rushes us past some of the complexity we should be learning how to study and teach. I'd like to see our curricular efforts ask more questions about the analytic frames we use as an answer to feminism's own shortcomings.

FB: Can you say more about the curricular issues that concern you?

RW: I've always been interested in a less presentist curriculum, one that could think about and study subjectivity or forms of human self-consciousness in the world that aren't modern. How did the human being conceive of itself outside of these frameworks of modern consciousness and state forms of identification? This is a pressing question, but it may not be satisfying for those who come to the field for usable knowledges. But given current changes in higher education, we might want to be on the side now of resisting "usable" knowledge; we might want to think about curricula dedicated to preservation. People have to be taught and encouraged to

think that they need to know something about the world before modernity. This would be a seachange in the field because we have long promoted a notion that knowledge matters most when it's about me, my world, my identity, my situation. But Americans are completely narcissistic; we always think that the world is about us. As bizarre as it sounds, I want the field to detach from the needs of contemporary feminism, because that's just a very small, particular frame – not that I would discourage anyone from thinking about feminism's contemporary needs, but building an entire curriculum around it is inadequate, especially in the current U.S. university.

FB: What do you mean by preservation?

RW: Radical thought is always about revolution, transgression, the destruction of a world to build a new one. But today, in a time of large scale dismemberment of people's everyday lives, preserving, conserving, holding onto: these are vital for progressive politics. For those of us in academia, we need to be able to say what we want to preserve. We need to be able to articulate the value of knowledge, of higher education, of a liberal arts curriculum.

FB: This is part of your argument about institutionalization isn't it?

RW: Yes. A lot of people are saying now we should deinstitutionalize identity based knowledge programs, that we should take these projects – of the study of gender, race, sexuality, class, ability, etc. – outside the university. I think it's short sighted to sacrifice any of the space you have. That's one kind of preservation.

FB: Deinstitutionalizing seems kind of counterproductive, just in terms of how we've claimed these spaces in the university and the university is a valid space for feminists to do things.

RW: To be institutionalized as a field of study means you're entrenched; you're complicit. The conversation in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies about complicity is about not wanting to think that agency is historically constrained. So many of the pedagogical and rhetorical habits in Women's Studies and allied fields are about trying to produce subjects that are non-complicit with the world they want to change. I always thought the complicity/non-complicit conversation was really a dead end. What possibly could it mean to be non-complicit? How could I get dressed in the morning? I've always been interested in the surprise that people have when their political work in one moment seems co-opted in a later moment. Why are we surprised? Do we think historical change is a one-way street?



MAKING THE CUT

A Conversation with Faith Barton
about FGM/C, Western Feminism, and
Ethnography

by Carlton Fleenor

Faith Barton is a senior at The College of William & Mary, where she is double-majoring in Studio Art and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies. She is a Student Assistant and the Newsletter Editor for the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies department. Mary & William student contributor Carlton Fleenor interviewed Faith to discuss female genital cutting (FGC), as well as an interview she conducted with scholars Maria Malmström and Goran Sabir Zangana, the contents of which will comprise a chapter in Professor Gul Ozyegin's upcoming edited volume on gender and sexuality in Muslim societies.

CF: What is FGM/C?

FB: FGM/C refers to female genital mutilation and circumcision or cutting. The practice is known in more mainstream discourse, especially that of Western feminism, as female genital cutting. Western feminists a few decades ago discovered that there was this practice in African and Middle Eastern cultures of cutting the clitoris of young girls, anywhere between the ages of three and fifteen.

CF: Is the practice performed at birth, or at some form of religious ceremony?

It depends on the specificities of one's culture and geographic location. The World Health Organization has defined four different forms of FGC: the first form consists of cutting off the tip or all of the clitoris; the second form consists of cutting off the clitoris and some or all of the labia minora; the third form consists of cutting off all external genitalia and stitching up the vaginal opening, leaving a hole to pee out of and menstruate; the fourth form can include pricking, piercing, or incising the clitoris and labia, or stretching or cauterizing the clitoris and labia.

In the case of the third form of FGC, usually what happens is, on the wedding night, the husband of the woman who has been cut breaks it open with his penis during sex, or takes her to the hospital to have the cut broken. In some cases, the cut labia will be sewn up every time the woman has intercourse.

Upon learning about this practice, most Western feminists conceived of FGC as a device by which the patriarchy represses women, mutilates the female body, hinders their ability to enjoy sex, etc. Despite its status as a much more complicated cultural practice, however, FGC was largely framed as an atrocity and mutilation in Western feminists' appeals to broader, more mainstream audiences. Alice Walker actually produced a documentary on FGC titled *Warrior Marks*, which rendered the issue very problematically. Towards the end of the film, she confronts a woman who performs the cutting procedure itself, and asked her a series of inappropriate questions such as, "Do you realize what you're doing is wrong?"

CF: It doesn't sound like Alice Walker's methods were properly ethnographic in nature.

FB: No, she really just came in and started pointed fingers. Her rhetoric largely amounted to assertions that FGC is a morally wrong and harmful practice, which is very offensive and problematic in its lack of a proper concern or respect for these cultural practices. Cut women who hear that the practice is a mutilation from an outside discourse also tend to internalize the message, which can cause significant psychological duress. These women begin to perceive themselves as damaged or mutilated, rather than as participants in a cultural act that bestows meaning.

CF: Agency?

FB: Yes, the practice is about agency and the symbolic claiming of womanhood. FGC is a ritual to induct girls into womanhood, and it is a fairly significant part of their culture. In order to become a full and real woman, one has to participate in FGC. So when these women are exposed to a discourse centered on their status as mutilated or damaged, they start seeing themselves as victims.

A variety of opinions relating to the ethics of FGC exist in these cultures. Some women disagree with Western feminists' valuation, believing that FGC is not necessarily patriarchal, but is still a form of oppression upon women's bodies and selves. Some women decide to not get cut, or do not let their daughters get cut. These differences in valuation, however, need to come from within the culture, rather than being imposed from the outside: really, most of, if not all, Western feminist activism around FGC has been in imposition to the practice, rather than being concerned with supporting productive, culturally-situated interventions into these practices.



Faith Barton and Carlton Fleenor tackle the difficult-to-discuss phenomenon of female genital cutting.

CF: *While FGC is obviously a very serious issue, I can already draw parallels between the issues surrounding it and the intentions behind ethnographic research relating to phenomena in popular culture—for example, one shouldn't declare *The Bachelor* a morally vacuous show without examining the manners in which viewers interact with and use it as a space for the production of meaning. Could you comment on that?*

FB: Maria Malmström's work is some of the best I have seen, because she has done fieldwork in Cairo where she was living with and interviewing Egyptian women in lower class neighborhoods. Her ethnographic research is respondent to, and explains very well, how these women actually experience FGC as a cultural practice, in a manner that complicates how we currently look at it. In the interview that I conducted with her, she spoke about the contradictions between Westerners' views on FGC as a form of mutilation, and our views on male genital circumcision.

CF: *Male circumcision is definitely a prescribed practice in the Western world. In cultures where FGC is a predominant practice, are there laws, religious or otherwise, which promote its continued observance?*

FB: In certain cultures, yes. Some religious leaders will state that the tenets of their religions do not promote FGC, but implicitly approve of such action. Religious leaders will also sometimes explicitly disapprove of FGC, but the followers of their religion will still observe the practice because it's a tradition, and they see it as an integral part of their culture. The relation between religion and female circumcision is complicated.

CF: *What are some of the more explicit health risks associated with FGC?*

FB: Infection is one of the biggest concerns. Anti-septic is often applied when performing male circumcisions; such care is not often taken with female circumcisions, however. In the case of the WHO's third and fourth forms of FGC, if a woman has been sewn up, and the skin keeps getting broken open again, either once or repeatedly, that will greatly increase the possibility of infection.

CF: *Do women who undergo FGC experience sex in a fundamentally different manner?*

FB: In the Western discourse surrounding FGC, there is often discussion concerning how the practice rids women of the traditional site of female pleasure during intercourse, the clitoris. Women who have undergone FGC still enjoy sex, however, but they just enjoy it differently. Maria discusses in her upcoming book how this sense of difference is a marker of sexuality's status as a culturally inscribed practice.

This understanding of sex as a culturally inscribed practice can also be read in the popular discourses surrounding the subject of male circumcision in American culture today. Recently, people have increasingly begun acknowledging that uncircumcised men experience more pleasure during sex, due to the increased sensitivity of feeling permitted by the presence of the foreskin. This almost European sensibility stands in opposition to the Western, Judeo-Christian imaginary's normalization of male circumcision, which has consistently dominated our societal conceptualization of male genital sexuality.

CF: *What roles do your interviewees have in the FGC scholarly conversation?*

FB: Maria's fieldwork has been a really important link between the lived experiences of women who have been circumcised, academics that would otherwise not have such access, and administrators for NGOs who are working to stop FGC. She contributed to a UNICEF/UNFPA report back in 2010; those organizations have been funding programs on the ground that are being directed by individuals within the cultures themselves. Their recent work has been a lot more inclusive and purposeful in its approaches to combating FGC than past attempts.

CF: *It doesn't sound interventionist.*

FB: And this is really the first time that has ever been true. Maria's ethnographic research has directly aided UNICEF and UNFPA in implementing FGC programs in different countries. On the other hand, Goran Sabir Zangana is a medical researcher who, while being born in Kurdistan, learned about FGC while studying in the U.S. as part of a Fulbright Program and he started working with a German NGO. As such, his conceptualization of the practice of FGC largely sprung from his engagement with Western discourses around the issue, despite his being born in a society where FGC is regularly practiced. He went on to found Doctors Against FGM, which disseminates information relating to FGC, provides education programs about the risks associated with the performing of FGC, and works on policy change around the issue.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW? WMST/GSWS ALUMNI UPDATES

ASHLEY GLACEL '02 *Women's Studies and Public Policy Double Major.*

After completing a Master's at the New School, Ashley worked for the Feminist Majority for a year in Washington, D.C. In 2005, she became press secretary for Representative Gwen Moore, and in 2007 moved to the Senate side to serve press secretary for the Special Committee on Aging. Ashley left the Hill in 2011 and is currently working on her PhD in American Studies at the University of Maryland.

AVINA I. ROSS '09 *Women's Studies and Sociology Double Major.*

Since graduating from W&M, I have worked as the Criminal Justice Planner for the Colonial Community Criminal Justice Board in James City County and as Virginia's state coordinator for local domestic violence fatality review teams. I am currently finishing my term as the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Coordinator and transitioning into the non-profit movement to combat gender violence. I have recently started working for a local and familiar nonprofit, Avalon: A Center for Women & Children as their Operations and Community Response Specialist. I am responsible for developing and designing a rapid re-housing program for women in crisis. Additionally, I will develop a community needs assessment for the Greater Williamsburg area, manage agency accreditation and outcomes, as well as grant writing and reporting.

On a lighter note, I've graduated from VCU this Spring with a M.S. in Sociology, where I focused on domestic violence against black women. In the future, I plan to continue working as an advocate and positioning myself to be a mentor and motivator for future sociological and feminist thinkers.

NICOLE MCCAULEY '13 *Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies and English Double Major.*

I graduated from W&M in 2013 with an English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies dual degree. In the Fall, I will begin working in Ashland, Oregon through AmeriCorps as the Coordinator for the Southern Oregon University Multicultural Mentoring Program. I will be working with the university's Diversity Resource Center, Queer Resource Center, and Women's Resource Center to create a mentoring program between Southern Oregon University students and local high school students from underrepresented racial, sexual orientation, disability, and religious backgrounds. The students in the mentoring program have certain limitations to achieving their higher education goals and I aim to do everything in my power to help them meet their goals. I am thrilled to start working and I know that my Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies degree has prepared me extremely well for the tasks at hand. I will use my W&M GSWS degree to inspire, encourage, and support students on their journey to becoming more enlightened individuals.

KAREN WOLF '03 *Women's Studies and Computer Science Double Major.*

I did a short stint with the Feminist Majority Foundation from 2004-2005. I finished my M.A. in Women and Gender Studies at George Mason University in 2010. I'm currently working in student affairs at Mason, mostly doing websites, but that means I get to work with the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Resources Office, along with other offices. It's a great, feminist-friendly workplace! I live in Falls Church, and I'm still close with several of my W&M friends.



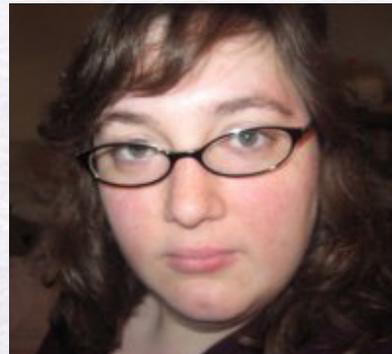
ASHLEY GLACEL '02



AVINA I. ROSS '09



NICOLE MCCAULEY '13



KAREN WOLF '03

WHY I AM A FEMINIST

Faculty and Campus Community Voices



NICOLETTE GABLE *Teaching Fellow in GSWS.*

One day, when I was sixteen or so, my father returned from the library with a pile of books for me as well as a speech. The books were a normal occurrence; I was a voracious reader. My father, the most well-read person I have ever known, was my guide through literature. The speech was not normal. He told me that he had tried to shelter me, but I would soon be going to college, and should know what I would be facing. Although I was smarter, funnier, kinder, than most people, this might not be enough, because we live in a patriarchy, a system that breaks even the best women, and here were the books to prove it. I raced through *The Tropic of Cancer*, *The Sot-weed Factor*, *The Cider House Rules*, and *Portnoy's Complaint*, among others. I realized then that the problem was worse than my father knew. The misogyny in these books was staggering, but I loved them nonetheless, as did he. I was already deeply in love with John Updike and Vladimir Nabokov. How could I love what was so clearly wrong? Worse yet, I had read few women writers and had found none that I identified with. The small number I had read in school—Austen, Brontë—I disliked, and the romance novels that filled the library's shelves I believed were complicit in oppression, selling a fantasy at least as harmful as Roth's but less well-written. I had, unfortunately, no one to guide me out of this. Feminism, the idea that men and women should be equal, hardly seemed the answer. It was so obvious a contention that barely merited thought. So, I continued reading what I liked and kept my fingers crossed that I might be able to stay clear of the patriarchy. Perhaps, if I differentiated myself from other women, made it clear that I was not des-

tinued to be a wife, mother, or mistress, I could avoid the fates of the women in the novels. It was not until college, sitting in my favorite (male) professor's office hearing the words "I'm not a feminist; I don't like women writers" come out of my own mouth, and watching the wry smile that flickered across his face that I realized that I had miscalculated somehow. Quietly, without making a fuss or arguing with me, this professor gave me theory. I read Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, and Helene Cixous. I learned to connect my own experiences with the theory, to think and write from what I knew. Instead of being a sign of complicity, my attraction to books written by men obsessing over women was an asset, a way to help me understand the nuances of the system. Then, in another class, I read the word sisterhood for the thousandth time, in a book about the history of feminism, and I connected it, for the first time, to the way I felt about my sister. I vividly remember calling my sister, explaining that the way we related as sisters, loving each other without hierarchy, exactly the same and yet totally different, was a brilliant organizing metaphor for a movement and for a way of life. I remember her dry response "And you're just realizing this now?"

VICTORIA CASTILLO *Visiting Assistant Professor Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies.*

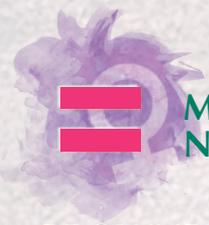
I sometimes wonder if I have always been a feminist, even when I was crawling around in diapers. I don't think I really used the word or understood it until high school, but yet I felt as if it was always around me. I had strong female role models in my family – my mom, my grandmother, my great-grandmother. I doubt that they would have identified as feminist when I was growing up, but they seemed to me to have the characteristics of strong, independent women who took charge of the family. Even my father encouraged me as a young girl to pursue sports and education, and taught me not to be afraid to compete with the boys. I also grew up in a fairly liberal environment with progressive public schools, teachers, and friends. I had comprehensive sex education classes as early as fourth grade, and teachers (both male and female) who talked about progressive causes including feminism. I even had the opportunity to take a women's history class in high school, where I remember being amazed by the boldness of activists such as the anarchist Emma Goldman who seemed far ahead of her time.

Probably because I grew up in an environment in which feminism seemed to be in the air I breathed, I often found myself outraged when sexism and



other societal inequalities such as racism and classism became visible. For example, at times some of my father's traditional ideas about gender filtered through when he told me, and not my brother, to go help in the kitchen. Moreover, I sometimes felt that society and the media didn't place as much value on women, even though it seemed to me that women were doing the important work. I also disliked it when men objectified women. Even as young as fourth or fifth grade I remember being enraged when men whistled at me when I was walking home alone from school. Later in college and while I was living in Latin America, I witnessed more flagrant examples of violence and sexism, but also women and men who bravely resisted those experiences by organizing collectively to change society.

I strongly resented the moments of unequal treatment, violence, and the devaluing of women; and whenever they occurred, they burned deep inside me. However, it wasn't until I took GSWS classes in college that feminism became a conscious part of my life and provided me with a language and history that helped convert my anger into a desire to take action to change society. Unfortunately, I still feel that burn of anger whenever I read about politicians saying ridiculous things about women or hear about blatant examples of sexism or violence against women, but that burn just reminds me why I am a feminist.



BROWNBAGGIN' IT



Women in Antiquity

Course Spotlight

Barbette Spaeth, Associate Professor of Classical Studies, is known for her learned and exciting teaching. But even the many admiring students who take her “Women in Antiquity” course may not realize the many paths of exploration upon which Professor Spaeth has ventured. She has been on archeological digs in Cyprus and Crete. She has studied at The American School of Classical Studies in Athens, where she travelled all over Greece to study archaeological sites that ranged in date from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period. She has been an Affiliated Fellow at the American Academy in Rome and travelled extensively in Italy as well. Professor Spaeth has also participated in more wonderfully heretic and unusual activities, as when she was apprenticed to a “witch” in New Orleans and studied modern witchcraft, including its Dianic (after the goddess Diana) form, which is limited to women. She presented a paper at two conferences of the neo-pagan community that included a Druid and a Voodoo priestess.

Professor Spaeth has always been a brilliant scholar. She completed her B.A. and M.A. in only four years at prestigious Northwestern University with the designation of *summa cum laude*. Her Master’s thesis was on Orphism, an ancient mystery cult. It was with this research, directed by the renowned Classical scholar Stuart Small, that Professor Spaeth’s life-long interest in the anthropology of ancient religions began.

After a stint as the computer documentation specialist for the US Naval Academy, Professor Spaeth continued her studies as a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University. Her research now centered on the goddess Ceres, who was particularly attached to women in the Roman world. It was this work that engendered “my interest in feminist studies,” according to Professor Spaeth. Eventually, after her work at the American School of Classical Studies under the archaeologist John Camp, research and study in Heidelberg, digging at the Sanctuary of Apollo Excavations in Kourion, Cyprus and the Kommos Excavations in Crete, Greece, she completed her graduate work and received her Ph.D. degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1988. She took a position as Assistant Professor at Tulane University in 1987, where she taught undergraduates to great acclaim until 2001, when she came to William and Mary. Professor Spaeth’s revised Ph.D. thesis was the basis of her first published book, *The Roman Goddess Ceres* (University of Texas Press, 1996).

Professor Spaeth has continued to teach, write, and publish upon her beloved subject of women in antiquity. She has just edited the important Cambridge University Press Companion series volume on *Ancient Mediterranean Religions* (2013), as well as serving as consulting editor for the *Greenhaven Encyclopedia of Greek and Roman Mythology* in 2002. Her many articles include an essay on Ceres and Roman women and the soon to be published “From Divine to Demonic: The Witch in Classical Literature,” in the forthcoming Oxford volume *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World* (2014). Her current book project is *Cult, Memory, and Identity in Roman Corinth*.

WSGS students—and indeed, William and Mary students in general—will be glad to know that this fall Professor Spaeth will be teaching a much anticipated course entitled “Magic and the Supernatural in the Ancient World.” Get ready for teaching that will be engaging, serious—and seriously engaging!

Editor Faith Barton took an opportunity to ask Professor Spaeth about her course, *Women in Antiquity*.

FB: Would you talk about the structure of your course, *Women in Antiquity*?

BS: The class is divided into three parts: part one is on Ancient Greece, beginning with the Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period. The second part is women in Ancient Rome, from the legends of the founding of Rome, down to a bit about early Christian women. I generally end when the Roman Empire becomes Christian; although this time I extended beyond that to give students a better idea of what early Christian women were like. The third part is student presentations; each student does a fifteen minute presentation on a topic of their choice. I arrange them in thematic groups and that takes up the last 3 weeks of the course. They also write a final paper, generally on their final presentation, although they can pick a different topic if they prefer.

FB: What research in the field of women in antiquity do you enjoy exploring the most?

BS: I like talking about the lives of real women in antiquity, focusing on epigraphical and archeological evidence, and this evidence tells us about them; I find literary portraits interesting, but those are mostly created by men so they’re filtered in a way that can be somewhat problematic. I’ve also been talking about the writings of actual women and the



Professor Deborah Morse



Professor Barbette Spaeth in front of the Temple of Apollo in Corinth



Women Bathing—Louvre

question of the female voice – for example, the way women write love poetry is different from the way men write love poetry, and it's interesting to think about the different ways women approach relationships as opposed to the way men do. I talk some too about famous women in antiquity, like Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, who had an enormous influence on him and the beginning of the Hellenistic period, and Livia, the wife of Augustus, and her role in the Early Roman Empire. The other thing I tend to focus on is women's religions – we spend a lot of time talking about women's roles in religion because we know that they had enormous influence in this part of ancient life, looking at so-called women's cults and women's roles in official state cults and in family cults. Many scholars of an-

cient religion tend to focus on state cults and that's leaving out a lot of religious activity that's focused on the family; women had important roles in birthing, marriage, and funeral rituals.

FB: What do students react to or respond to the most in the class?

BS: It depends, these students this past semester got really excited about the plays we read. We read Euripides' *Medea*, a tragedy and Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* a comedy, and talked about how those plays reflect ideas about women as the Other. I try to frequently break up the class into small groups and assign them different things to look at from what we've been talking about in class. They divided this time into groups on *Medea* and *Lysistrata* to talk about women in those plays; we also talked about the change in representation in women in art from



ancient Greece and Rome to the Hellenistic period and the issue of the “male gaze.” And I always spend time talking about witches and portrayals of witches and why it is the Greek witches tend to be beautiful and generally helpful (though if pushed too hard they can get nasty), whereas Roman witches are portrayed as ugly and evil. Why is it that women in different cultures are portrayed so differently and what does that reveal about attitudes towards women?

FB: Does the syllabus change from semester to semester?

BS: I change the readings though the topics tend to stay the same. I’m always on the lookout for new things for them to read, and sometimes I switch up what plays they read. I’m thinking next time about including more readings of Roman literature about

women, more whole works; maybe I’ll have them read the two Roman novels, Petronius’ *Satyricon* and Apuleius’ *Golden Ass* and we can talk about how women are represented in those two works.



by Mary Molineux

Research & Instruction Librarian, Liaison
to Sociology; Psychology; Neuroscience;
Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies

SWEM LIBRARY: YOUR PRIMARY PLACE

Primary sources are becoming increasingly important for student research: faculty often require students to identify and use one or more primary sources as part of a project or paper, and students are learning that primary sources provide unique perspectives

But finding primary sources can be challenging. That's why Swem Library is the place to go. Librarians at the Research Desk can help students find all kinds of primary sources – original texts such as diaries, letters, and documents; newspaper and magazine articles written by the observer; statistics; and even more creative sources such as art work, poetry, and music.

Quick tips

1. when you start a project or paper, it's often best to choose the primary source first and then search for secondary materials.
2. search for primary sources in the library's catalog, using the subject SOURCES combined with your topic. For example: WOMEN AND SOURCES
3. talk with your friendly librarians at Swem Library's Research Desk!

Here are just a few of the hundreds of primary source books available at Swem Library that relate to women's issues. We also have many online databases with additional sources.

- The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer: To Tell It Like It Is
- Women's Travel Writings in Revolutionary France.
- Mary McLeod Bethune: Building a Better World: Essays and Selected Documents.
- Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785.
- African Women Writing Resistance: An Anthology of Contemporary Voices.
- Treacherous Texts: U.S. Suffrage Literature, 1846-1946.
- Women of the Civil War South: Personal Accounts from Diaries, Letters and Postwar Reminiscences.
- Radical Writing on Women, 1800-1850: An Anthology.
- Girls and Literacy in America: Historical Perspectives to the Present.
- Women and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965.
- Writing the Trail: Five Women's Frontier Narratives.
- Gender, Modernity and Liberty: Middle Eastern and Western Women's Writings: A Critical Sourcebook.
- Women's Work: An Anthology of African-American Women's Historical Writings from Antebellum America to the Harlem Renaissance.
- From Megaphones to Microphones: Speeches of American Women, 1920-1960.
- Writing the Siege of Leningrad: Women's Diaries, Memoirs, and Documentary Prose.

AWARDS AND PRIZES

FACULTY AWARDS

JENNY PUTZI (Core Faculty, Incoming Director) has been designated a University Professor for Teaching Excellence.

STUDENT AWARDS

2014 Carol Woody Internship Award Recipients

Funded by a generous donation from William and Mary alum Carol Woody, the Carol Woody Real World Internship awards are available for students seeking real world experience to complement their studies. Awards usually range from \$200-\$400, depending on available funds. Below are this year's recipients.

EVA ZELSON Law will be interning with Community Legal Services in Philadelphia. She will be working with the Employment unit, representing low-income clients in employment discrimination cases, among others. Ms. Zelson is particularly concerned with the devaluation of traditionally "women's work" in the marketplace and hopes to assist low-income women workers in the pursuit of equity.

AMANDA WHITEHURST English and Sociology Double Major will be interning with Rafiki Africa in Kenya on a project designed to improve educational access for girls and young women of the Luo tribe. School attendance among girls in this community is lower than boys because the girls traditionally stay home during their menses, falling behind and reducing the odds of graduating. Rafiki Africa has developed a feminine hygiene product to address this urgent need, and Ms. Whitehurst will be gathering community input on how the product can be improved as well as educating girls and young women on the use of the product.

CHARLOTTE MABON Government and Sociology Double Major will be interning in Washington, D.C. with Generation Hope, which supports teen mothers in their pursuit of higher education.

Student Activism Prize

MORRIS CHEN '14 Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies and Psychology Double Major Throughout his four years at William & Mary, Morris has contributed greatly to the William & Mary campus through his activism around issues of diversity and the LGBTQ community. Morris is currently a co-president of the Lambda Alliance, which has been an important resource on campus for LGBTQ students. One program affiliated with Lambda Alliance that Morris has worked on has been the Safe Zone Program, which engages in activities to create the campus a more welcoming place for LGBTQ students. Morris is also representing LGBTQ students by serving as the Student Assembly Undersecretary of LGBTQIA* Affairs for the 2013-2014 year. Moreover, Morris has served the GSWS undergraduate students by being an active member on the GSWS executive committee this year. Morris is most well known for his efforts in organizing the W&M LGBTIQA Pride Festival last year and this year (to be held April 12), as well as the accompanying drag shows. Morris has also been involved in organizing a Transgender Day of Remembrance held in November for the William & Mary and Williamsburg community.

Dean's Prize for Scholarship on Women Award

GRADUATE WINNER

The winner of our Dean's Prize for Graduate Research is KIM BERLY MANN, a PhD student in American Studies, working with Professor Arthur Knight. Mann explores the construction of body and femininity in her chapter, "With the Flexibility of Flesh: Machining the Feminine Cyborg." Mann's work analyzes Catherine Lucille Moore's 1944 short story "No Woman Born," which tells the story of Deidre, a performer and dancer who is transformed into a mechanical cyborg following a devastating injury in a fire. In the context of Moore's story, Mann deftly explores the relationship between self and body, the perception of women's bodies, and feminine identity. Mann also demonstrates how Moore's story anticipates major feminist issues, such as gender as performance, thirty years before they were given significant attention by feminist theorists.

UNDERGRADUATE WINNER

CARLTON FLEENOR (Major in Literary & Cultural Studies, Minor in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies) is the winner of the Dean's Prize for Undergraduate Research. His paper, written for Professor Gul Ozyegin's "Comparative Studies in Gender and Work" course is titled "Too Many Reasons Why: A Politically Situated Look at Gender, Media, and the Videogame Industry." Fleenor argues that the intertwined nature of the videogame industry and the media that report on the industry must be considered when analyzing biases women face in the industry. Fleenor explores the underlying profit-driven motives that have caused the videogame media to devote increased coverage to the issue of women in the industry and goes on to assess women's current role in the industry in view of feminist theory and challenges faced by women in STEM fields.

GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM
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MARY & WILLIAM NEWSLETTER

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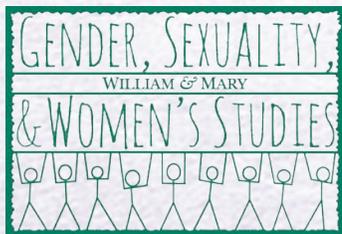
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