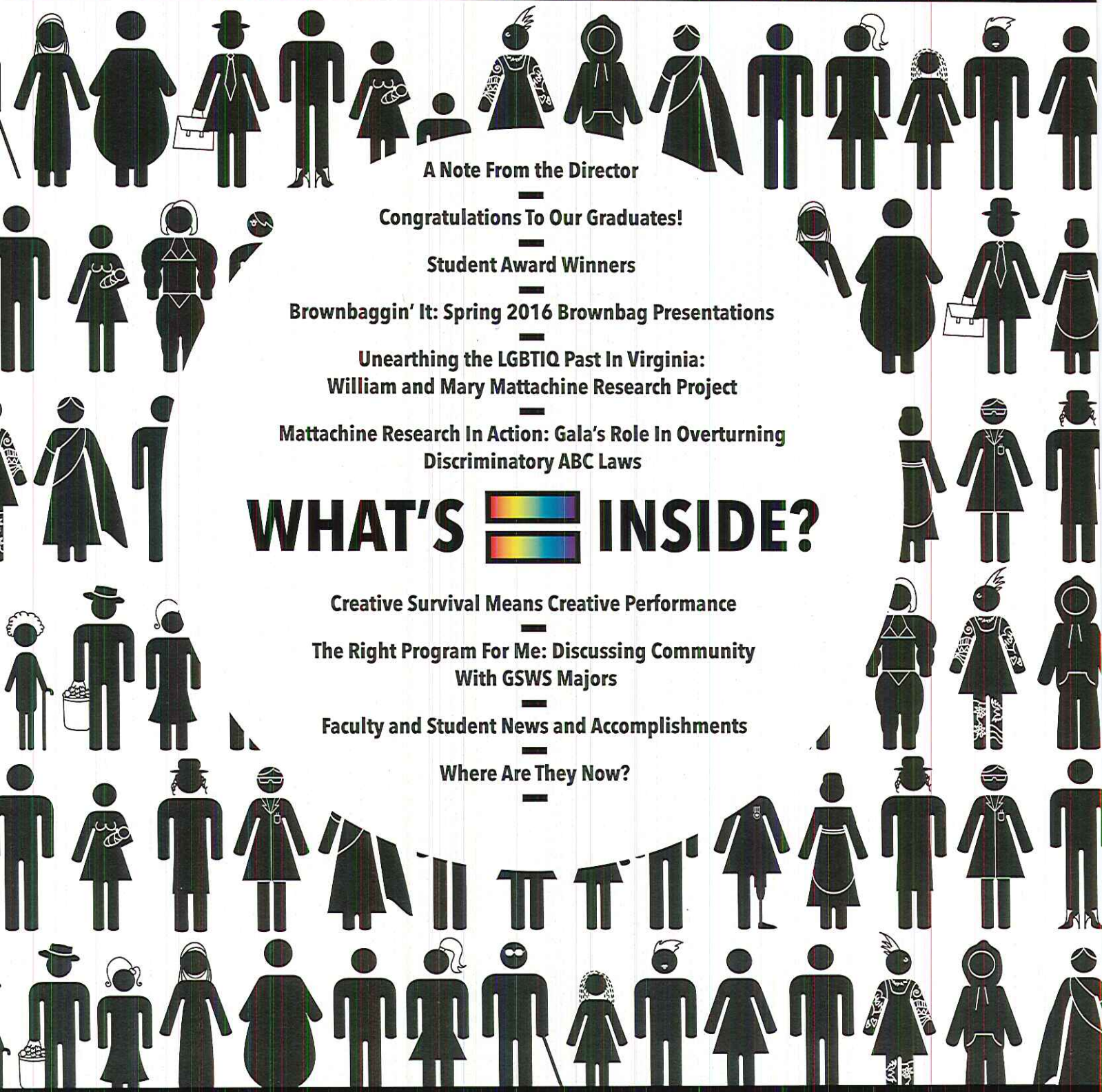


MARY & WILLIAM

THE GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2016: ISSUE 10



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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



This has been a great year for the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program!

We have had campus visits from two incredible artist activists—Eli Clare in the fall semester and Rhodessa Jones in the spring; we are graduating eighteen majors and minors and have declared a dozen more; we have offered classes in everything from “Gender” to “Queers of Color Critique” and “Transgender Fictions”; and we have enrolled hundreds of students in our courses. As Noah Brooksher reveals in the piece he has written on the GSWS community for this issue of *Mary & William*, our students (and our faculty!) feel like they have a home here, a place where they are valued, protected, and respected.

Our community will be going through some changes next year, but, for the most part, these changes are good for us in both the short and the long run. I'll take the opportunity offered by this Director's Note to outline some of them for you and to reassure you that the GSWS Program is alive and well!

Both Professor Gul Ozyegin and I will be on research leave during the next academic year. For those of you

who aren't familiar with that concept, faculty members at most institutions go on research leave (or sabbatical, at some schools) in order to focus on their research and writing for a semester without being distracted by other responsibilities. Leave also enables us to research and develop new courses, bringing our scholarship and our teaching together in new and exciting ways.

Gul will spend part of her leave in Berlin to conduct in-depth interviews and participant observation for her fourth book, *Belonging and Identity: A Home Divided? Gender and Generational Histories of Turks in Germany*. After her stint as the director of William and Mary's 2016 summer program in India, she will attend the International Sociological Forum in Vienna in early July to participate in an author-meets-critics session on her latest book *New Desires, New Selves: Sex, Love, and Piety Among Turkish Youth*. She is also scheduled as a keynote speaker for a conference on Transnational Masculinities and Relationalities in Izmir in early September.

I'll be taking the year to finish a book about nineteenth-century American women's poetry and the practice of imitation and to think further about the ways in which my passions for nineteenth-century American studies and transgender studies can be brought together in future projects. I'm very excited about attending *Trans* Studies: An International Transdisciplinary Conference on Gender, Embodiment, and Sexuality* in October 2016, where I will present on my research on transgender young adult fiction. I'm sure I will return from research leave with boundless amounts of energy to devote to new courses and new programming in the GSWS Program!

In my absence, we are so fortunate to have Professor Tom Linneman serving as Interim Director. A professor of Sociology, Tom teaches courses in “Social Movements and Social Change” and “Sexuality” and he is the faculty advisor to Mosaic House, a living-learning community on campus. He served as Director of the Sociology Department from 2006 to 2011 and has long been a member of the GSWS Executive Committee. He will bring so much to this role and we are so lucky to have him in the Program!

Professor Claire McKinney will also be joining us in the fall as Assistant Professor of GSWS and Government. Claire is currently serving as a Postdoctoral Fellow in Family and Intimate Relations in American Culture Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. She received her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago in 2014 and is working on a book about the history and contemporary terrain of American abortion politics in which she develops a concept of medical citizenship, where claims to political and social rights are mediated by medical decision making and authorities. She will teach courses for us on reproductive rights, feminist theory, disability studies, and social movements. Her first course for the GSWS Program will be on “The Politics of Reproductive

Rights,” offered in the spring of 2017. Please make an effort to welcome her to our community when you return to campus in the fall!

Two valued members of our community will sadly not be returning in the fall. Both are moving on to bigger and better things, but we will miss them very much! Visiting Assistant Professor Bettina Judd has been an invaluable member of the GSWS Program. Her courses in “Black Gender,” “Hip Hop & Sexuality,” and “Black Feminist Thought” have pushed students to think about the intersectional nature of identity and the essential relationship between artistic expression and activism. So many students have told me that Bettina has made them think, has prompted them to declare a GSWS major, has just blown their mind. A gifted poet and visual artist, as well as a scholar of black women's creativity, Bettina has been so generous about sharing her gifts with us. Bettina leaves us to join the faculty of the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington as Assistant Professor of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies. We are thrilled for her and we feel fortunate to have been able to work with her at the beginning of what will no doubt be an illustrious career. (See page 11 to find out what other Visiting Assistant Professors in GSWS have gone on to do with their careers!)

Our Fiscal and Administrative Coordinator Kristen Zrebiec has also left us in order to join her husband Matt in Italy, where he has been reassigned. Kristen and I both started our jobs in the GSWS Program in the summer of 2014. I knew right away that we were going to be a great team. Before the fall semester began, we scoured the offices, donating boxes of files to Special Collections in Swem Library, throwing things away, redecorating, and just generally making the place our own. Everything we did over the past two years was a result of that partnership. Kristen is the most responsible, dependable, and kind person I know. She was the smiling face of the Program to the students and faculty who came into Morton 322. Kristen, ti vogliamo bene. Ci mancherai!

While so much changes, other things stay the same. Professors Victoria Castillo, Leisa Meyers, Suzanne Raitt, and Christy Burns will be on campus, teaching classes, advising students, and being there for our majors and minors. You can rest assured that the GSWS Program is in good hands, even if we are going through some changes. While I won't be on campus on a daily basis next year, I will still be around. Don't hesitate to contact me if you need anything!

Best wishes,

Jennifer Putzi, Associate Professor of English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!

GSWS Majors

- Chloe Alexander (GSWS/Psychology)
Bria Bennett (GSWS)
Ellen Berry (GSWS/Kinesiology and Health Sciences)
Noah Brooksher (GSWS/English)
Octavia Goodman (GSWS/Kinesiology and Health Sciences)
Michelle Greene (GSWS/Psychology)
Hunter Grolman (GSWS/English)
Duenya Hassan (GSWS/Government)
Shakeria Hicks (GSWS)
Aiesha Krause-Lee (GSWS/Anthropology)
Inez Paz (GSWS/Kinesiology and Health Sciences)
Austen Stevens (GSWS)
Jordan Taffet (GSWS/English)

GSWS Minors

- Rachel Cook (Biology/GSWS)
Brittany Johnson (Psychology/GSWS)
Margaret Pleasants (Psychology/GSWS)
Emily Powell (Psychology/GSWS)
Danielle Staten-Ferrell (Psychology/GSWS)

American Studies Ph.D.s

- Nicolette Gable
Helis Sikk

STUDENT AWARD WINNERS

Carol Woody Internship Award

- Sadie Meadows (GSWS/Psychology '17)
Taylor Medley (GSWS/Public Policy '17)
Samantha Braver (GSWS/Government '18)
Julie Santanna (GSWS '17)

Dean's Prize for Student Scholarship on Women

- Undergraduate: Noah Brooksher (GSWS/English '16)
Graduate: Helis Sikk (AMST Ph.D)

GSWS Activism Prize

- W&M VOX: Voices for Planned Parenthood
Julie Santanna (GSWS '17)



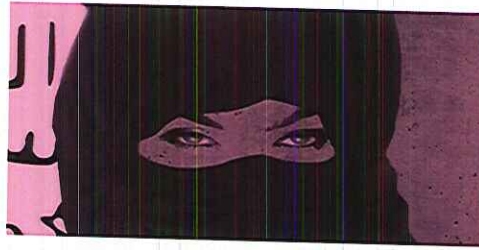
BROWNBAGGIN' IT: SPRING 2016 BROWNBAG PRESENTATIONS



"Too Often Moved but Not Moving: Freedom as Flight and Detachment in the Work of Gabrielle Suchon"

Rebekah Sterling, Visiting Assistant Professor, Government

This talk examines the work of a seventeenth-century French feminist, Gabrielle Suchon. A former nun who obtained release from her vows, Suchon published two philosophical works about women's condition: the *Treatise on Morals and Politics* (1693) and *On Voluntary Celibacy, or a Life without Commitments* (1700). In these books, she formulates an alternative ideal of individual freedom, drawing on Catholic, Stoic, and other ancient and modern authors. This talk focuses especially on her argument for women's freedom of movement and travel, what she calls the *liberté du lieu* (freedom of place). Suchon extols travel's ability not only to develop the mind but to regulate the passions. Yet while acknowledging travel's perils and risks, she also construes travel as a flight from the perils, persecution, and constraints of home – and from the anger, anguish, and negative passions generated by everyday relationships. Suchon connects internal and external freedom: physical mobility and contemplative detachment become strategies not only for cultivating the soul but for resisting constraint and servitude. Overall, Suchon's writings expand and complicate conventional histories of "freedom" within Western political thought.



'Women and ISIS: A Complicated Relationship' Dunya Hassan (GSWS/Government '16)

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has invested significant resources in radicalizing women from both Western countries and the Middle East. As a result, hundreds of Western women alone have traveled to ISIS-held territory and joined "the cause." Many of these women are young in age and range from teens to early 20s. While Western media portrays these women as victims of online grooming, their motivations for joining the group are incredibly complex. Some voice their political desires to live in a state where race and nationality hold no meaning. I explore the varied motivations of Western women joining ISIS, and the roles they play once in ISIS-held territory. I also discuss policy recommendations for how Western governments can more effectively counter ISIS.

"Love Un/Detectable - Queer Health, HIV, and Homonormativity"

Jan Huebenthal, American Studies Program PhD Candidate and W&M Mattachine LGBTIQ Research Project Fellow

On ABC's popular show *How To Get Away with Murder*, a storyline centered around PrEP (pre-exposure HIV prophylaxis) indicates that monogamous couplehood and personal accountability have become representational pillars of the new "homo normal." As medical advances have made HIV survival possible, narratives of "undetectable" viral loads often fail to account for the multiple layers of racial and political privilege from within which they emerge. For example, African American men who have sex with men are eight times more likely than whites to be diagnosed with HIV, and one in two gay black men will likely be diagnosed with HIV in his lifetime. In looking at diverse textual materials, this talk develops a critique of the centrality of AIDS disavowal to mainstream LGBT politics. Indeed, narratives of undetectability rely on modes of personal responsibility that dominate current LGBT identity politics, which stress assimilation and state inclusion. As a result, an emphasis on personal responsibility ties HIV care and survival to racial, political, and ultimately individual privilege. As I wonder about the ethical residues of the "crusade" for LGBT rights, I argue that access to the private spheres of marriage, child-rearing, and inheritance has come at the expense of the health of vulnerable populations.

UNEARTHING THE LGBTIQ PAST IN VIRGINIA: WILLIAM & MARY MATTACHINE RESEARCH PROJECT

By Noah Brooksher (GSWS/English '16)

While every year sees change in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program, the growth we saw this year seems especially momentous. Just a few notable developments that occurred include the inception of a new GSWS honor society (Triota), the hiring of new faculty, provocative lectures by scholars and activists Eli Claire and Rhodessa Jones, and the continued expansion of the course catalog to include original and groundbreaking classes like "Queers of Color Critique" and "Transgender Fictions." With so many events happening all at once, it is easy to overlook projects that, despite their essential and innovative work, may not receive the attention they deserve. Consequently, while we should certainly celebrate our many significant accomplishments, it is simultaneously necessary to highlight potentially lesser known programs, such as the newly launched Mattachine Project, that produce the crucial research for which the GSWS Program is renowned.

Indeed, it is this attention to the marginal that is at the center of the Mattachine Project's goals. The original Mattachine Society was founded in 1950, making it one of the first queer activist groups in the country, while a new Mattachine Society formed in 2011 dedicates itself to original archival research of LGBTIQ political history. Part of this larger movement, the project at William & Mary focuses on documenting the LGBTIQ past specifically in Virginia. Spearheaded by Professor of American Studies and History and former GSWS Program director Leisa Meyer and American Studies PhD candidate Jan Hübenthal, the project centers on state laws and policies that affected the lives of LGBTIQ individuals throughout the history of the Commonwealth. For the primarily archival based work, students (many of whom are GSWS majors or minors) travel to various institutions, including the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Valentine History Center, in order to examine rare materials and preserve the stories of LGBTIQ people that are often lost in the pages of history. Ming Siegel (Constitutional Theory & History '16), for instance, focused her research on the intersection between religion and LGBTQ history in Virginia, finding much fascinating material in the Equality Virginia Archive on the Christian Right at VCU.

Noella Handley (History/Linguistics '16), whose work similarly centers on the interactions between Christianity and LGBTQ individuals, finds this project invigorating due to the relatively contemporary nature of the materials. She mentions that "A lot of the people referenced in the collections are still alive and the fact that I can get in contact with them and have a conversation about the history I've been researching in archives is super cool." Implicit in such a statement is the rejection of a history/present binary. Indeed, it recalls William Faulkner's famous words: "The past is never dead. It's not even past." In other words, there is something that we in the present can gain from the descent into history; the past is not a temporal instance that existed in the vacuum, but rather is a dynamic force that continues to affect the present day.

Taylor Medley (GSWS '17), whose research centers on the role that Alcohol Beverage Control laws played in the closure of queer spaces, arrives at a similar conclusion. For her, this research illustrates that "queer people have always been on the front-lines fighting for our rights and our humanity." The profound implications of such a statement should not be understated; by making the invisible visible, or perhaps more accurately, as Taylor emphasizes, by showing that "queer people have never been invisible," this project fundamentally disrupts dominant narratives of erasure that have attempted to silence the voices of queer individuals throughout history. This ability to rewrite that which is often viewed as already written paradoxically points to a radical futurity: a sense that by reframing our perspectives of history, we do not dehistoricize the present, but rather rethink narratives in a way that can guide us to new theories, and, ultimately, action.

MATTACHINE RESEARCH IN ACTION: GALA'S ROLE IN OVERTURNING DISCRIMINATORY ABC LAWS

By Taylor Medley (GSWS '17)

The case I studied involved discriminatory ABC Laws where the Alcohol Beverage Control Board established policies regarding the sale of alcoholic beverages in the state of Virginia and had several statutes regarding homosexuals. These included:

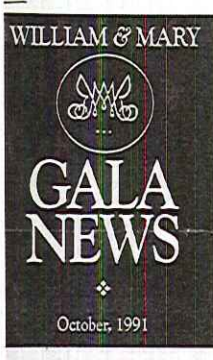
Section 4-37 states in part "... a bar's license may be suspended or revoked if the bar has become a meeting place and rendezvous for users of narcotics, drunks, homosexuals, prostitutes, pimps, panderers, gamblers or habitual law violators..."

Section 4-98 "...forbids a licensee from employing any person who has the general reputation as a prostitute, homosexual, panderer, gambler, habitual law violator, person of ill repute, user of or peddler of narcotics, or person who drinks to excess or a "B-girl."

In 1990, a lawsuit was filed by the owner of the French Quarter Café in Alexandria that was denied a license because of these policies, and by the W&M Gay and Lesbian Alumni (GALA) association, sponsored by Virginians For Justice.

Before the French Quarter Café opened in May of 1991, retired Col. William Glasgow, Jr. tried to keep the restaurant from getting a license based on the ABC regulations prompting a lawsuit by the French Quarter owners who didn't want to be in fear of losing their license and being shut down in the future because of the regulations. W&M GALA joined the lawsuit because of their own experience of discrimination. When attempting to get a liquor license for a Homecoming event, their request was delayed because of the ABC regulations; a GALA spokesman said that the delay was caused by "a major, ongoing violation of Constitutional rights in the state of Virginia... the ABC code denies the freedom of assembly guaranteed gay and lesbian Virginians, like all Americans."

On October 23, 1991, US District Judge Albert V. Bryan declared the anti-gay ABC regulations unconstitutional and signed an order preventing Virginia ABC agents from enforcing them.



GALA JOINS SUIT VS. VIRGINIA ABC BOARD

Biased Licensing/Employment Statute at Issue

William and Mary GALA Directors voted overwhelmingly at their August board meeting to join a lesbian activist and an Alexandria nightclub in a lawsuit against the Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Board. The suit aims to strike down portions of the state code which empowers the Board to suspend or revoke the liquor license of any establishment which serves or employs gay men or lesbians in Virginia.

GALA's involvement in the suit stems from an incident in early 1990. While attempting to secure a reception room at a Williamsburg hotel for use during Homecoming, hotel officials delayed accepting the reservation until the ABC Board assured no action would be taken to revoke the hotel's liquor license. Eventually, GALA's reservation was accepted.

This minor inconvenience, however, pointed out a constitutional issue to GALA's board of directors. The questionable section of the ABC code states:

"The Board may suspend or revoke any license issued by it... if it has reasonable cause to believe... That the place occupied by it is used for the purpose of... a meeting place for users of narcotics, drunks, homosexuals, prostitutes, pimps, panderers, gamblers, or habitual law violators."

The statute goes on to prohibit a licensed establishment from employing:

"any person who has the general reputation as a prostitute, homosexual, panderer, gambler, habitual law violator, person of ill repute, user of or peddler of narcotics or person who drinks to excess."

Three days after GALA joined the suit, papers were filed and the story began receiving press coverage. (Excerpts from a coverage can be found on page 2.)

GALA will bear no financial responsibility for the suit. Virginians for Justice, a Richmond-based rights organization, providing the funds for the litigation, much of which is being done pro bono.

Please see ABC SUIT, page

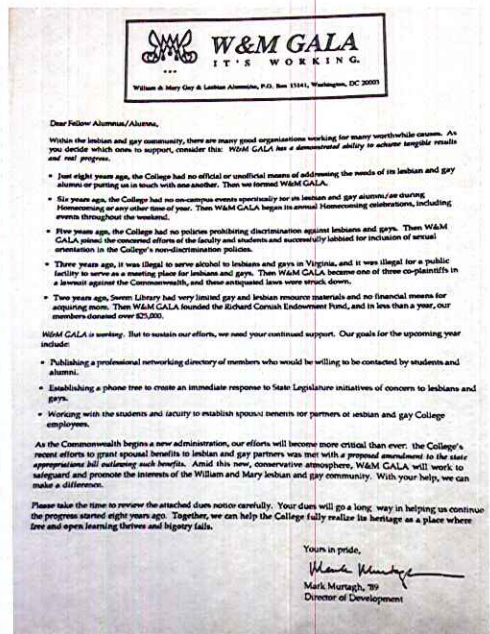
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William and Mary GALA



WILLIAM AND MARY NEWS UPDATES

WE WON!!!!!!!!!!!!

lawsuit which is the main topic of the enclosed newsletter was settled out on October 18, 1991, when the Commonwealth of Virginia's Attorney General's office had the references to homosexuality that pertain to the Alcohol Beverage Code of the Code of Virginia were unconstitutional and unenforceable. Details of the settlement are in the next edition of the William and Mary GALA News.

CREATIVE SURVIVAL MEANS CREATIVE PERFORMANCE

Bettina Judd, Visiting Assistant Professor, GSWS

This starts as a reflection on Rhodessa Jones' work and her visit to William & Mary, and ends with personal thoughts about Jones' influence on my life as an activist, scholar, and artist.

Rhodessa Jones' electrifying presence is both a matter of creative performance and creative survival. If you were present at any of the events related to her visit to William & Mary as the 2016 annual Braithwaite lecturer you found Jones in the center of a circle of enraptured students, faculty, and staff. Jones is the quintessential story teller and her work through The Medea Project: Theater For Incarcerated Women demonstrates the importance of telling stories for individuals who would otherwise have the carceral system and public opinion tell their stories for them.

The Medea Project: Theater For Incarcerated Women was founded in 1989 as a performance project in which incarcerated women would collaborate by sharing their stories and playing theater games in a series of workshops in San Francisco prisons. The workshops developed into a public performance in which the inmates themselves along with volunteers and Jones herself, would perform and tell these stories in front of a public audience at a local theater. In this sense, the project has two major components: the workshop in the prison and the final performance on the public stage. Both components offer a sense of healing and being heard for these women who have been incarcerated.

In Rena Fraden's *Imagining Medea: Rhodessa Jones & Theater For Incarcerated Women*, Jones makes these clear connections between being an artful story-teller and surviving. She says,

'People in jail are great performers. They are bullshit artists. They are poets. They are very colorful. They really learn to survive by their wits and part of it is language. You got to find out how to go in and grab people, which is the genius of a great comic, of a great dramatic actor...you've got to be the shaman, the magician. You got to make us believe whatever you want us to believe about you.'

We can imagine the uses of telling stories for the "bullshit artist", for the con-(wo)man, but what would it mean to ask this person to tell their truth? Quite possibly, a truth that has truly never been asked for? As simple question like, "tell us what really happened," that is not about judge and jury, but catharsis. Telling the story for the sake of the woman telling it.

What is revealed are insights into the full humanity of humans we dismiss as felons, criminals, inmates. We might hear a story about how they cheated death and find in the story incredible sorrow, abandonment, and also, bravery. And in such a story, we might hear how systems have failed otherwise whole people, and made them appear to be separate and inherently different from those of us who have never had to consider living in prison for any amount of time.

Through the Medea Project's HIV Circle, we might hear stories about the moment of contracting the virus, we might hear about the effects of stigma and

shame on the holistic health of women living with HIV and AIDS. Such stories illustrate the power of the feminist conviction that the personal is indeed political. Rhodessa Jones is an embodiment of this conviction, and stretches its meaning to the limits.

I'd never thought of myself as an academic, but an artist who had found a peculiar home in feminist theory. Feminist theory seemed to hang out in the academy so I moved in. This might still be true even as I continue to work and teach and fight in the halls of academia, to find immense joy and a sense of rightness in teaching what I call to myself "get free studies," that are quietly and not so quietly bubbling in Black women's studies, disability studies, Chicana studies, queer of color critique, and on. But getting free still never meant the minutia of academic rigor, but the vibrancy of life that exists here among students and faculty and more so, beyond the walls of academia. Getting free looked a lot like being in the body and knowing it. Getting free looked like standing in ones' truth and telling ones' stories. This freedom was clearest to me in art and performance.

I was still making sense of all of this when I first met Rhodessa Jones nearly a decade ago while she was on residency at the University of Maryland, College Park. There, in her short course titled "Creative Performance, Creative Survival" we worked through our own stories, got in touch with our bodies (which academia in its Cartesian impulse moves us away from), and reached out and got in touch with the stories of others. I remember collectively reading with ten other people a single copy of Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls* and feeling newly the power of collective learning and reading and breathing in, experiencing this pivotal work the way, perhaps the way it should be experienced. I recall the overwhelmingly joyful, vulnerable, and right feeling of standing on my head for the first time ever while Rhodessa assured me that I was okay. (I was screaming uncontrollably the entire time.) Most importantly, I remember the young women who were incarcerated at Waxter juvenile detention center being vulnerable, and wild, and telling their harrowing stories. We didn't have the term "black girl magic" then, but they embodied it and Rhodessa ushered them into expressing that fully.

When I think of it—Creative Performance, Creative Survival—the title alone might have told me then that this was the real "get free studies," and I haven't let go of that feeling of being an artist, renting a home in the academy, in a relationship with feminist theory perhaps because of her example. Being an artist and an activist who is dedicated to all of the ways in which liberation must happen—mind body and spirit—might be the most integral to any form of liberation we aim for in the academy. She is a gift to us. For her to be here, to share her time and wisdom through the incredible work she does with the Medea Project, might remind us all of why we chose the life of the mind in the fields of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Africana

Studies, Asian American Studies, Latina/Chicana Studies and all the various studies that also aim for us to get free.

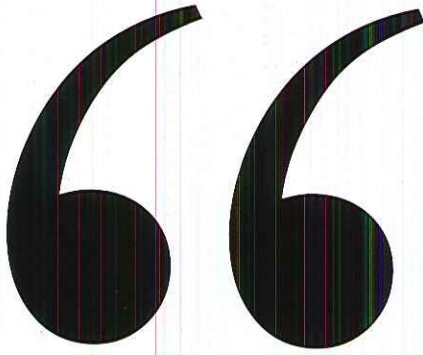
Jones' insistence on the power of telling ones' story has great influence on her students, on the volunteers she works with, and the vulnerable populations she serves. And her influence is felt around the world as she has taken her work and the gospel of telling one's story around the country and the globe. Now, we at William & Mary are a part of this influence, and we are better for it.

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**SUCH STORIES
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¹ Fraden, Rena. *Imagining Medea: Rhodessa Jones & Theater for Incarcerated Women*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 2001. 40. Print.



NOAH BROOKSHER: Thank you all for agreeing to talk about the community here in GSWS! I know all of you are majors (or, in your case, Laura, a soon to be major), so I'm curious what got you all interested in the GSWS program. Did you come to William & Mary knowing what you wanted to study, or did this interest develop later in your academic career? Were there any professors, friends, or organizations that played a significant role in your choice of majors?

ASHLEIGH ARRINGTON: I knew I wanted to study Women's Studies when I was applying to colleges. Any school that even made the short list had to have a sociology and a women's studies program, and I fell in love with W&M and loved that they had both departments.

LAURA MACDONALD: Like Ashleigh, I knew I was interested in Women's Studies before I had even started applying to colleges. I was introduced to feminism in my second year of high school, and realized very quickly that it was my passion. In my last year of high school, I started to focus my college search around the schools' Gender Studies departments. William & Mary had the largest range of GSWS classes, so it quickly became one of my top choices.

MARIANNA STEPNIAK: I have a totally different story from the both of you; when I entered college, I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to major in! Math, IR, French, Anthropology--the list of possibilities went on and on but nothing really fit. My parents encouraged me to take courses that intrigued me--advice for which I am eternally grateful--and that was how I ended up in "Women in Islam" with Professor Tamara Sonn in the spring semester of my freshman year. I distinctly recall registering for class and thinking to myself, "This is the sort of class that makes people become GSWS majors...ha! Not me!" In "Women in Islam," I found myself entrenched in subject material that I had never encountered before but which made all the sense in the world to me. I talked about the class to everyone, always with the closing line, "Can you believe that this isn't common knowledge??" That, indeed, is why I became a GSWS major: I believe that the subject material should be common knowledge, that everyone should understand--even at an elementary level--how deeply gender affects all human cultures.

ASHLEIGH: Initially, I planned on majoring in Sociology and minoring in GSWS, but when I went to declare for GSWS, Jenny [Putzi] talked me into just declaring a major because the credit difference wasn't that much and I could always bump it back down to a minor, and I haven't looked back since! The first few GSWS classes I took at that time were the Intro section and "Gender in Society," which had some overlap in material but I liked them both for different reasons, and the more GSWS classes I took the more I really loved the opportunities I had within the department. My decisions felt really

confirmed in classes cross-listed with History or Italian and really digging into the breadth of this field and the ways I could apply my knowledge to so many other fields and situations, and those are the things that really keep me excited about my GSWS classes.

MARIANNA: It took me until halfway through fall semester of sophomore year, when I was knee-deep in Professor Barbara King's "Evolutionary Perspectives on Gender" and Professor Judith Hand's "Gender in Society," that I decided that declaring a GSWS major was the best decision for me. Professor Putzi agreed to be my major advisor and actually agreed to reach out to my parents to reassure them that I was making a thoughtful, stable major decision and that they should ask her any questions they had about the program. That moment was the first of many that cemented my belief that I had chosen the right program for me.

LAURA: When I came to William & Mary, I quickly realized there was so, so much more for me to learn. Last semester I took a 100-level course on "Gender" with Jenny which made me fall in love with GSWS all over again. I have loaded my schedule with GSWS courses because I continue to grow more passionate about intersectional feminism and activism every day. Honestly, I am so appreciative of the program and the classes here at William & Mary because I really feel they have helped me to grow as a person and as feminist. I now definitely know I am not an expert on all things GSWS, which drives me to keep studying and learning as much as I can in and outside of class.

I have really been inspired by my professors, like Jenny and Professor Bettina Judd, as well as the other majors and minors in the GSWS department (not to mention slightly intimidated because everyone is amazing). [Activist and poet] Eli Clare also taught me so much about activism, specifically regarding ableism in the feminist movement, when he visited campus last semester.

NOAH: It seems to me that despite your differing experiences with the major, you all share a deep personal and intellectual commitment to your courses. Even for the two of you who knew very strongly coming into William & Mary that you wanted to be a part of the program, I get the sense, and correct me if I'm wrong, that your courses confirmed your decision. In particular, you all point to various professors who have inspired you or reaffirmed an already existent interest. Yet, one aspect of Laura's answer that I found interesting was her emphasis on other students. I know for me at least, when I took my first GSWS class, "Introduction to Women's Studies," it felt so amazing to be surrounded by likeminded individuals who all shared a passionate commitment to feminism, something I had not experienced in high school. That I could continue taking courses with likeminded students played almost as big of a role as the professor and the material itself

in influencing my decision to major. I was wondering if anyone else had a similar experience; did the other students in these classes influence you at all?

AIESHA KRAUSE-LEE: I totally agree with the notion that my peers helped me realize and deepened my passion for gender studies. Particularly in the various classes I've taken with regards to black gender, I've found a passion in my classmates that is rare and hard to find in any other department. Often, I feel that it is less about learning in the classical sense and more about learning through sharing, through opening the personal experiences you and others have had to a discourse. I know this idea is really important to the foundation of women and gender studies in general—the notion that “the personal is political”—but seeing it come alive in the classroom is a really unique and amazing experience. Of course, our incredible professors help guide us through the process, and the content we study from our women and queer ancestors assist us in uncovering and reframing our personal perspectives into real concepts and, ultimately, action. It wouldn't be possible without the openness and willingness of everyone in the classroom.

ASHLEIGH: For me, I think my peers played a different role. In my “Intro to GSWS” section, many students were engaged but not necessarily as excited about it as I was. It was hard to get discussions going and many of them were looking for an easy GER rather than a connection to the major, so I was actually happy to be done with that class. The open-ness that Aiesha mentioned was there, but for me it was a bit different. While I found myself learning from my peers, it was more about what my peers brought to cross-listed classes. For example, I've taken classes cross-listed in the Modern Languages Department or the History Department and what I learn there from students who focus on those areas, and how they intersect with my knowledge from the GSWS perspective, is just really cool and incredibly beneficial.

NOAH: While both of you emphasize the importance of your fellow students (albeit, to slightly differing degrees), within a traditional academic setting, I was wondering if you felt the importance of this shared passion and open-ness outside of the classroom? Are there any friends you met or organizations that you were introduced to as a result of your classes, for instance? What are the benefits to such a community that expands outside the confines of the conventional academic classroom?

AIESHA: Definitely, I've met a huge number of my close friends through the GSWS Program, for which I am so grateful. Further, I've met people who I was later able to make colleagues and allies in activist works throughout campus. For instance, it was through my classmates in the Program that I was able to become involved in planning this year's black lives matter

conference, as well as participate as a researcher for the Mattachine Project. Seeing the theory my peers and I studied in the classroom come alive through community engagement and activism has been really important for my growth as a scholar, community member, and individual. I am so grateful for the opportunities to meet like-minded and driven people through the department.

LAURA: I love being a part of the GSWS community here at WM. The people I have grown closest to were introduced to me through Lambda, VOX, and an introductory “Gender” course, namely. I have also been inspired by others on this campus who have become amazing activists and tireless advocates. It is because of the work of students here that I was able to protest outside of the Supreme Court, and that my roommate and I get to stay in gender neutral housing next semester (just for two examples!). Similar to what Aiesha said, I feel very grateful that I have been able to find friends and allies through the GSWS program here. I am so thankful to be part of a community that understands and accepts me for who I am (excuse the bad cliché).

I really, really hope I can become like them, like all of you, throughout my time here at WM!

ASHLEIGH: I agree with Laura. Learning about the passions of my classmates and the activism and research they do has been fascinating and has really pushed me to think about what else I'm interested in. Hearing about projects like the Mattachine Project that my peers are very involved in has been so cool, and I'm inspired by their dedication and hard work to think about my own research interests. Even though I'll be a senior in the fall, I'm looking forward to all the other ways to engage in the broader community.

AIESHA: It has been through the program and affiliated organizations that I have met so many allies to my causes and also been able to participate as an ally myself. A lot of this work would not be able to be done without the support of the Program as an institution (through finding, funding, advertising, etcetera) as well as the personal support from my peers and professors that I either had classes with or met via GSWS.

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THE RIGHT PROGRAM FOR ME: DISCUSSING COMMUNITY WITH GSWS MAJORS

In an effort to find out why GSWS students are drawn to the major and the community, Noah Brooksher talked with majors Ashleigh Arrington (GSWS/Sociology '17), Mariaanna Stepniak (GSWS/English '17), and Aiesha Krause-Lee (GSWS/Anthropology '16), as well as first-year student and soon-to-be-major Laura MacDonald ('19).



FACULTY AND STUDENT NEWS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **SAMANTHA BRAVER** has an internship this summer in the Events Department at EMILY's List.
- In May, **NOAH BROOKSHER** will be inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest honor society.
- **MICKY GREENE** has been accepted into the Master of Social Work Program at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.
- **SADIE MEADOWS** has an internship this summer with the Department of Social Services in Orange County, Virginia. She will be working within departments to learn how the services provided by DSS help women and other marginalized groups that are disproportionately affected by abuse and disadvantaged by economic and social systems.
- **TAYLOR MEDLEY** has an internship this summer with Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia in Richmond. She was also present for Governor Terry McAuliffe's veto of HB 1090, a bill that would have defunded Planned Parenthood in the state of Virginia. The Governor even presented Taylor with his signing pen!
- **PROFESSOR GUL OZYEGIN** has been promoted to full professor! She was also awarded the Margaret Hamilton Professorship in recognition of her excellence in scholarship and teaching. In 2015, she published two books: *New Desires, New Selves: Sex, Love and Piety among Turkish Youth* (NYU Press) and the edited *Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Cultures* (Routledge).
- **JENNIFER PUTZI** was appointed as co-editor of *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*.
- **JULIE SANTANNA** will be interning this summer at the Fan Free Clinic in Richmond. She will be working in Transgender Health Services.
- **BARBETTE SPAETH** has been appointed as Professor-in-Charge of the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome, Italy, for the 2018-2019 academic year. She also published two encyclopedia articles and co-organized the Fourth Annual International Symposium for Pilgrimage Studies here at William and Mary in the fall of 2015.
- **EMILY THOMAS** was elected William and Mary Senior Class President.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

We usually use this space to showcase the accomplishments of our GSWS graduates who are out in the world doing wonderful things.

This month, we feature two faculty members who spent time with GSWS as Visiting Assistant Professors and have now gone on to permanent positions (and wonderful things!) at other institutions.



Beth Currans, Visiting Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at William and Mary, 2008-2010

Beth Currans has been teaching in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at Eastern Michigan University since fall of 2010, where she received tenure in June 2015. Since arriving at EMU, she created a Queer Studies minor, helped revise the BA and MA curriculum, and published two independently-authored and two collaboratively-authored articles (in *Feminist Formations*, *Social Justice*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, and *RIDE: The Journal of Applied Theater and Performance*). Her book manuscript, which explores how protests organized and attended primarily by women transform public spaces, is under contract with University of Illinois press. It will (hopefully) be published in 2017. Columns she co-authors with Eileen Boris called "Feminist Currents" appear annually in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*. A special issue about "Lesbian Organizations and Organizing" that she edited was just published by the *Journal of Lesbian Studies*. She is currently working on a Disability Studies minor with other faculty from across the university and has another article forthcoming in *Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora*.

In her free time she engages her local community by serving on the board of the local food co-op and participating in grassroots assemblies including protests, sculpture parks, performances, and arts-gatherings. She also throws fabulous parties and enjoys gardening, camping, and swimming in local lakes.



Margot Weiss, Visiting Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at William and Mary, 2007-2008

Hello from Connecticut! I am Associate Professor of American Studies and Anthropology, and affiliated with Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, at Wesleyan University. I've been teaching here since the fall of 2008, when I left William & Mary after a great year with the students and faculty in Women's Studies! At Wesleyan, I coordinate the clusters in Queer and Disability Studies, and I teach courses in queer theory, the anthropology of sexuality and gender, ethnographic methods, and social theory. Recently, I had the opportunity to teach a course on queer/trans/disability and the policing of bodily normativity at York Correctional Institute, a women's prison in Niantic, CT. That was an amazing experience--those women blew me away.

Since I left W&M, my first book, *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality* (Duke University Press, 2011) was published. I was thrilled when it won the Association for Queer Anthropology's Ruth Benedict Prize and was a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award, and I am grateful to those of you at W&M who helped me with final edits and ideas. Right now, I am on sabbatical and writing my second book, *Visions of Sexual Justice*, which explores how queer left activists cultivate a radical political imagination in the midst of economic crisis and vulnerability. Sabbatical also allows me to cultivate my obsession with queer, anti-racist, feminist sci-fi; work on my gardening; hang out with my cats; and cook ever-more-complicated vegan food.





WILLIAM & MARY

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MARY & WILLIAM NEWSLETTER

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