

MARY & WILLIAM

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

FALL/WINTER 2017-2018 : ISSUE 11

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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Listening, learning, working together—that is what the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program is about for me.

Twenty-six years ago, I sat in the living room of the house I rented with two other students at Augustana College and watched Anita Hill testify that she had been sexually harassed by Supreme Court judicial nominee Clarence Thomas. I was a senior, a recent Women's Studies minor, and I was in the process of applying to graduate school where I planned to study women's literature. I had never been in Hill's position—harassed by someone with obvious power over me and my future—but I had been sexually assaulted and harassed by boys my age multiple times since my sophomore year in high school. (#MeToo.) I was mesmerized by the images of Hill in that blue dress, sitting in front of a row of white men, recounting her experiences with what seemed to me to be a sense that she deserved to be heard. Even as a young feminist, I had never felt like that. But Anita Hill's testimony that day did a lot to change that, for me and for plenty of other women.

Twenty-six years later, we're in the midst of a potentially game-changing moment for American women. Prominent and powerful men like Harvey Weinstein, Roy Moore, John Conyers, George H. W. Bush, Al Franken, and Matt Lauer are being accused of sexual assault and harassment and many are being forced to resign their positions. Women in all walks of life are coming out to proclaim "Me too": I too have been sexually assaulted and harassed. Most commentators agree that this movement is nowhere near over: new accusations come out every day and, at least in the mainstream media, accusers are being listened to and believed.

Of course we also live in a country that elected a known predator to the presidency just one year ago. This knowledge makes me reluctant to proclaim that we are somehow past the doubting and slut-shaming of women who, like Anita Hill twenty-six years ago, attempt to speak truth to power. I also wonder whether our willingness to believe accusers extends to women of color, gay men, and transgender men and women. The very silencing of the origins of the #MeToo movement—founded in 2006 by African American activist Tarana Burke—points to our culture's sense that justice for victims of assault and harassment can only go so far and to certain kinds of people. There is also the question of how accusations are resolved in different areas of our culture—while some accusers are shamed out of their prominent roles as directors, news commentators, and, yes, politicians, others continue in these roles, offering apologies or outright denying the accusations against them. We've got a long way to go to figure out what to do once accusations are made public and how we can hold sexual predators accountable for their actions. We've also got to continue the work of education and community-building that got us to this moment.



Listening, learning, working together—that is what the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program is about for me. As I enter my final semester as Director of GSWS, I focus on leaving behind a program that is based on our students—their experiences, their needs, their passions. As faculty, we have much to teach them—we are experts in Latin American history, the politics of reproductive rights, women and work, and women writers—but we are continually adjusting our programming and our course offerings to work with the students we have and the students we expect to have in coming years. This fall, we offered new courses in "Medicalized Citizenship," "Body Imaging," and "Religious Liberty in the United States." We helped bring renowned legal scholar Sarah Deer to campus and talked with her about her advocacy for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence in Native American communities. We also began work on a revision of the requirements for the GSWS major and minor, bringing our Program up to date and into conversation with important trends in the larger field of gender studies. (Stay tuned for details!) As always, we work to build and strengthen our own community, creating a home at William & Mary for students and faculty passionate about fighting the good fight.

In solidarity,

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

jlputz@wm.edu

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Spring 2018 Braithwaite Lecture:

Tuesday, February 20, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.
Integrated Science Center (ISC), room 1127

Shatema Threadcraft is Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth University and is spending the 2017-18 academic year at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Her recent book, *Intimate Justice: The Black Female Body and the Body Politic* (Oxford University Press, 2016), received the American Political Science Association's award for the best book on race, ethnicity, and politics, and the National Women's Studies Association's Sara A. Whaley Award for the best book on women and labor. While at William and Mary, Professor Threadcraft will deliver a talk based on her new project on gender, race, and the politics of death in the United States. Her project examines how necropower has operated historically and how it operates in black communities today, how the politics of gender, sexuality, and ability are implicated in the politics of death, and how necropower is justified and contested in black communities.

Please come to the lecture and invite your friends, students, professors, and colleagues! A reception will follow the talk.



SPRING 2017 PRIZES AND AWARDS

Dean's Prize for Scholarships on Women

This prize is awarded to an undergraduate and graduate student by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences for the student's work in advancing our knowledge of women and/or the politics of gender.

Marianna Stepniak

Jan Huebenthal

Student Activism Award

This prize is awarded to an individual, student organization, or group that has done outstanding feminist activist work outside the classroom.

The Haven (Liz Cascone)

Nancy Gray Prize

This prize is awarded to one graduating senior in recognition of their academic and activist achievements and their commitment to the ideals of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program.

Taylor Medley

Carol Woody Internship Award.

This award allows for 'real world' experience for distinguished students participating in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies.

Hayes Parker-Kepchar

Aleksandra Pozor

Hannah Major

WELCOME LATASHA SIMMS!

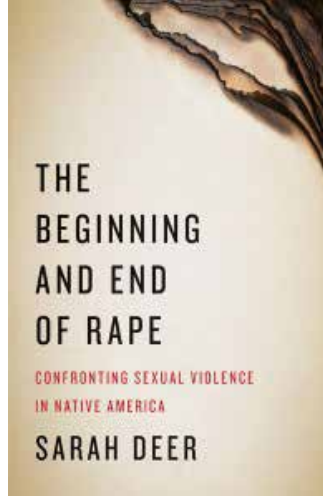


Latasha Simms has been an employee of William & Mary since July 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science from Virginia Union University and is working on her MA in Business Administration in Information Systems. After receiving her Masters, Ms. Simms plans on pursuing her doctorate in Business Management. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated.

Over the past few years, Tasha has planned, coordinated, and directed countless community events and projects across the Peninsula, including effectively serving as an Assistant Campaign Manager for the election of Newport News School Board Member, S.E. District, Mr. John R. Eley. Tasha also holds the position of Administrative Director for ICount Youth Organization and serves as a committee member for The Arts Foundation.

Tasha is inspired by this quote from Steve Jobs: "Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it."

STUDENTS TALK ABOUT SARAH DEER



Activist, lawyer, and scholar Sarah Deer visited William & Mary in November as part of the College's new COLL curriculum. In addition to other events, she met with a group of GSWS faculty and students who had recently read her latest book, *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (University of Minnesota Press, 2015). In a large forum setting she also talked about her work with Kara Thompson, assistant professor of English and American Studies. We asked students for their responses to Deer's visit and the larger importance of her work.

MAISIE BLAUFUSS

"The colonial narrative runs through the bodies of Native women, because there is no consent in their history or their present, either in the context of the power of Native people as sovereign nations or women's control over their own bodies."

ANDREW CACCIATORE

"I do agree with Sarah Deer's rejection of the word epidemic and its use in describing the violence experienced by Native women. If sexual violence was truly an epidemic, it would have spread, like a disease, into the rest of society at the same rates Native women are attacked."

HANNAH GOURDIE

"I am planning on going into domestic violence advocacy, and it was fantastic to hear from someone with career interests similar to my own. Sarah Deer's talk pushed me to consider how I can make my activism and research in the field of family and gender-based violence more intersectional and culturally sensitive."

JACOB HOPKINS

"Deer criticizes the intersection of racism and capitalism as a stronghold for upholding normative

expectations of an ideal citizen body—and at the cost of dismissing the humanity and the needs of individual Native women.

In defining her activism, Deer calls for a Native unity that strengthens instead of generalizes, forming community instead of stigmatizing and marginalizing. Most important to her are opportunity and options: she urges lawmakers to see tribes as not all the same and to understand that each has the right to determine their own sovereignty and justice system. Rejecting tribes as a monolith returns legitimacy, agency, and independence to individual tribes, treating them as sovereign entities within the American political territory that interact with the U.S. legal system as equals."

LAURA MACDONALD

"I think Sarah Deer's visit was so wonderful. She worked with so many different departments and attended far more events than I'm sure she needed to. Every conversation I was lucky enough to have with Deer reminded me of her passion for activism and her overall tenacity.

Most specifically, Deer's visit stands out to me because of the complex issues she tackles in her work. As a Government major, I find the information Deer provided about Native American legal issues to be of the utmost importance. Discussions about Native America and how it operates within the United States should be mandatory in the Government major (and all majors) because our state was built on stolen land. Deer emphasized this, but also made it clear that there is something everyone can do to support the Native Americans and the many efforts they have in disrupting colonialism. Her visit has helped me to clarify what I want to do with my own life in order to support anti-colonial efforts."

JOANNA SCHROEDER

"Dr. Deer was especially engaging because of her emphasis on the restoration of humanity in the discourse of sexual violence against Native women. I appreciated how her personality shone through her talk, echoing her points on humanization."

RHEA SHARMA

"Sarah Deer stated that Native American women do not help their daughters know what to do if they are raped, but what to do when they are raped. Deer mentioned that governments should have the power to address and respond to their own internal and external affairs, or have legislative sovereignty. In tribal nations, this sovereignty is attacked, leading to native people not having full governance over their own bodies, and thus, their rights as human beings are threatened."

HAILEY ULRICH

"In the wake of the many recent sexual misconduct allegations against the U.S.'s most powerful men, including our own President, Native women cannot be left out of the conversation. This already overlooked group needs to be recognized in the hopefully new

age of reform of our society's intersectional system of sexual abuse that continues to harm and exploit the less powerful."

NORA ZIMMERMAN

"Those who employ biologizing language propose simultaneous rationalizations for white people to invade Native space and Native bodies and for white people to exclude Native women, to quarantine them, by portraying sexual assault as a contagious threat. They construct Native bodies as both as a threat to white people and as a site of potential knowledge production, knowledge that could be used for the good of white people."



ALUMNI UPDATE

By Taylor Medley (GSWS '17)

Hi y'all! My name is Taylor and I just graduated in May from the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program with a concentration in Public Health. During my time at William & Mary I was active in VOX: Planned Parenthood Generation Action, where I was both a student leader on campus and intern with Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia (PPAV). Additionally, I was a founding volunteer at The Haven and involved in Health Outreach Peer Educators (HOPE).

After graduation, I worked part-time jobs in Williamsburg to save money before moving to Richmond, Virginia (shout-out to students who hold down jobs and academics, y'all are amazing)! In August, I began working with PPAV as their Youth Get-Out-The-Vote Fellow. I'm a bit biased, but I think I have the best job in the world: I travel around the state attending campus and progressive events to engage young people about Planned Parenthood and the upcoming gubernatorial election happening in November. It brings me a lot of hope and joy to see students and young people organizing in their communities. In 2013, the youth-voter turnout was 22% compared to a statewide turnout of 43%. For us, that's a disappointing number considering that young people are incredibly motivated about issues like reproductive justice, LGBT rights, and other social justice issues. By the end of my program, we're hoping to have over 3,000 new youth supporters who we can contact and mobilize to vote in this election - hopefully increasing the youth turnout rate by up to 10%!

My time with the GSWS Program has prepared me for the world of organizing. I take the theory, readings, and conversations I had over my four years at W&M and apply them to my activism every day. I try to push myself and others to not only understand the importance of GSWS buzzwords like intersectionality, reproductive justice and resistance, but to move to action around them in our work and conversations. Without GSWS, I would feel much less secure doing this work in such scary and unsettling times.

If you're interested in talking more, feel free to e-mail me at taylormedley@gmail.com or follow my work on Twitter @reprotaylor



GSWS EVENTS

Homecoming



GSWS Welcome Back Party



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

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

Amie Bauer, Class of 2012 (Women's Studies)

Judicial Law Clerk to Honorable Kathleen M. Pantle, Illinois Circuit Court of Cook County, Chancery Division

Ellen Berry, Class of 2016 (Kinesiology & Health Sciences/GSWS)

Personal trainer, acac Fitness & Wellness Centers, Charlottesville, VA

Karyn Bruggeman, Class of 2010 (Government/Women's Studies)

National Press Secretary for the State Innovation Exchange (SIX), a non-profit policy strategy and resource center for a network of 2,000 progressive state legislators

Katie Dixon, Class of 2009 (Art History/Women's Studies)

Freelance Digital Strategist and PR Professional, working primarily with Democratic politics and policies

Becca Fogley, Class of 2008 (Psychology/Women's Studies)

Clinical Psychologist

Danielle Garrett, Class of 2008 (Government/Women's Studies)

Strategic Policy Manager for the Center for Consumer Engagement in Health Innovation, Community Catalyst

Ashley Glacel, Class of 2002 (Public Policy/Women's Studies)

Screenwriter, Los Angeles, CA

Kathryn Higgins, Class of 2005 (Literary & Cultural Studies/Women's Studies)

Program Director, Seattle Architecture Foundation

Tracey Houston, Class of 2001 (Psychology/Women's Studies)

Assistant Director of Victim Services, Nashville Office of the District Attorney

Sarah Klotz, Class of 2008 (English/Women's Studies)

Assistant Professor of Research at USC Rossier School of Education, Senior Project Specialist at the Center for Urban Education

Hayley Loblein, Class of 2008 (Neuroscience/Women's Studies)

Doctoral candidate in School Psychology at University of Texas Austin, specializing in pediatric neuropsychology

Julian Long, Class of 2004 (Women's Studies/English)

Community Development Coordinator and Grants Manager for the City of Rochester, NH

Elizabeth Miller, Class of 2011 (Women's Studies/Sociology)

Assistant Director, W&M Office of Community Engagement

Kali Murphy, Class of 2011 (Government/Women's Studies)

MBA candidate at Duke University

Virginia Walters, Class of 2007 (Religious Studies/Women's Studies)

Medical student (expecting MD in May) at SUNY Downstate College of Medicine



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MARY & WILLIAM NEWSLETTER

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GIVE TO GSWS

Your contribution to the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program will help our faculty members provide the best learning experience to our students. You can contribute online with your credit card, using our secure web server at: www.wm.edu/as/gsws/support/index.php. The contribution form will be pre-selected to direct your gift to the general academic fund for the GSWS, which supports student and faculty needs directly.

To contribute by mail, make your check payable to The College of William & Mary Foundation. Please be sure in your check's memo area to not how you are designating your gift to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies.

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