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Summer 2011

Alumni Matter, Summer 2011

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Scholarship winners



Karen Pfost (left) with Emily Lloyd, Luellen Laurenti Scholarship recipient



Paula Seymour (left) received the Dorothy E. Lee Scholarship and Jessica Bales (right) received the Women's and Gender Studies Achievement Award, pictured with Kyle Ciani



RIGHT Jay Groves (left) with Daniel Mathews, Anne M. Semlak Memorial Scholarship recipient

Students' art graces WGS Gallery

Three students exhibited their art in the WGS Gallery this year. Graduate student Chad Wys showed his eclectic multimedia images and sculptures in "Our Short Eternity," Becky Dolenak explored artificial illumination in "Nightscapes," and Hayley Fisk cast a discerning eye on food and body image in "Let Them Eat Cake."



Chad Wys



ABOVE Hayley Fisk



Becky Dolenak

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
Illinois' first public university

Women's and Gender Studies Program
 Campus Box 4260
 Normal, IL 61790-4260



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WGS ALUMNI MATTER

Summer 2011

From the acting director

Dear Alumni,

Congratulations to our recent graduates! We know you will embrace the WGS mission—to think critically about gender as global citizens who value lifelong learning and social justice—as you move beyond Illinois State University. We are proud to have such wonderfully diverse and active alumni, and are heartened by what you have achieved in this past year: you have mentored, hired, counseled, and educated people of all abilities, ages, and cultures. A snapshot of those achievements is included in this issue, along with some program highlights.

Our affiliated faculty members connected with critical social issues throughout the year, and ISU honored two WGS faculty as Distinguished Lecturers. Roberta Seelinger Trites gave the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Lecture, "The Pixar Maturity Formula: Sexism, Growth, and Social Responsibility in Children's Movies." Susan Sprecher delivered the Distinguished Professorship Lecture on "Scientific Perspectives on Relationship Compatibility, Compatible Matches, and Compatibility Matching." WGS Director Alison Bailey joined K. Aaron Smith, Lawrence B. Solum, and Michael Jaricki in the panel discussion, "Immigration Reform and the Plight of Bi-National Gay and Lesbian Couples." In our collaboration with the weekly International Studies Seminar, Bailey shared her research on "Outsourcing Surrogacy to India" and Maria Schmeckle presented "A Global Perspective and Action Agenda Regarding Children in Street Situations." Our 16th annual symposium featured presentations by 23 students, including four WGS students; an exhibit of design students' art on cultural identity; and a riveting keynote address by internationally acclaimed feminist scholar Professor Chandra Talpade Mohanty. For details of these events please see issues of our newsletter, *Gender Matters*, at WomensAndGenderStudies.IllinoisState.edu.

The WGS Resource Center received an important donation of books from renowned historian Sarah B. Pomeroy, which improves our offerings in ancient and women's history. In addition to its wide range of publications, the center provides meeting and study space for WGS and Women's Mentoring Network students.

Director Alison Bailey returns from her sabbatical August 1. I've enjoyed the opportunity to serve as acting director and visit with alumni who have returned to campus. Please continue to drop by, email, or even snail mail.

In solidarity,

Kyle Ciani

Alumni news

Annaliisa Ahlman '08 is technical director and scene designer for the nationally recognized arts program at Niles North High School. Short plays written by Ahlman, her colleague Timothy Ortmann, and her students were selected for performance at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. This summer she travels to England and Scotland, where her students will perform as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.



Annaliisa Ahlman with students

Drew Anastasia '06 is teaching and working toward a Ph.D. in rhetoric and composition studies and an M.S.W. at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is coeditor of *Sprinkle: A Journal of Sexual Diversity Studies* and is a Q-BLOK sponsor for homeless GLBT youth.

Debbie Armstrong '03 (minor) and '06 (certificate) retired this year from ISU's Registrar's Office after 35 years with the University. Armstrong is enjoying more time with her family and tutoring students at the local grade school.



Debbie Armstrong

Stephanie McIntyre Braun '07 (certificate) is the manager

of the Joliet Junior College Academic Skills Center and the GED chief examiner for Grundy and Kendall Counties. She lives in Morris with her husband of eight years, Andrew, and their two sons, Xander (age two) and Sebastian (born May 4, 2011).

Kelly Donnellan '11 (certificate) served as WGS graduate assistant for two years and will begin a position teaching social studies for UNO Charter Schools in Chicago this fall.

Julia Drauden '10 had her poem, "The Path of Least Resistance," published in the *Spoon River Poetry Review*, fall/winter 2010. She is an administrative assistant at Murer Consultants, a health care consulting firm in Joliet.

Brandy Peak '09 earned her master's in nonprofit management from DePaul University, and began her position as membership services assistant at The Field Museum. She is also an Illinois Choice Action Team member.

Rebecca Rossi '99, aka "Malice Cullen" skates with philanthropic purpose for the McLean County MissFits, the local roller derby team. In May 2011 the MissFits raised \$20,000 for Relay for Life. Rossi also is the associate director of the Heartland Community College Green Institute in Normal.



Rebecca Rossi, aka Malice Cullen

Liz Sawyer '00 has been the chairperson of OUTReach, the faculty/staff LGBTQ advocacy group at the University of Arizona, since fall 2008.

Caitlin Tyrell '10 loves her work in admissions at Carrington College, California. She plans to get a master's degree in counselor education to be a school counselor.



Left to right: Monica Noraian, Tina Brakebill, and Sandra Harmon presented "Celebrating the Legacy of ISNU Women: a Mentor, a Doctor, and an Educator" on October 7 to kick off Homecoming week.

Heidi Van De Voort '09 married fellow alum C.J. Daniel on 10/10/10. She works in the middle school choral program in Homer Glen, and has performed in several community ensembles, singing the soprano solos in Handel's *Messiah* and Vivaldi's *Gloria*, and playing the role of Micaela in an operatic review of Bizet's *Carmen*.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty delivers symposium keynote

On April 29 Chandra Talpade Mohanty delivered the 16th Annual WGS Symposium keynote address, "On Wars, Borders, and Empires: Securitized Regimes and Feminist Critique." She focused on three securitized regimes—the U.S., Israel, and India—and three sites where such state-sanctioned violence is perpetrated—the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, Israel-Palestine, and the disputed Kashmir Valley.



Chandra Talpade Mohanty visited with WGS certificate student and WGS faculty member Shushan Avagyan's Cultural Expressions in Social Contexts class. Mohanty is at center top, and Avagyan is at center below her.

Mohanty explained how such regimes legitimize authoritarian power by arguing for the need for security. They employ a "gendered logic of masculinist protection," corresponding to the patriarchal idea that women and children are expected to be obedient and loyal at home in exchange for their husbands'/fathers' protection. Having convinced its citizens of threatening populations, Mohanty reasons, governments are able to act with violent im-

punity, normalizing the militarization of civilian life, surveillance, incarceration, and suspension of civil rights for undocumented immigrants, indigenous peoples, and citizens suspected of harboring insurgents.

While Mohanty painted a bleak picture of human suffering at the hands of these securitized states, she also gave us a hopeful view of feminist resistance. Israeli and Palestinian feminists have forged cross-border alliances to struggle against the Israeli occupation. Indian, Pakistani, and Kashmiri women organize against state and communal violence across borders, religions, and national loyalties. In the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, women's organizations help communities share survival tactics and resistance strategies to counteract the partition of indigenous lands.

The symposium was generously cosponsored by the Alice and Fannie Fell Trust; Departments of Graphic Design, History, and Philosophy; MECCPAC; A Dean of Students Diversity Initiative; Office of the President; Office of the Provost/Sage Trust; College of Arts and Sciences, and WGS.

International Studies Seminar Series

We continue to collaborate with T. Y. Wang of the Department of Politics and Government and Issam Nassar of the Department of History in bringing scholars from a variety of institutions to campus for the weekly International Studies Seminar held Wednesdays, noon–1 p.m. Presenters included the School of Theatre's playwright-in-residence, Rahul Varma (Teesri Duniya Theatre), whose play *Bhopal* was produced by ISU's Crossroads Project; philosopher Namita Goswami (DePaul University); and historian Theodora Dragostinova (Ohio State University). We also cosponsored Robert Mazur (Iowa State University), who discussed sustainable livelihoods in Uganda to help ISU's Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps.



Stephanie McIntyre Braun and family



Kelly Donnellan at graduation

Safe Zone hosted an LGBTQ Students of Color event. Panel members from left to right: Ashley Scot, Tomas Bolivar, Xavier Grady, Roger Cardena, and Dani Fox.



LEFT FLAME (Feminist Led Activist Movement to Empower) received the Outstanding Registered Student Association Award at the 23rd Annual Commitment to Diversity Award Ceremony on April 10. Shown here, the executive board at the Clothesline exhibit.



(Left to right) Roseanna Dorsey, Allison Piper, Larissa Urban, and Michelle McCabe, graduating WGS minors

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