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Gender Matters

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

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Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program  
*Illinois State University*

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## WGS Completes First Five-Year Plan: Retreat Reveals New Directions

By Alison Bailey and Becca Chase

As the Women's and Gender Studies Program wraps up the 2009-10 academic year, it is also time for us to assess what we have accomplished since Julie Hile guided us through the strategic planning process that led to our 2005 to 2010 five-year plan. Thanks to the committed efforts of our staff, student employees, and faculty, we have made significant progress. This spring we asked the WGS faculty to complete an online survey to evaluate the results of our work, and then met to review those evaluations and make recommendations for our next five-year plan.

Among our first tasks in 2005 were to clarify our mission and vision and to improve the appearance and content of our Web site and newsletter. Survey respondents registered their approval, saying the two venues are much improved. We also have instituted a Facebook group and the annual *Alumni Matter* newsletter. We have peppered the campus with flyers about events, programs, and special courses, and faculty and students alike say the program has a much stronger presence on campus as a result.

The faculty also indicated that they think the WGS annual symposium has improved, citing the quality of student presentations and keynote speakers—Native American activist and scholar Andrea Smith, human rights activist Dolores Huerta, performance artist Holly Hughes, literature and media scholar Susan Bordo, and

reproductive justice historian Rickie Solinger. This spring, Diversity Advocacy recognized the WGS symposium with the Outstanding Established Program Award.

The curriculum committee developed a rubric to distinguish between core and affiliated faculty. Subsequently, our faculty went through a review, and we picked up some new faculty members. Several faculty members have developed and taught new courses. Kudos to Sherrylin Billger, Tom Gerschick, Mary Trouille, and Georgia Tsouvala for these new electives. Thanks also to Cynthia Edmonds-Cady for working with us to create a WGS emphasis in Social Work; and to Becca Chase and Paula Ressler for developing WGS 392: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Queer Studies and Theories, which will be taught for the first time next spring.

The faculty contributes to the program in many other ways, too. Kyle Ciani posts WGS minor and certificate information and flyers for events and community service opportunities on a bulletin board outside her office. Melissa Johnson and Elisabeth Freidman are getting art students involved in WGS, too. Karen Pfof mentors the feminist student organization, F.L.A.M.E., along with our wonderful community ally, Yadira Ruiz of YWCA's Stepping Stones. To all these committed people we offer our heartfelt thanks. In return, we have made a major effort to support faculty during Department Faculty Status Committee processes.

However, our survey also indicated that we need more of the faculty to live up to our service motto, "Do one thing for WGS." There are several easy ways to (*cont'd*)

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### Women's and Gender Studies Staff

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help us promote the program that few faculty members do regularly. Most talk up the minor and certificate in their classes at least sometimes, either personally or by inviting WGS staff to address students. Our goal is to promote the program in all courses at least once every semester before registration. Very few instructors and professors promote the minor and certificate in their WGS syllabi. We also need more of the faculty to disseminate information about events and courses by circulating fliers, forwarding relevant listserv e-mails, and encouraging students to join the WGS Facebook group and visit the Web site's events calendar. We also encourage faculty to promote the program in their home departments.

So, what are our future goals? First and foremost, we need to continue growing the minor, and several retreat participants cautioned that we should prioritize this drive before taking on new projects. Over the past five years, 48 certificate students and minors have completed their WGS studies, while 107 have entered the program, leaving us a current total of 59 students. Our goal is to have 75 students enrolled. We are collaborating with the College of Education to develop an emphasis in Women's and Gender Studies for education majors, following the Social Work model. We will be scoping out similar opportunities in other professional programs that offer majors little wiggle room in their study plans.

This summer we are, with mixed feelings, launching an online version of our introductory course, Women, Gender, and Society. A couple of electives also are being offered online for the first time. In addition, the curriculum committee has been looking into the feasibility of a proposed LGBTQ emphasis, and this inquiry will continue.

Most faculty members who responded to the survey and attended the retreat thought that more needed to be done to recognize WGS service work in home departments, and it was suggested that the tenured core faculty might help with this. Others observed that it appeared that the same five or six people were still doing most of the service work. One asked, "Where do people go after the Meet and Greets? The service work for WGS is comparatively light." In response, Kass Fleisher made a commitment to actively promote the WGS curriculum in the English Department this fall. There was also a call for clearer guidelines for core and affiliated faculty responsibilities. This will be taken up at the fall core faculty meeting.

There was, of course, discussion during the retreat about how the program should situate itself in the light of the current budget climate.

Over the summer, we will be drafting a new five-year plan, which will be put before the faculty for discussion this fall and then finalized. Stay tuned! ☼



*Women's and Gender Studies won the Outstanding Established Program Award, in recognition of our annual Women's and Gender Studies Symposium, at the Dean of Students Diversity Advocacy Awards Ceremony, April 11.*

## Faculty and Student Accomplishments

**Alison Bailey** published "On Intersectionality and the Whiteness of Feminist Philosophy" in *The Center Must Not Hold: White Women Philosophers on the Whiteness of Philosophy*, ed. George Yancy (Lexington Books), and presented it as the keynote address at the Graduate Student Conference at Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan, March 26-27, and at Intersectionality: Challenging Theory, Reframing Politics, Transforming Movements Conference, UCLA Law School, Los Angeles, California, March 11-13. She also presented "Re-conceiving Surrogacy: How Should Western Feminists Think about Indian Surrogacy?" at the Gender, Bodies, and Technology Conference at Virginia Tech, Roanoke, Virginia, April 22-24.

**Ann Haugo** began a two-year term as president of the Mid-America Theatre Conference at the conference in Cleveland, Ohio, March 4-7.

**Cynthia Huff** presented "Through the Family Looking Glass: Diaries, Women, and the Narrative of Construction of the Family" at the Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference in Austin, Texas, March 25-27; and "A Room of One's Own as Pedagogical Practice" at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Bogota, Colombia, April 8. She published "Dressing the Part: The Body in/of the Diaries of Hannah Cullwick and Arthur Munby" in *New Essays on Life Writing and the Body*, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing). (Cont'd)

**Sesha Kethineni** presented “Profile of Juvenile Offenders: An Empirical Overview” at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 4-7, 2009; and “Redeploy Illinois Program: The Impact on Juveniles, Families, and the Juvenile Justice System” at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences annual meeting, San Diego, California, February 23-27.

**Jessie Krienert** co-authored “Eldercide: A Gendered Examination of Elderly Homicide in the United States, 2000-2005” with Jeffrey Walsh, published in *Homicide Studies*, Vol. 14 (1); and “Elderly in America: A Descriptive Study of Elder Abuse Examining National Incident-Based Reporting System Data, 2000-2005” with Jeffrey Walsh and Moriah Turner, published in the *Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, Vol. 21(4); and “International Crimes: *Jus Cogens* and *Obligatio Erga Omnes*” in *Comparative and International Policing, Justice and Transnational Crime* (Carolina Academic Press).

**Ali Riaz** presented “Religion and Politics in South Asia” for the Department of Communication and Journalism at Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 6; and presented “Knowledge Society: In Which Way?” at BRAC Center, Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 8.

**Marla Reese-Weber** presented a poster entitled “The Role of Attachment in a Romantic Couple’s Emotions during a Conflict Episode: Self, Partner, and Observer Ratings” with Van Herrmann, R., Schneider, W. J., Gardner, E., Nemecek, R., Herrmann, D., Thurston, K., and Moore, N. at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 11.

**Mary Trouille** was awarded the 2010 American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Women’s Caucus Editing and Translation Fellowship. She presented “Law, Literature, and Life Experience in Accounts of Wife Abuse in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century France”; and chaired a session entitled “‘He Said, She Said:’ Rape in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Law, Fiction and Moralistic Writing” at the ASECS Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 17-20.

**Maura Toro-Morn** published “Migrations through Academia: Reflections of a Tenured Latina Professor” in *Tedious Journeys: Autoethnography by Women of Color in Academe* (Peter Lang Publishing Group).

**Georgia Tsouvala** presented “Women in Early Imperial Gymnasia” at the annual meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, April 14-16. She was also appointed to the Committee on Ancient History of the American

Philological Association, and became adviser of the Mu Upsilon Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, Illinois State University’s chapter of the National History Honor Society.

**Chris Wellin** co-authored “A Review of Arts and Again Research: Revealing an Elusive but Promising Direction for the Era of the Third Age” with Dawn Carr and Heather Reece, published in *Journal of Aging, Humanities and the Arts*, Vol. 3(3).

**Janet Wilson** presented “Going Public in Prison: Empowering Incarcerated Women On and Off Stage” at the Mid-America Theatre Conference, Cleveland, Ohio, March 6.

**Kirstin Hotelling Zona** published “An Attitude of Noticing: Mary Oliver’s Ecological Ethic” in *Interdisciplinary Studies on Language and the Environment*, and “Tree” in the poetry section of the online forum *Literary Mama* at <http://literarymama.com/poetry/> posted on April 10. ☀

### WGS Spring 2010 Graduates



Graduating WGS minors  
Alissa Rzepecki and Ned Marto



Graduating WGS certificate student Jenna Goldsmith  
and graduating WGS minor Julia Drauden



Graduating WGS minors  
Kendra Karman and Jason Wilkins

Not Pictured: Melissa Johnson, Breanna Mull, Mary Sturm, Caitlin Tyrell, and graduate certificate students Joseph Campbell and Erica Thurman.



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## Decolonizing Visual Representations of Indigenous People

By Roseanna Dorsey

On April 1, Angela Haas (mixed-blood Cherokee-German) presented “Indigenous and Feminist Transgressions in Visual Rhetoric and Visual Culture Studies” for the Visual Culture Symposium. Much of her discussion had to do with the visual rhetoric that has surrounded and deeply impacted Native American culture.

Haas began by humorously describing how as a child she would look back and forth from the television screen, showing wild images of Hollywood Indians, to her American Indian grandfather. The TV images looked nothing like her grandfather. She was confused.

Such early experiences have led Haas to “redress colonial influences on the perceptions of people, literacies, language, and cultures.” She explained how the visual rhetoric that has been used in advertising and television for so many years has infiltrated and corrupted mainstream perceptions of Indian culture, and illustrated her analysis with a fascinating array of images.

Haas referred to stereotypical images of Indians as “colonial fugitive poses”: colonial, because the stereotypes of American Indians (all-natural, spiritual, exotic) are based on Western ethnographic and colonial rhetorical strategies. The ways American Indians have been generically portrayed in advertisements and media have been used to justify the continuing colonization of indigenous peoples. Such visual rhetoric still deeply and negatively affects American Indian people.

She also offered examples of Native American art that decolonize such rhetoric. For instance, Haas showed “Shadowboxing,” a mixed-media piece by John Low (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi) (*see page six*) in which he layered and juxtaposed colonial representations of Indianness with actual familial and indigenous artifacts, challenging the viewer to identify which is which and the relationships between them, as well as to reflect on the viewer’s cultural literacy or lack thereof.

*Angela Haas is an assistant professor of English and a Women’s and Gender Studies affiliated faculty member at Illinois State University. ☼*

## Qwo-Li Driskill Performs at Café Soul

By Julia Drauden

Poet, rhetorician, and two-spirit Cherokee activist Qwo-Li Driskill headlined Diversity Advocacy’s Café Soul on Monday, February 22. The event was sponsored by Diversity Advocacy and Profound Pioneers Entertainment Group. The first half of the presentation featured original spoken word and music performed by student artists and creative writers, followed by Driskill reading poems from hir<sup>1</sup> book *Walking with Ghosts* (Salt, 2005) in addition to some unpublished pieces. Driskill was introduced by WGS affiliated faculty member Dr. Angela Haas (English).



*English Professor and WGS affiliated faculty member Angela Haas with guest speaker Qwo-Li Driskill.*

Driskill’s poetry centered on communities and their divisions and intersections. In hir poems se also used vivid and arresting imagery expressed in natural and bodily erotic language. Driskill also spoke on the “power of [the] erotic to heal trauma, especially in a queer context,” referring to hir poem “Back to the Blanket.” Se cautioned that the erotic can be powerful, but also dangerous, and that it must be respected because it is a “generative power we have within ourselves.”

An engaging question and answer session followed Driskill’s reading. “We have a lot of work to do as far as healing historical trauma,” se said, when discussing colonialism, racism, and queer issues in American history. “There must be ways to heal from historical trauma that honors experiences people have actually had.”

Driskill is an assistant professor of rhetoric and creative writing at Texas A&M University. Se advocates for social justice for Native American LGBTQ people. Driskill is a “two-spirit” person, which se explained as being an “umbrella term used in native communities” to refer to Native American people who do not conform to traditional masculine or feminine gender expressions.

The student performers touched on themes of diversity, bodies, separations in society, race, language and emotion, and mother-child relationships. Emcee Shellynne Waldron of Diversity Advocacy explained that the student work was “all about identity, however we choose to define it.” ☼

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1. The gender-neutral terms “hir” and “se” are used in this article, reflecting how Dr. Driskill refers to himself.

## Student News

### FLAME Emphasizes Activism and Learning

By Breanna Mull

This semester, Feminist Led Activist Movement to Empower (FLAME) worked diligently to provide countless learning opportunities for its members. President Shannon Beck began the semester with an activity exploring how feminism has evolved over the years. At subsequent meetings, Treasurer Elise Franchi spoke about female circumcision, noting both the dangers of the process and its effects on two to three million girls and women each year. Community Liaison Heather Greiter led a discussion on violence against women, reporting that one-fourth of all relationships involve violence, yet 84 percent of cases are not reported to the police. In March, Vice President Julie Wachtenheim kicked off Women's History Month with more startling statistics: for example, women make up only 16.8 percent of Congress today. The RSO's last meeting was held on April 26, where a discussion on inequity and gender inequality in the workforce was led by Secretary Charlotte Adams.

FLAME also hosted guest speakers. Dr. K. Aaron Smith (English) led a session on gendered language and sociolinguistics, explaining that when social categorizations intersect with language usage, it affects societal perceptions of certain groups. The English Department's Kathryn Kerr and Nancy McKinney spoke on feminism and literature, analyzing poems by Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde.

In April, FLAME staffed tables for Pay Equity Day and at Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, a Sexual Assault Awareness Month event. On Pay Equity Day, women were given the "privilege" of purchasing a cupcake for 77 cents while men were charged a dollar, representing the 77 cents that a woman earns to a man's dollar. Onlookers were either impressed with the clever display or skeptical about the



*Walk a Mile in Her Shoes encouraged men from the community to walk in high heels to show their support and raise sexual assault awareness. Women's and Gender Studies minor Jason Wilkins is on the left.*

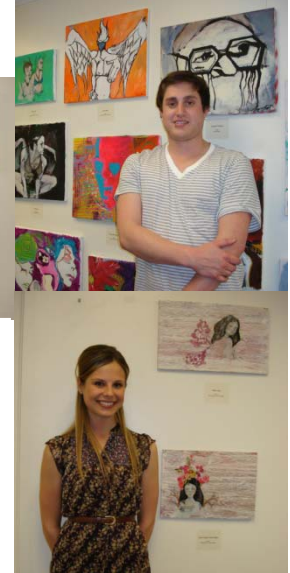
statistic, which is based on 2007 U.S. Census Bureau findings. FLAME looks

ahead to the fall and invites all students to join them then for another challenging semester of empowering feminist experiences!☀

### WGS Art Gallery Displays "3."



*Angela Inez Baldus, top left, Greg Gorton, top right, and Kayla Hueneburg, right, presented their group show, "3.", at the gallery.*



### PRIDE Raises Funds for AIDS Task Force

By Breanna Mull

PRIDE offers LGBTQ people and their allies safe spaces for discussion, learning, entertainment, and socializing. It provides necessary support for ISU's student LGBT community and broadens the diversity of experiences available to the entire student population. Every Wednesday the group met to explore such topics as media, sex toys, identities, and scrapbooking.

The RSO's signature event, the annual PRIDE Charity Drag Show, took place on Saturday, March 27. This year's spectacular performance staged by talented professional, semi-professional, and amateur drag queens and kings raised money for the AIDS Task Force of McLean County. The nearly 600 people in attendance at the Center for the Performing Arts laughed and cheered along with host Sharon Sheralike.

PRIDE also participated in the National Day of Silence on April 16, which is an annual protest to raise awareness about bullying and harassment targeting LGBTQ people in schools. Students took a vow of silence by placing a piece of red tape across their mouths. After an entire day of silence, PRIDE hosted a Night of Noise to celebrate their efforts.

On April 28 PRIDE held its last meeting and hosted its end-of-semester banquet. Whether you are queer, questioning your sexual or gender identity, or just want to find out more, PRIDE hopes you will attend a meeting next fall! ☀

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*Gender Matters*  
*Illinois State University*  
*Women's and Gender Studies Program*  
*Rachel Cooper 2nd Floor*  
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*Normal, IL 61790-4260*

**Welcome, New Minors!**

Allison Bechtel, Psychology  
Josie Graves, English Education  
Samantha Greben, Apparel Merchandising and Design  
Emily Lloyd, Sociology  
Daniel Mathews, English Education  
Hannah Muscat, Psychology  
Larissa Urban, English Studies

**Congratulations, Graduating Minors!**

Julia Drauden, English Studies  
Melissa Johnson, English Studies  
Kendra Karman, Journalism  
Ned Marto, History  
Breanna Mull, Mass Media  
Alissa Rzepecki, Political Science  
Mary Sturm, Psychology  
Caitlin Tyrrell, History  
Jason Wilkins, Political Science

**Congratulations, Graduating Certificate Students!**

Joseph Campbell, English Studies  
Jenna Goldsmith, English Studies  
Erica Thurman, Political Science



“Shadowboxing” (2007) by John Low (Potawatomi)  
(see page four for story)