

# Women's & Gender STUDIES

Fall 2001

at Rutgers-New Brunswick

## From the Chair

This semester has been especially challenging for all of us as we move through these difficult times. Women's Studies communities around the world have engaged in the feminist analysis of September 11 and subsequent events—how they will affect our lives and what interventions we should make to develop a just, lasting peace that moves beyond traditional anti-war rhetoric. Our voices, while not always heard and not always visible, are making important contributions to current debates, and we will continue to engage in these dialogues. At Rutgers, the October gathering "Conversations on the Current Crisis: At the Intersections of Gender and Race," co-sponsored jointly by the Center for Women's Global Leadership, Department of Women's and Gender Studies, Institute for Research on Women and the Office of Diverse Community Affairs and Lesbian/Gay Concerns, provided an important forum for such engagement.

Meanwhile, many new developments have taken place at our new Department. As many of you probably have heard by now, the Board of Governors at its June meeting approved our request to become the Department of Women's and Gender Studies. We have 30 faculty who have lines in the department or whose lines are shared with other units. Two new faculty members joined our department this fall: Ethel Brooks (Assistant Professor, WGS and Sociology) and Barbara Cooper (Associate Professor, History, African Studies and WGS). Our list of affiliated faculty is growing (presently over 70 faculty members), as we welcomed this semester Laura Ahearn, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology; Kayo Denda, our fantastic librarian from Douglass Library; and Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, Assistant Professor, Departments of Puerto Rican Studies and Spanish and Portuguese. Our

Ph.D. program is in its final stages of approval and we hope that the whole process will be completed by the beginning of next semester. We are also very excited as we start the recruitment process for our first batch of Ph.D. students starting September 2002.

In this context, special thanks are due to Jennifer Jones whose contributions to the M.A. program and to the development of the Ph.D. program were extraordinary. We will miss Jennifer when she goes away on a well-deserved sabbatical starting January 2002. Both Harriet Davidson and Jennifer Jones have led us through a challenging period as we made the transition. To each of you, we owe many, many thanks and hope that these sabbaticals will in a small way provide you with the time you need so much for your own work. (I promise that upon your return your course load will only double!). Mary Hawkesworth was enthusiastically elected as our new Graduate Director. She has agreed to serve in this position till summer 2004. Welcome, Mary! She has started dividing her dollars into halves so that now we have already doubled our resources.

There are a few other pieces of very good news: Bonnie Smith's (History and Women's Studies) well earned and long overdue promotion to PII took place this year and Elizabeth Grosz will be joining us in September 2002 as a faculty member. In fact, she will be on campus starting January 2002 when she occupies the Laurie Chair.

The Rutgers community at large, especially the women's community, is thrilled to welcome in January Patricia Williams, Professor of Law at Columbia University. Professor Williams, a recipient of the prestigious MacArthur Award, is a globally renowned scholar and activist who will visit Rutgers for a year as the Wynona M. Lipman Chair in Women's Political Leadership. I hope you will take the opportunity to join us in

welcoming our distinguished guests, and will be able to meet them in person while they are at Rutgers.

There are also several exciting new initiatives that we have begun to develop at Women's and Gender Studies and we hope that others will follow in the near future. A group of faculty interested in South Asian Studies, Ethel Brooks, Louisa Schein, Jasbir Puar, Laura Ahearn and Indrani Chatterjee, and an M.A. student, Valsala Kumari, formed an Ad hoc committee, which will be led by Leela Fernandes. Supported by an anonymous donor, the group has already planned an exciting series of lectures for Spring/Fall 2002. Another new international linkage is being developed thanks to support from FAS and the Graduate School. One faculty member and two graduate students will receive funding to attend a summer course in Dubrovnik entitled "Gender and Nation: Tradition and Transition". This one-week long course will take place between May 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

I hope you are as excited as I am with all these new developments. New ideas are welcome as always. Please stop by my office if you have a chance. As the semester is ending and maybe we all can slow down, I want to thank you all for your contributions. In particular I want to acknowledge Joanne Givand, who expanded her day work and stayed late again too often. I also want to thank Kyla Zambrio who has been keeping our graduate program in good shape in preparation for the future expansions and to Sujatha Moni, who among many contributions, edited this newsletter and made sure that it finally got to the printer.

Joanna Regulska

### **Our New Graduate Secretary**

Kyla Zambrio joined Women's and Gender Studies as Graduate Secretary for Women's and Gender Studies this fall. Kyla brings to the department her skill in Web design and programming. Currently the youngest member in our team of staff, Kyla got married recently and finds the hectic pace of work here both interesting and challenging. Before joining us, she worked in the Liberal Arts Program of Mercer County College.

## **SIX NEW STUDENTS JOIN THE M.A. PROGRAM**

Six new Students joined the M.A. Program in Women's and Gender Studies this year. They were welcomed into the Program through a party held at the home of the Graduate Director, Jennifer Jones. They also attended an Orientation for new M.A. students on August 28th. Towards the end of September, they met for a brown bag lunch to discuss the new Ph.D. program and the recently concluded Women's Studies Conference at Emory University. Faculty members who spoke on the occasion were Jennifer Jones, Mary Hawkesworth, Jennifer Morgan and Ethel Brooks.

Following are brief profiles of the new students, their backgrounds and interests.

**Soo Jung Jang** comes to Rutgers with a Master's in Women's Studies from Korea and her interest in Women's issues began primarily through her experiences in the university. She was the first elected female president of the Department of Korean Language and Literature. She was also a counselor for the Seoul Women's Hot Line. Deeply concerned about the prejudicial treatment of women in Korea, and unsure how to untie the knots of patriarchal male-centered systems and widespread phallogocentric beliefs, Soo hopes that Graduate Studies in Women's Studies will provide the theoretical tools to resolve some of these issues. Soo is also specifically interested in exploring the patriarchy of global economy and human rights.

**Valsala Kumari** was born in Kerala, India. She has one Master's Degree in English Literature from the University of Delhi, and another in City and Regional Studies from Department of Urban Planning at Rutgers University. Back in India, she was an officer who dealt with a large number of women's issues. She was an activist as well. Since she had no theoretical background in Feminism, Valsala decided to pursue a Masters degree in Women's and Gender Studies. She aims to pursue a Ph.D. in Women's Studies (if she gets selected at Rutgers!).

**Elizabeth M. Spohr** was born in Elizabeth, NJ. She received her Bachelor's degree in Women's and Gender Studies from Rutgers. She is currently the Director of Henderson Residence



Hall on Douglass Campus. She is a founding member, President and Advisor of the Women's Defense Coalition; a Rutgers University based Women's Resource Center. Her interests are international work, accessibility of theory through the creation of zines/handmade books/art, PRAXIS (!) and literary issues.

**Jessica Valenti** is from Queens, New York. She has a BA in English from SUNY Albany. Her interest in Women's/Gender Studies emerges through the influence of her mother, who is a feminist, and from teaching "Introduction to Feminisms" at SUNY, Albany. Her specific interests lie in sexuality and gender, and feminist pedagogy. She plans to either pursue a Ph.D. in Women's/Gender Studies or to work for a non-profit organization. She completed an internship with Ms. Magazine recently and has done a lot of work for Planned Parenthood in Albany concerning lobbying and getting support for the Women's Health and Wellness Act.

**Nicole De Nino** was born in New York. She received her undergraduate degree from SUNY Binghamton where she double majored in history and literature. Nicole claims that towards the end of her Undergraduate studies she realized that most of her classes were cross-listed with women's studies, and felt that this was the next direction she had to take. She is very interested in women leaders/warriors in the middle ages and in the Renaissance period, women who were seldom mentioned in any of her history classes. Before joining Graduate School, Nicole worked in Tokyo where she taught pre-school, which she describes as an amazing experience.

**Marisa Ragonese** is a homo(cidal) radical lesbian feminist revolutionary. As an activist, her newest passion is to perfect the art of everyday interruptions into sexism, racism, heterosexism, heteronormativity, and general ignorance. "She's only been shot at once." Her goals at Rutgers include: turning all of the wimmin there into homos, getting rid of the meat at the three trillion events that Women's Studies hosts, annihilating anti-feminist forms of postmodernism, and generating new work which documents the phenomenon of "progressive backlash." She still believes in grrrl revolution.

### **Elizabeth Grosz – New Laurie NJ Chair**

Starting Spring 2002 Elizabeth Grosz will take up residence at Rutgers University as the 2002-03 Laurie New Jersey Chair in Women's and Gender Studies at Douglass College. Dr. Grosz moved to the United States recently. She was born in Sydney, Australia, where she studied Philosophy at the University of Sydney. She received her PhD in 1981 and taught for many years in the Department of General Philosophy, one of two Philosophy Departments at the University of Sydney. In 1992, she moved to the Critical Theory Program at Monash University in Melbourne, where she was Director of the Institute for Critical and Cultural Studies. In 1999 Dr. Grosz moved to the United States where she took up the Julian Park Chair in Humanities at the State University of New York at Buffalo and became a member of the Comparative Literature and English Departments there. She has published widely in the area of Feminist Theory, focusing on questions of sexuality and desire, the body and materiality, and space and time.

### **Recent Publications by Women's and Gender Studies Faculty**

#### **Ethel Carolyn Brooks**

"Globalized Chinese Capital in Central America," With Amy Freedman, *Asian Pacific Perspectives*, (May 2001).

#### **Charlotte Bunch**

"Preamble: Abriendo las Copuertas," *Declaracion Universal de Derechos Humanos: Texto Y Comentarios Inusuales*, ed. Alda Facio (San Jose, Costa Rica: ILANUD Programa Mujer, Justicia y Genero, 2001).

"Taking Stock: Women's Human Rights Five Years After Beijing" in *Holding On to the Promise: Women's Human Rights and the Beijing + 5 Review*, eds. Cynthia Meillon and Charlotte Bunch (NJ: Center for Women's Global Leadership, 2001).

#### **Susan J. Carroll**

*The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ed. Susan J. Carroll (Indiana University Press, 2001).

"Introduction," in *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ed. Susan J. Carroll (Indiana University Press, 2001).

"Representing Women: Women State Legislators as Agents of Policy-Related Change," in *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ed. Susan J. Carroll (Indiana University Press, 2001).

"Do Term Limits Help Women Get Elected?" with Krista Jenkins, *Social Science Quarterly* 82 (March 2001): 197-201.

"Welfare Reform in the 104th Congress: Institutional Position and the Role of Women," with Kathleen J. Casey, *Women and Welfare: Theory and Practice in the United States and Europe*, ed. Nancy J. Hirschmann and Ulrike Liebert (Rutgers University Press, 2001).

"The Impact of Term Limits on Women," *Spectrum: The Journal of State Government* 74 (Fall 2001): 19-21.

**Dorothy Sue Cobble**

"'On the Edge of Equality': Working Women and the US Labour Movement," with Monica Bielski, *Gender, Diversity, and Trade Unions: International Perspectives*, ed. Fiona Colgan and Sue Ledwith. (London: Routledge Press, 2001).

"Lost Ways of Unionism: Historical Perspectives on Reinventing the Labor Movement," *Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Lowell Turner, Harry Katz, and Rick Hurd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

**Ed Cohen**

"Poesis, Autopoesis, Autopoethics," *Culture Machine* 3 (2001).

**Leela Fernandes**

"Rethinking 'Globalization': Gender and the Nation in India," *Feminist Locations: Global/Local/Theory/Practice in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Marianne de Koven (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001).

**Judith M. Gerson**

"In Between States: National Identity Practices among German Jewish Immigrants," *Political Psychology* 22 (2001): 179-98.

**Mary E. Hawkesworth**

*Gender, Globalization and Democratization*, eds. Rita Mae Kelly, Jane Bayes, Mary Hawkesworth and Brigitte Young (Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

"Democratization: Reflections on Gendered Dislocations in the Public Sphere," *Gender Globalization and Democratization*, eds. Rita Mae Kelly, Jane Bayes, Mary Hawkesworth and Brigitte Young (Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

**Nancy A. Hewitt**

*Southern Discomfort: Women's Activism in Tampa, Florida, 1880s-1920s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

**Phyllis Mack**

*In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Phyllis Mack and Omer Bartov (Berghahn Books, 2001).

**Leslie McCall**

*Complex Inequality: Gender, Class, and Race in the New Economy*. Perspectives on Gender series, ed. Myra Marxferree (New York: Routledge, 2001).

"Sources of Racial Wage Inequality in Metropolitan Labor Markets: Racial, Ethnic and Gender Differences," *American Sociological Review* 66.4 (2001): 520-542.

**Jasbir Kaur Puar**

"Global Circuits: Transnational Sexualities and Trinidad," *Signs*, special issue on Globalization and Gender (Summer 2001).

"Transnational Configurations of Desire: The Nation and its White Closets," *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness*, eds. Matt Wray et. al., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

**Joanna Regulska**

"Vergeschlecht Hichte Intergration in Europa: Neue Formen der Exklusion," *Berliner Journal Fur Soziologie*, 11.1 (2001): 51-62.

**Louisa Schein**

"Urbanity, Cosmopolitanism, Consumption," *Ethnographies of the Urban: China in the 1990s*, eds. Nancy Chen, Connie Clark, Suzanne Gottschang, Lyn Jeffrey (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).



### *From the New Director of Graduate Studies*

With the advent of 2002, the Graduate Program in Women's and Gender Studies will enter a new phase. Thanks to the wonderful work of Jennifer Jones, Harriet Davidson, Barbara Balliet and Joanna Regulska, our new Doctoral Program is scheduled for final approval in February. We are currently in the process of recruiting the first class of Ph.D. students (application deadline, January 15), who will matriculate next fall.

Throughout the planning stages for the Doctoral Program, my colleagues in Women's and Gender Studies have been concerned to insure that this new program simultaneously enriches and strengthens our existing M.A. Program. Toward that end, we hope to recreate in our graduate program one of the hallmarks of feminism: an unswerving recognition of the interconnections of theory and practice. We hope that all of our graduate students will develop a rich appreciation for feminist activism, both because of the pressing need for continuing, progressive social transformation and because of the complex theoretical issues that feminist praxis raises. We also hope that all of our graduate students will value the multiple ways that feminist theory has opened our imaginations to the possibilities for inclusive democratic practices, and expanded our understandings of strategies for realizing social change. Our new curriculum, as well as diverse co-curricular offerings are designed to explore the intricate connections between feminist theory and practice, and to illuminate the centrality of intersectionality to understandings of women's lives and prospects in a world in which the local and the global are thoroughly intermeshed. I look forward to working with students and faculty to help realize the feminist vision as well as the academic goals of our Graduate Program.

During spring 2002, faculty and students are invited to begin discussing such issues through our continuing "brown bag" luncheon series, which will feature research briefings by several of our esteemed colleagues. Professors Ethel Brooks, Jennifer Morgan, and Patricia Williams, the 2002 Senator Wynona Lipman Chair in Women's Political Leadership at the Center for American Women and Politics, will be our featured luncheon speakers. Stay tuned to your email for posting of exact times, dates, and places.

I hope to welcome you to each of these terrific events.

Mary Hawkesworth




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### **Women's and Gender Studies Welcomes 3 New Affiliated Faculty**

Dr. Laura M. Ahearn joined the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers in 2001. Her areas of interest include linguistic and cultural anthropology, and gender studies.

Kayo Denda is the Women's and Gender Studies librarian at the Mabel Smith Douglass Library. She has been with us since Fall 2000.

Dr. Lawrence M. La Fountain-Stokes is Assistant Professor in the Departments of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Caribbean Studies and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. His areas of interest are Theatre and Performance, Cultural Studies, Gender, Feminism and Queer Theory.

## ***LIFE BEYOND THE WOMEN'S STUDIES M.A.: TWO RECENT GRADUATES SHARE THEIR WORK EXPERIENCES***

### ***Feminism and human rights***

Shana Fried

(Degree: January 2001)

Immediately after completing course work for an M.A. in Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers in June 2000, I started working as Administrative Director at the Committee for United Nations Delegations, Inc., a nonprofit organization located within the General Assembly building of the U.N. headquarters in New York. My job here is to direct an office of volunteers and staff in the programs they design, to serve as a helpful resource for foreign delegates trying to adjust to New York and finding their way through the U.N. system. My other responsibilities include working with instructors to develop courses in conversational and business English, and serving as fundraising and special events coordinator.

In addition, I recently took up a new position, that of fundraising assistant at the Center for Peace and Human Security. Here, I will be organizing Special Events (including an upcoming media festival on human rights and a benefit concert for development projects in Burma); as well as handling their government grant writing. In both my jobs I have been able to sustain my interest in international human rights, developed during my course work at the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Rutgers.

The transition from academics to employment has been both challenging and meaningful to me. While on the one hand the lack of financial aid made it imperative for me to find work before completing my M.A. thesis, on the other hand, the fact that my work at the UN has been an extension of my academic interests, made the transition much more interesting. Although my thesis was on feminist publishing, I spent much of my coursework focusing on human rights and activism. For instance, the course I took with Professor Joanna Regulska on "Women and Social Change" provided great insight into local

and global feminist activism and the significant impact of local governments on global issues.

It was Professor Regulska again, who helped me and a couple of other M.A. students, raise funds to gain valuable fieldwork experience in Cuba. We worked for three weeks with MADRE, a non-government organization focusing on human rights issues involving Women and Children in Cuba, and the effects of the US embargo on them. I think it was at this point that I became more focused on international work.

Being a part of the Women's Studies Program also gave me the opportunity, while working for the U.N., to teach a night class "Women, Culture and Society." As most teachers for this course, I required my students to design a feminist action project as part of their final grade. We had a lot of fun together, organizing protests, raising funds for various causes, and watching the impact of their hard work. My students still write to me about their thoughts and ideas. I enjoy keeping in contact with them and helping them with new endeavors.

Even though I studied literature for a long time, and my thesis was focused on feminist publishing, I consider this too as an important kind of activism. In fact, much of my thesis was focused on the idea of literature as activism, and of the way in which publishing challenging works by women is an integral part in the move for social change. The publishers I interviewed certainly felt that their work was activism.

I have always been an activist. I suppose recently I have become more focused on international and global issues on account of my work with the U.N. and the Center for Peace and Human Security ... but this seems to me to be a logical extension of where I started.



## *Sweatshop workers*

Anastasia Ordonez

(Degree: October 2000)

I am currently employed as a writer and content developer for a website called [www.behindthelabel.org](http://www.behindthelabel.org), a multimedia news magazine and on-line activist community that covers the untold stories of the global clothing industry. The site exposes international labor struggles by using video, text, and photographs to tell the hidden stories of millions of workers around the world who make our clothes, the people who care how their clothes are made, and the multinational corporations that control production. I became involved in this project as I felt that it gave me an opportunity to learn more about, and subsequently address in a public forum, the issues affecting garment workers in sweatshops: long work hours for little or no pay, physical abuse, sexual harassment, lack of healthcare, no freedom of association; no sick days; etc. Prior to working on this project, I worked as research consultant for the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), a UN agency with its headquarters in the Dominican Republic.

I always try to maintain a gender perspective in all the work I do. In the case of sweatshop garment workers, over 85 percent of the people employed worldwide are women. Hence, I felt that working on this project would allow me to put to work the feminist theory I learned while completing my M.A. in Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers. It is important for people

who are learning about sweatshops, to understand that many of the labor rights violations that women here experience, such as sexual harassment, forced pregnancy tests, and constant undervaluing of their work, are directly related to a more endemic gender discrimination in our society.

A story I covered recently involved a group of nineteen female garment workers in Los Angeles who launched a PR campaign and lawsuit against the popular retailer Forever 21. Most of these women, like their citywide co-workers, are of either Latino or East Asian heritage. Their complaints included withholding of wages, and non-payment of overtime salaries, among others. According to California Law, retailers are not directly responsible for the working conditions of factories (the vendors are). However, these women, through their protest, are hoping that their lawsuit will change all that.

What is really interesting about this story is that the workers initiated the whole campaign. While they received some guidance from a local non-profit labor rights organization and legal center, these women were the driving force behind the campaign. They claim it has been a truly empowering experience for them, and has given them the confidence to continue their fight for equal rights.

Forming now...

### **Rutgers Women's and Gender Studies Graduate Alumni Committee**

**The new Rutgers Women's and Gender Studies Graduate Alumni Committee aims to assist graduate students with job and/or internship placements, questions about their graduate studies, and to provide general support.**

Plans for an upcoming get-to-know-each-other are in the works!

If you are interested in joining, or if you have any ideas that you would like to share, please contact Anastasia Ordonez ([anastasia@gadhra.com](mailto:anastasia@gadhra.com)), Priti Darooka ([artpriti@aol.com](mailto:artpriti@aol.com)), or Shana Fried ([shanafried@hotmail.com](mailto:shanafried@hotmail.com)).

# **THE NEW PH.D. IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES AT RUTGERS**

## **ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2002**

The Ph.D. in Women's and Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary program which provides advanced and systemic course work investigating gender in society and culture in historical and contemporary contexts from multi-cultural and multi-racial perspectives. The new Ph.D. is built around three innovative Areas of Concentration:

- ***Agency, Subjectivity and Social Change***
- ***Technologies and Poetics of Gender and Sexuality***
- ***Gendered Borders/Changing Boundaries***

These concentrations are designed to stimulate original scholarship by addressing new research questions. Each concentration is introduced through a pro-seminar that presents key questions, theories, methodologies, and empirical case studies.

Women's and Gender Studies Department  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Ruth Dill Johnson Crockett Building  
162, Ryders Lane  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8555

The Ph.D. program in Women's and Gender Studies welcomes diverse applicants including international students, returning students, and recent graduates of bachelor's degree programs. Applications are considered for fall admissions only.

### **Application Deadline January 15, 2002**

Application forms are available at:  
Office of Graduate and Professional Admissions  
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey  
P.O. Box 5053  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903  
Or online at  
<http://gradstudy.rutgers.edu/3ways.html>

To find out more about the program/request a brochure, call the Graduate Secretary Kyla Zambrio at (732) 932-9331.

Please visit our website at:

[womens-studies.rutgers.edu](http://womens-studies.rutgers.edu)