

Feminist Trajectories

Department of Women's and Gender Studies
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues,

Let me begin with the good news! The news we had been anticipating all year was confirmed: The Board of Governors approved our recommendation that Marisa Fuentes be promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Congratulations Marisa! And though she has been with us for two years now, and such a good citizen she is no stranger, I do also want to note that as of July 1 Maya Mik-dashi ceased being a Mellon Fellow and became a Tenure Track, Core Faculty member with a joint appointment with Middle Eastern Studies. Welcome Maya! Last year was a remarkable year for celebrations, as we received awards at the National, Regional, and University level. It is my privilege to acknowledge once more our faculty and staff awardees: Kayo Denda our WGS Librarian was awarded the Women and Gender Studies Section Career Achievement award from the Association of College and Research Libraries for her significant long-standing contributions over the course of a career; Jasbir Puar and

Dr. Abena P.A. Busia



Brittney Cooper traveled to Ontario Canada to receive their awards from the Northeast Association of Graduate Schools for Doctoral level and Master's level teaching respectively; Carlos Decena and Monique Gregory won The Graduate School New Brunswick Awards for Teaching and for Staff Excellence respectively; and finally, Mary Hawkesworth, Monique Gregory and Suzy Kiefer received from President Barchi the Ernest E. McMahon Award for their work establishing our successful online certificate in Women's Global Health Leadership.

With much anticipation and needed help, we welcome our new Program Coordinator Feronda Long Orders, who will be joining the department this coming academic year. She comes from the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (formerly known as Cook College) with many years of experience. She will primary work with our entrepreneurial programs, social media, website and collaborative partnerships.

As I embark on my last year as Chair,



Inside this issue

Grad Program Updates	3
Undergraduate Updates	5
Douglass Library News	6
Department Highlights.....	7
Faculty Highlights.....	17
Graduate Achievements.....	20
Undergraduate Achievements	22

Special points of interest

- From Exclusion to Inclusion: 250 Years of Women at Rutgers
- Dr. Deborah Gray White appointed to Chair Committee on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History
- President Obama Appoints Dr. Ethel Brooks to U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council
- Mayor Bill DeBlasio appoints Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan Commissioner for the Commission on Gender Equity
- Remembering Alison Bernstein

Letter from the Chair (cont.)

I look forward to seeing through some of the many things we agreed upon at our retreat at the beginning of the calendar year. A big thank you to our junior faculty -

Maya, Brittney, Kyla and Sylvia, working under Marisa's able direction - for giving us such an inspiring start by sharing their sense of hope and possibility for our collective future. Monique on behalf of the staff gave us a clear eyed and sober vision on our need to organize and conduct ourselves to get the work done. In addition to the organizational challenges we faced to sustain our successful outreach and entrepreneurial programs, the university shift to RCM has placed additional responsibilities on us that we all need to learn to shoulder. Our open and frank discussions, ably facilitated by Beverly Guy-Sheftal also laid bare some of the intellectual pedagogical challenges we face to meet the goals we have set ourselves.

Thank you one and all for the integrity of your participation. That we are on the right path was I believe affirmed by the robust conversation we had with Executive Dean Peter March at our April

faculty meeting; we were able to hold him almost an hour longer than planned debating ideas with us, another remarkable thing! I look forward to our continuing discussions to work out and then implement the many tasks we have committed ourselves to in the coming year. What name will we be known by in the future? What should be the focus of our collective work and programming over the next few years? How should we reshape our Programs, and how transform our pedagogies in this our digital age? It is appropriate that we will celebrate in March the 15th year of our graduate program and hopefully bring to campus some of our alumnae to celebrate the path we have trod. What we hope for in the future will take preparation and forward planning, and I trust that we can continue to count on each other to work together to sustain the department we have built and inherited and make it even more illustrious for the coming generations.

Hopefully after an enjoyable summer we can all look forward to another fine year in WGS!

Academic Freedom

WGS STATEMENT ON ACADEMIA AND FREE SPEECH RIGHTS

It is inherent to the discipline of Women's Studies to deal with complex subjects through theoretical lenses, which question conventional knowledge production. This department, one of the most distinguished departments of WGS in the country, has a highly visible faculty of national and international reputation invited to speak in various fora on sometimes highly controversial subjects. Such faculty members, as scholars, have not only a right, but also an obligation to produce and disseminate knowledge within and beyond the academy. Moreover, as private citizens, our faculty continue to enjoy the same freedoms of speech and expression as any private citizen and in accordance with university policy the department supports their protection from institutional discipline in the exercise of these academic and free speech rights.

NEWS FROM THE GRADUATE DIRECTOR

Dr. Jasbir Puar



The Graduate Program in Women's and Gender Studies continues to deepen its commitments to community formation and excellence in graduate education. We began the academic year with a Demystifying Academia workshop on "Preparing for the Academic Job Market" co-sponsored with the Institute for Research on Women, including panelists Nicole Fleetwood, Director of the IRW, and WGS graduate student Stina Soderling. The fall Convivial Conversation featured the spectacular research of Nafisa Tanjeem on "Mapping transnational activism in social media: The case of Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh" with Professor Mary Hawkesworth as the respondent. In the Spring, our Convivial Conversation highlighted Jenna Brager's work on *The Selfie and the Other: Reading Viral Images and Media Panics in Europe's Refugee Crisis* with comment from Professor Judith Gerson.

Our Spring 15 Demystifying Academia workshop featured Marisa Allison and Gwendolyn Beetham on *Women's and Gender Studies: Between Exploitation and Resistance*. Allison and Beetham presented findings from a 2014 survey of WGS Directors and Chairs from around the country that examined labor practices in WGS programs/departments. They discussed advocacy work within the field aimed at examining how Women's Studies faculty and feminists working in a variety of disciplines to reconcile their feminist labor politics with the need to grow their programs, departments, and the discipline under the edicts of the corporate university.

As a program, we continue to reap awards and recognition at the university, regional, and national level. Snezana Otasevic won both a Summer Mellon Grant, an especial coup for our department as this was the first round WGS was allowed to compete. She also won an honorable mention for the GSNB Dissertation Teaching Award. Rosemary Ndubuizu won a Ford Dissertation Fellowship which will enable her to finish her dissertation on housing reform in Washington D.C. and its specific impact on Black women.

Professor Carlos Decena was awarded the Undergraduate Teaching Award from the Graduate School. And our wonderful Monique Gregory was awarded a Staff Excellence award for her superb work for the WGS Graduate Program and our department in general.

Last but not least, Professors Brittney Cooper and I won the Northeast Association of Graduate Schools Teaching Awards this year; Professor Cooper for teaching at the Masters level and I at the Doctorate level. It was already an honor to be chosen to represent Rutgers University by the Graduate School and a first ever for two of Rutgers' nominees to be chosen for this regional award. Professor Cooper and I traveled to Waterloo, Canada on April 15th to attend the award ceremony.

We look forward to welcoming four doctoral students in the fall: Jennifer Vilchez, Tyler Carson, Sarah Orsak, and Itzel Corona Aguilar.

NEWS FROM THE MA PROGRAM

Dr. Julie Rajan

The WGS Masters Program is pleased to announce the graduation of four of our students in 2015/16: Intimaa al-Sdudi, Chelsea Hill, Erica Reed, Michelle St. George and Carolyn Washington (May 2016). Each student completed a Practicum with an organization that complemented her own research interests.



Intimaa al-Sdudi completed a practicum with the grassroots group known as *SIGI (Sisterhood is Global Institute)*. SIGI was established in Jordan in 1998 as a registered independent and non-profit organization by a group of Jordanian human rights activists, lawyers, and jurists who believe that women's issues are the issues of both the local and the international communities. Through SIGI, Intimaa was able to interact with and assist Syrian women and girl-child refugees residing in refugee camps in Jordan. For her Practicum Report, Intimaa explored the multi-layered range of violence that Syrian females are currently experiencing as refugees in Jordan. Intimaa has since returned to her home in Gaza, Palestine, where she is planning to continue work in line with her interest in human rights.

Chelsea Hill completed her Practicum with the *Center for American Women and politics (CAWP)*. She assisted with CAWPS's contextual research into the ways in which women in Congress legislated on issues commonly believed to be 'women's issues' (i.e., abortion, sexual assault, human trafficking). Chelsea's Practicum Report assessed whether or not Congresswomen felt a responsibility to legislate as women on behalf of women and how intersectionality helped to explain their behavior. Chelsea is now continuing her work with CAWP as a research assistant on a project called Who Talks. The Project is a partnership between CAWP, Gender Avenger, and the Women's Media Center that measures the gender disparity among political commentators in morning and prime time election coverage. The aim is that by calling attention to it the networks will recognize and diagnose the problem.

Erica Reed completed her Practicum with *Keeping Babies Safe*, an organization focused on distributing up-to-date baby sleep product information, educational materials and recalls, as well as raising funds to donate safe cribs to families in need. For her Practicum Report, Erica used the knowledge she gained during the Practicum to reassess conceptions of motherhood within patriarchal frameworks that limit maternal agency by enfranchising a "good mother/bad mother"

dualism. That dichotomy, she argues, limits women's ability to mother autonomously and instead forces women to express their maternal agency guided by preset internal and external guilt tactics. Erica observes that 'mother-dualism' is a means of cataloging and controlling women's behavior as mothers to meet social and political standards of "goodness."

Michelle St. George completed a practicum entitled, *"Positive body Image Interventions for Adolescent Girls."* Michelle examines three positive body image interventions for girls in the United States and is supported with new evidence from a focus group discussion. Children are constantly bombarded with messages from the media, society, their peers, as well as countless other sources that tell them they are not good enough, smart enough, attractive enough, or thin enough. As a result, more and more children are putting their health and lives at risk by engaging in dangerous behaviors to achieve what they think are the ideal physique. The interventions that this study examines can be applied at the family level, individual level and cultural level. Two of the interventions focus on books; one is a self-help book, *Beautiful You* (2010), while the other is targeted for a family approach, *The Body Image Survival Guide for Parents* (2013). The third intervention this thesis examines is a New York City public health campaign called *The New York City Girls Project*. The support of the focus group included insight, views and real life experiences from current undergraduate females on the topic of positive body image interventions. While all three interventions have advantages and disadvantages and with conclusions from the focus group, this thesis argues that a multifaceted approach is needed when promoting a positive body image to young females.

Carolyn Washington's Practicum focused on the NATO Score Card for United Nations Security Council (UNSCR) 1325, dealing with women, peace, and security. The Score Card serves as a tool for NATO member states and partner-nations in assessing the degree and extent of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 within their armed forces. The scorecard is important in that, first of all, it allows NATO to assess the interoperability of its member states, which is important for cohesion in future operations. Second, Carolyn observes, it is equally important for individual nations to gauge their progress and learn from others within NATO. For her Practicum Report, Carolyn addressed what it would take for a new policy to truly transform an organization using the implementation of UNSCR 1325 as a case study. This coming fall 2016, Carolyn will continue this important work at SUNY Buffalo, where she will complete a PhD in Global Gender Studies.

NEWS FROM THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Dr. Nikol Alexander-Floyd



The undergraduate program has continued to experience consistent growth and development in the past year. Rutgers WGS provides a range of options, including not only a WGS major, but four minors: WGS, Social Justice, and Critical Sexualities. At last count, we had a total of 110 majors and 283 minors. The department is especially continuing to recruit and develop curricular offerings for our newest minor, Gender and Media, which we share with the School of Communication and Information. We have also had continued success with our online women and art courses. These courses are offered in a collaborative effort between WGS and the Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities (formerly the Institute for Women and Art), which continue to be popular choices, and have added additional sections of our regular offerings. Plans are underway to create a certificate in women and art, given the demand for these courses.

In addition to the expansion in our women and art constellation of courses and growth in majors and minors, we have also seen exponential development in our Health Certificate program offered in conjunction with the National Nurses United Union. The brainchild of Distinguished Professor Mary H. Hawkesworth, this online health certificate offers courses such as Global Women's Health Movements, Impacts of Economic Inequality on Women's Health and Debt, Crisis, and Women's Health. Students at Rutgers have especially benefitted. Students across majors have signed up for our courses, but especially those in psychology and public health, political science and nursing. Professor Hawkesworth, Monique Gregory, our department administrator, and Suzy Kiefer, our Administrative Assistant, our team tasked with directly overseeing the NNU Health certificate, received a well-deserved award for their excellence in administration from the university.

We have also worked to put in place procedures that would assist in the efficient functioning of advising and other day-to-day operations. We have expanded advising, especially during peak periods, allowing students to sign-up online for meetings in increments that fit their schedules. We have also developed forms for evaluating course substitutions and independent studies, clarifying requirements and further streamlining the processing of requests.

Finally, in addition to curricular development and ongoing recruitment, we worked to enhance instruction by providing our first professional development workshop for instructors. The session was held in person, but also provided webcasting for those who needed to attend remotely. We provided a list of "do's and don'ts" to provide a handy reference for guidelines and pointers. And, the interactive workshop provided opportunity for feedback and brainstorming about pedagogical approaches and instructional opportunities.

NEWS FROM DOUGLASS LIBRARY

Kayo Denda, Women's and Gender Studies Librarian and head of the Margery Somers Foster Center at the Mabel Smith Douglass Library won the *Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Women and Gender Studies Section (WGSS) Career Achievement Award*.

The Department is extremely proud of Kayo's national recognition for all her efforts and exceptional work in the field of Women's and Gender Studies.

According to Krisellen Maloney, the University Librarian and Vice President for Information Services, "The ACRL is recognizing what students and faculty have known for years – Kayo is an innovative librarian who steadfastly supports academic research at Rutgers University through instruction, reference assistance, programming, and collaboration. I am delighted to join the ACRL in celebrating her accomplishments."

Here is the Press release from the ACRL Women and Gender Studies Section announcing the award:

CHICAGO - Kayo Denda, head of the Margery Somers Foster Center and Women's Studies librarian at Rutgers University, has been selected as the 2016 winner of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Women and Gender Studies Section (WGSS) Career Achievement Award. The award honors significant long-standing contributions to women's studies in the field of librarianship over the course of a career. A plaque will be presented to Denda at a WGSS event during the ALA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida.

"Throughout her career, Kayo has been involved

in planning and implementing academic and research programs in women & gender studies that are exemplary," said award Chair Diane Fulkerson, director of information commons/library services at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee. "She is an active member in WGSS and IFLA, and is a role model for not only women and gender studies librarians, but for all academic librarians."

Denda is a past chair of WGSS. She led the team of activists and librarians that created the Center for Women's Global Leadership Poster Collection, which won the 2012 ACRL WGSS Significant Achievement Award. Denda currently serves as liaison to Rutgers University's Department of Women's and Gender Studies, the Institute for Women's Leadership, the Institute for Research on Women, the Center for Women's Global Leadership and the Douglass Residential College.

Denda received her master's degrees in Women's and Gender Studies and Library and Information Science from Rutgers University.

Congratulations Kayo Denda!



From Exclusion to Inclusion: 250 Years of Women at Rutgers

In conjunction with Rutgers' celebration of its 250th Anniversary, the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and the Institute for Women's Leadership hosted a day-long symposium on March 8 that explored women's diverse contributions to the institution, their long struggle for inclusion, and the effects of intersectional scholarship on contemporary understandings of the world.

Growing out of a directed research course in fall 2015, team taught by Kayo Denda, Mary Hawkesworth, and Fernanda Perrone, the first panel, *"Excavating the Archive: Unearthing Diverse Women's Contributions to Rutgers,"* featured original archival research conducted by five Rutgers students. Meaghan Moody, who is completing her Master's in Library and Information Sciences, traced the vital roles played by women since the 18th century—providing homes for the undergraduate students during the century before the first residence hall was constructed, donating land, estates, libraries, and considerable sums to the College, and participating in theatrical performances and social activities. Four WGS double majors contributed their research findings to the panel. Mae-gan Kae Sunaz examined debates about coeducation in 1881, 1891, 1911, and 1969—four moments at which the Rutgers Board rejected proposals to admit women to the College—and contrasted dire predictions about the effects of coeducation with the actual experiences of the first women admitted to Rutgers College in 1972. Autumn Oberkehr investigated the rise and fall of home economics as an academic field championed

by feminists in the late 19th and early 20th century and developed almost exclusively by women scholars until the department's abolition in the early 1980s. Kelly Hannavi analyzed the thoroughly gendered and raced visual representations of women in Rutgers television and print material from World War II through the 1980s. Meryem Uzumcu explored LGBTQ activism on campus from the founding of the Student Homophile League in 1969 through the creation of the Office of Diverse Community Affairs and

Social Justice Education in the early 1990s. To frame the student research presentations, Fernanda Perrone, Rutgers Special Collections and University Archives, presented a brief overview of the nature and content of historical archives, which pose daunting challenges for those who wish to excavate the experiences of historically disadvantaged groups. Kayo Denda, WGS Librarian and Head of the Margery




Dr. Mary Hawkesworth

Foster Somers Center, dispelled any facile notions about the meaning of inclusion by calling attention to the diverse experiences of Ruby Manikam from Chennai (Madras), India, who was the first international student to graduate from the New Jersey College for Women in 1926, Jessie Gladys Fiske who worked her way up from the position of seed analyst to Chair of the Botany Department during her more than fifty years at Rutgers, and the founders of LABRYS, Douglass students in the 1970s who created an alternative newspaper to expand the coverage of women's issues on campus.

From Exclusion to Inclusion: 250 Years of Women at Rutgers (cont.)

The second panel, “Transformative Scholarship: Remaking the Known World,” foregrounded the path breaking scholarship of WGS faculty at Rutgers, who have helped to forge feminist, critical race, and postcolonial paradigms that have systematically challenged traditional research in humanities and social science disciplines. Cheryl Wall, the Zora Neale Hurston Board of Governors Professor in the Department of English and member of the WGS Graduate Faculty demonstrated the profound influence of African American experience on the understanding of the American literary canon, the principle of academic excellence in higher education, and the meaning of an inclusive university. Professor Judith Gerson, jointly appointed in Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies showed how key insights of intersectional analysis raised a host of new questions for scholars interested in German Studies, Jewish Studies, immigration studies, and the conceptualization of diasporic studies. Susan Carroll, Professor of Political Science and Senior Scholar at the Center for American Women and Politics, discussed how the study of women's political participation debunked long-received views in political science about the role of education is fostering political inclusion, the nature of gate-keeping in political parties, the manifold barriers to women's leadership, and the continuing role of gender in political campaigns. Professor Nicole Fleetwood, Department of American Studies, and Director of the Institute for Research on Women, explored the domain of prison art in the contemporary United States, showing how critical race and feminist analytical frames profoundly transformed knowledge about the prison system, the experience of imprisonment, and the

complex relationships among prisoners and their families. Professor Marisa Fuentes, jointly appointed to the Departments of History and Women's and Gender Studies closed the symposium by returning to the question of how to document the experiences of those who have historically been absent or silenced in the archive. Drawing upon her archival research in Britain, the Caribbean, and North America, Professor Fuentes demonstrated how both historical and interdisciplinary methods could illuminate how colonial records themselves testify to the dispossession, dehumanization, and physical abuse of enslaved women.



From Exclusion to Inclusion: 250 Years of Women at Rutgers

March 8, 2016, 1–6 p.m.
Mabel Smith Douglass Room, Mabel Smith Douglass Library
Join us as we delve into the history of women at Rutgers.

1–3 p.m.
Excavating the Archive: Unearthing Diverse Women's Contributions to Rutgers

- Kaye Doxide (Margery Foster Searns Center, WGS)
- Kelly Homan (History and Women's & Gender Studies)
- Amanda Pomeroy (Special Collections and University Archives, WGS)
- Meghan Woods (Library and Information Sciences)
- Arianne Oberholzer (Journalism and Media Studies)
- Morgan Kay Searns (Political Science, Women's & Gender Studies)
- Margery Searns (Planning & Public Policy, Women's & Gender Studies, Middle East Studies)

3:15–5 p.m.
Transformative Scholarship: Remaking the Known World

- Susan Carroll (Political Science and English Institute)
- Nicole Fleetwood (American Studies and Institute for Research on Women)
- Marisa Fuentes (History and Women's & Gender Studies)
- Judith Gerson (Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies)
- Cheryl Wall (Zora Neale Hurston Board of Governors Professor, English)

5–6 p.m.
Reception

The event is co-sponsored by the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, the Institute for Women's Leadership, the Margery Foster Searns Center, Rutgers University Libraries, the Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities, and the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education.

President Obama Appoints Dr. Ethel Brooks to U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council

In January, 2016, President Obama announced my appointment to the US Holocaust Memorial Council and on May 6, at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert McDonald swore me in as a Member of the Council. I will serve on the Council and its Academic Committee for a three-year term.

Senator Benjamin Cardin of Maryland, who had recommended my appointment, stated, upon my appointment in January:

“Seven decades after the Nazis destroyed the so-called ‘Gypsy Family Camp,’ killing 2,879 Romani men, women and children in a single night, I welcome the President’s decision to appoint Dr. Ethel Brooks as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Council. The Holocaust Memorial Museum is our country’s pre-eminent federal body entrusted with preserving the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and advancing knowledge, teaching and research related all aspects of the Holocaust. I am confident that Dr. Brooks will contribute greatly to those goals. Much more must be done to teach about the genocide of Roma and to combat pernicious bigotry and discrimination against Roma.

Shockingly, theories of race and biology continue to be used to rationalize discrimination against Roma. I am deeply disturbed by discourse in the Slovak Government seeking to explain away Slovakia’s segregated schools by advancing absolutely offensive and unfounded theories of race and biology. I urge the Slovak Government to ensure that Roma are not the subject of medical studies without full and informed consent, that the privacy rights of Roma are fully respected, and that the sterilization without informed consent of Romani women be acknowledged and redressed. Finally, I urge the authori-



ties in Bratislava to end the practice of some municipalities of building walls to separate Roma from other citizens. These walls have no place in modern Europe.”¹

During my term on the Council, I will work to promote the teaching, scholarship and commemoration of the genocide of Roma and Sinti in Europe and to fight the continued racism –including segregation, forced sterilization, evictions and deportations, police harassment and violence—that Roma face across Europe and beyond. I hope to heighten the visibility of the situation of Roma in the United States and Europe, and to contribute to the struggle for Roma rights and equality, against the racism and discrimination that Roma face in all aspects of life, and from all sides, across Europe and beyond.

Here’s the press release:

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) today congratulated Metuchen, New Jersey resident and Rutgers University professor Dr. Ethel Brooks on her appointment to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. Menendez recommended Dr. Brooks for this appointment in the 113th Congress.

“I am pleased Dr. Brooks will be joining the esteemed Holocaust Memorial Council to help educate society so we *never again* allow the atrocities of the past to be repeated,” said Sen. Menendez. “Dr. Brooks is an intelligent, principled educator who will help ensure the Holocaust Museum continues to teach vital lessons about the abhorrence of ethnic and racial intolerance. As the numbers of Holocaust survivors dwindle, the museum’s mission that we *never forget* becomes all the more important.”

See “Cardin Welcomes Nomination of Dr. Ethel Brooks to the United States Memorial Council.” January 12, 2016. Available from: <https://www.cardin.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/cardin-welcomes-nomination-of-dr-ethel-brooks-to-us-holocaust-memorial-council>

Dr. Deborah Gray White to Chair Committee on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History



Dr. Deborah Gray White, Board of Governors Distinguished Professor of History and Women's and Gender Studies Core Faculty member, was recently selected to chair a new committee that will study the role of enslaved and

disenfranchised populations in Rutgers-New Brunswick's history.

Here is the official letter from the university:

Monday, November 23, 2015

To Members of the Rutgers-New Brunswick Community,

Recently, I informed our community of the formation of a new committee to study the role of enslaved and disenfranchised populations in Rutgers University-New Brunswick's history. The committee will be charged with examining the role that the people of these disadvantaged groups played in the founding and development of Rutgers-New Brunswick, and with making recommendations to me on how the University can best acknowledge and commemorate their influence on our history. The committee will be composed of faculty, staff, and student members. I am enormously pleased to announce that Dr. Deborah Gray White, Board of Governors Distinguished Professor of History, has agreed to chair the committee.

Professor White, an American historian who has been at Rutgers-New Brunswick since 1984, specializes in African American and American Women's

history, particularly with regard to issues of identity and the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Dr. White's many books include the path-breaking *Aren't I A Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*, originally published in 1985 and now in its second edition; *Let My People Go: African-Americans 1804-1860* and *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994*. She co-authored *Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans*, which is in its second edition. Dr. White is also a Woodrow Wilson International Scholar and a John Simon Guggenheim Fellow.

During her 31 years at Rutgers-New Brunswick, Dr. White has not only been a scholar and teacher, but she also co-directed of *The Black Atlantic: Race, Nation and Gender* project at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis and chaired the School of Arts and Sciences' Department of History.

I can think of no one more qualified to lead this meaningful examination of our history than Professor White. Her leadership and wisdom has for more than three decades been an immense resource to the University and those qualities have never been more essential for us than they are now. With that in mind, please join me in congratulating and supporting Dr. White.

Richard L. Edwards, Ph.D.
Chancellor, Rutgers—New Brunswick

Rutgers Selected by State Department to host Civic Leadership and Business Entrepreneurialship Institutes for President Obama Young African Leaders Initiative



For the third consecutive year, the U.S. Department of State has selected Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey as a partner with the **Mandela Washington Fellowship**, the flagship program of President Barack Obama's

Young African Leaders Initiative. The University is hosting 50 young leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa to participate in a six-week leadership training institute this summer at Rutgers. Rutgers is 1 of 40 schools, and the only one in New Jersey, to be selected for the fellowship that will bring 1,000 emerging African leaders to the U.S. this year.

Dr. Abena P.A. Busia, Chair of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and Dr. Ousseina Alidou, Professor in the Department of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Literatures, are the two Senior Institute Faculty for the Civic Leadership Institute directed by Professor Ron Quinoy of the School of Social Work.

Dr. Busia said, "This particular fellowship helps strengthen these leaders and the organizations they represent." "They are from countries that are severely challenged in terms of resources other than human resources."

Dr. Alidou emphasizes the young leaders' humble upbringings and praised their valiant and compas-

sionate decisions to give back and help cultivate growth in their native communities. She indicated the majority of these leaders come from underprivileged communities, but they had the opportunity to have access to some education. They maximized this to help their communities and chose not to run away from them. Dr. Alidou believes that the story of Aarthi Burtony, a past Mandela Washington fellow from the island nation of Mauritius who participated in Rutgers' Civic Leadership Institute, is the prime example of the program's fundamental objective. (Burtony) lost her eyesight at a sudden stage of her life. Her leadership is in trying to help young people who are challenged with a specific disability. "She tells them that their disability is not the end of their ability in life."

Dr. Busia indicates the issues encountered in the homes of these African leaders, and in all of Sub-Saharan Africa, are not that different from the ones present throughout America and the globe, all that varies is the magnitude and manifestation of the problems. Also Rutgers' commitment to the transnational initiative illustrates the University's standing as a global academic leader. Putting together the human capital from these African countries with the resources that the University has is a wonderful way

for Rutgers' strengths to be recognized and to be brought to a use that reaches out to the world.



Mayor Bill DeBlasio Appoints Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan Commissioner for the Commission on Gender Equity

In June of 2015 Mayor Bill de Blasio established through an executive order New York City's Commission on Gender Equality. Radhika Balakrishnan, Professor in WGS and Faculty Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership was asked to join as a Commissioner. "Gender equality and equity have been the focus of my academic and activist life for over thirty years. I am honored to serve on a commission that will champion gender equity in public policy in the city that I love and call my home," said Radhika Balakrishnan in a press release. As a commissioner she has been working on a committee to establish criterion to integrate gender equity and equality into every city department. New York City also passed a law to make feminine hygiene products to be made available in public schools, prisons and shelters.

"I applaud the New York City Council for their unanimous vote to give women in public

schools, prisons and homeless shelters access to free feminine hygiene products. I am also excited to see the strong support from the de Blasio Administration and First Lady Chirlane McCray for the City Council's efforts to expand access to feminine hygiene products for all New Yorkers. The cost of these products are huge and put an undue burden on women for what is a natural bodily function. Lack of access to necessary products can interfere with something as basic as a young woman's ability to attend school, as well as be a serious source of discomfort, embarrassment and anxiety to women in

shelters and in prison. I am proud to be a member of the Commission of Gender Equity for New York City in a city that is taking the lead in bringing sound public policy to normalize feminine hygiene products as standard human needs – just like toilet paper," said Radhika Balakrishnan,

In addition to serving as Commissioner for New York City she was in October appointed as co-chair of the United Nations (UN) Civil Society Advisory Committee, (CSAC) which advises the United Nations Development Programme on policies and strategies. The CSAC currently functions as the main institutional mechanism for dialogue between civil society leaders and UNDP senior management. They provide independent perspectives and critical analyses on different aspects of UNDP's work, and strengthening of the civic engagement dimension of UNDP's policies and programmes, as well as in greater collaboration between UNDP and a broad range of civil society constituencies. In February at the Ministerial meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary

of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Balakrishnan addressed the meeting on behalf of civil society as the Co-Chair of CSAC, [You can watch the intervention 38.51](#) here.



Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan

Rutgers Digital Blackness Conference



On April 22-23, 2016, Professors Deborah Gray White (History, WGS), Melanye Price (Africana, Political Science), Brittney Cooper, (WGS, Africana) and Ph.D. candidate Kai-sha Esty (History) convened a historical two-day conference called “Digital Blackness.” Inspired by the explosion of critical work on Blackness and racial identity in the digital humanities and the proliferation of Black content creators in online spaces, this conference sought to provide a space to critically interrogate how Blackness is represented, aggregated, communicated and interrogated online. Scholars from across the United States and Great Britain joined us for two exciting days of conference sessions. The conference featured five plenary sessions that focused respectively on: Digital Black Studies, Representations of Black Women in Digital Media, Digital Black Feminisms, Digital Black Editorship, and Digital Activism. These plenaries were accompanied by 14 panel sessions that examined exciting topics like “Hashtag Politics: The Role of Twitter in Organizing Black Digital Culture,” “Wikipedia While Black: Representing Black Life in Popular Digital Spaces,” “Archives for Black Lives,” and “Afrofuturism, Technology and Hip Hop.”

Two featured events were Friday evening’s keynote address by Mara Brock Akil, the writer and director of several ground-breaking Black television sitcoms and dramas including *Girlfriends*, *The Game*, and *Being Mary Jane*. Akil has significantly shifted the representational frame through which Black women are viewed in television, and she spoke to the audience about the challenges and triumphs of trying to offer complex portraits of Black women to popular audiences. Wake Forest Professor Melissa Harris-Perry also acted as a virtual moderator for a plenary discussion entitled “In Her Own Image: Representations of Black Women in Digital Media.”

The conference keynote and plenary sessions were livestreamed on YouTube. And the #RUDigitalBlackness hashtag trended on Twitter throughout the conference in several major U.S. cities.

Many conference goers remarked on how excited and thankful they were to finally have space to think together with other scholars in the digital humanities about issues relevant to the study of Black lives both in the U.S. and abroad. Frequently scholarship in the digital humanities that is by and about people of color gets elided from the national scholarly conversation. But at Rutgers, scholars, librarians, archivists, graduate students, activists and interested members of the community came together for a series of rousing conversations about how Black life is being shaped by and shaping digital environs in the 21st century.

The conference also continues the work that the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies began in January 2014 with its one-day symposium on Feminist Digital Pedagogies. Our department is increasingly becoming a university space for scholars interested in the connections between critical studies of race and gender and digital humanities. The broad participation of both our faculty (as co-conveners) and our graduate students in the conference sessions adds another dimension to our departmental work in the field of digital studies.



**DIGITAL
BLACKNESS
CONFERENCE**
April 22-23, 2016

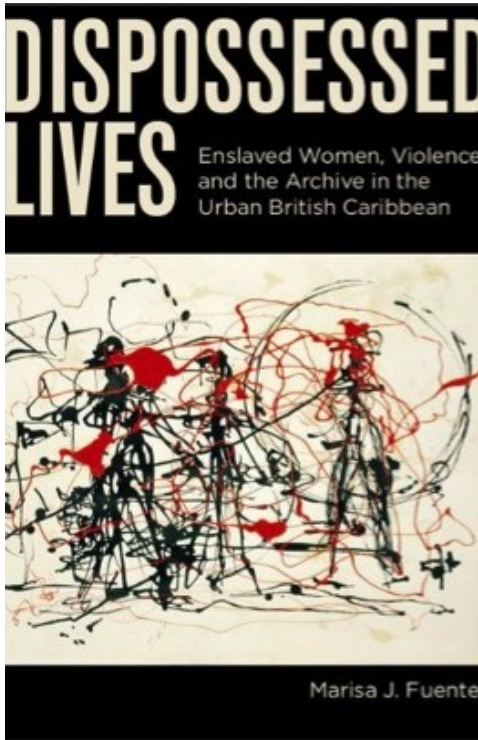
Free Registration: Visit our Website @
www.rutgersdigitalblackness.com
Like us on Facebook @ RUJDigitalBlackness

RUTGERS
250

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
MARA BROCK AKIL, TV writer and
producer, creator of shows *Girlfriends*
and *Being Mary Jane*

Featuring:
Melissa Harris-Perry, *MSNBC*
Mark Anthony Neal, *Duke University*
Meredith Evans, *Jimmy Carter Presidential*

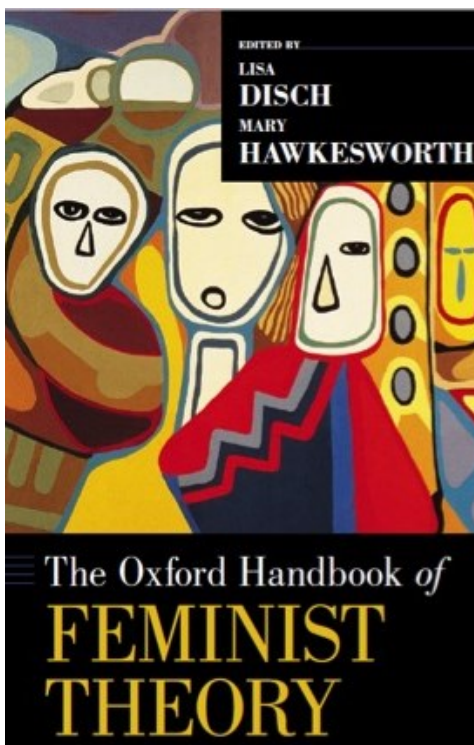
Faculty Highlights: Publications



Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive, Marisa J. Fuentes, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

Combining fragmentary sources with interdisciplinary methodologies that include black feminist theory and critical studies of history and slavery, *Dispossessed Lives* demonstrates how the construction of the archive marked enslaved women's bodies, in life and in death. By vividly recounting enslaved life through the experiences of individual women and illumi-

nating their conditions of confinement through the legal, sexual, and representational power wielded by slave owners, colonial authorities, and the archive, Fuentes challenges the way we write histories of vulnerable and often invisible subjects.

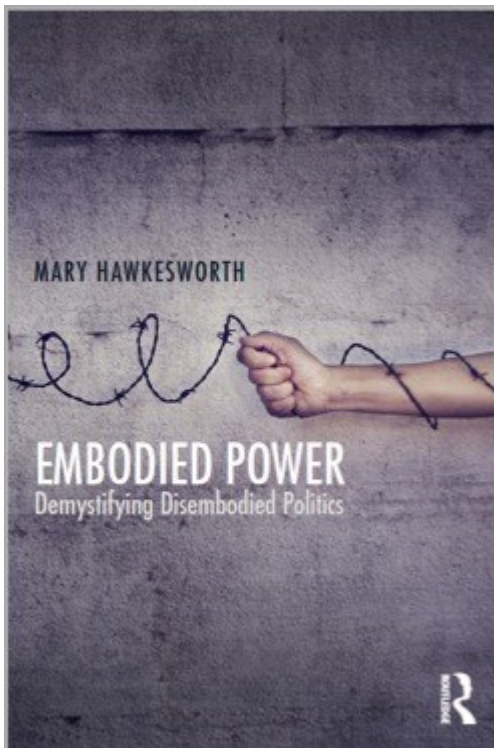


Gender and Power: Toward Equality and Democratic Governance, Mino Vianello and Mary Hawkesworth (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

The *Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory* (2016) provides an overview of analytical frameworks and theoretical concepts feminist theorists have developed to explicate the known world. Featuring leading feminist theorists from diverse regions of the globe, the collection provides in-depth explorations of fifty subject areas, demonstrating the complexity of feminist challenges to established knowledge, while also

engaging areas of contestation within feminist theory. Capturing a plurality of approaches across a diverse array of topics and disciplines, the *Handbook* raises new questions, brings new evidence, and poses significant challenges to academic disciplines spanning the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

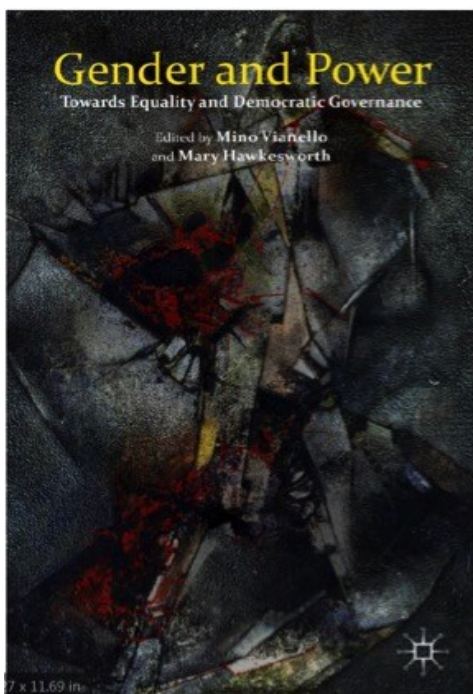
Faculty Highlights: Publications



Embodied Power: Demystifying Disembodied Politics, Mary Hawkesworth (Routledge, 2016)

Embodied Power (2016) explores dimensions of politics seldom addressed in political science, illuminating state practices that produce hierarchically-organized groups through racialized gendering—despite guarantees of formal equality. Challenging disembodied accounts of citizenship, the book traces how modern science and law produce race, gender, and sexuality as purportedly natural characteristics, masking their political genesis. Taking the United States as a case study, Hawkesworth demonstrates how diverse laws and policies concerning civil and political rights, education, housing, and welfare, immigration and securitization, policing and criminal justice create finely honed hierarchies of difference that structure the life prospects of men and women of particular races and ethnicities within and across borders. In addition to documenting the continuing operation of embodied power across diverse policy terrains, the book investigates complex ways of seeing that render raced-gendered relations of domination and

subordination invisible. From common assumptions about individualism and colorblind perception to disciplinary norms such as methodological individualism, methodological nationalism, and abstract universalism, problematic presuppositions sustain mistaken notions concerning formal equality and legal neutrality that allow state practices of racialized gendering to escape detection with profound consequences for the life prospects of privileged and marginalized groups. Through sustained critique of these flawed suppositions, *Embodied Power* challenges central beliefs about the nature of power, the scope of state action, and the practice of liberal democracy and identifies alternative theoretical frameworks that make racialized-gendering visible and actionable.

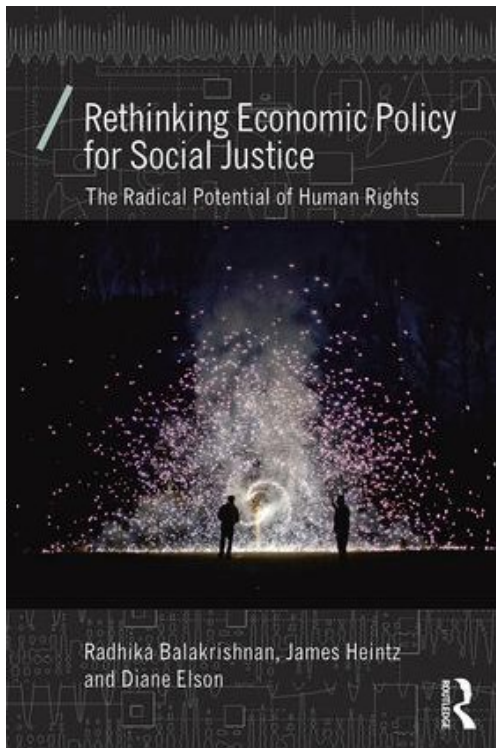


Gender and Power: Toward Equality and Democratic Governance, Mino Vianello and Mary Hawkesworth (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

Offering sophisticated insights into inequalities in opportunities, roles, power, and rights in societies across the globe, this volume investigates factors that enable and constrain women's advancement. From intimate relations, social norms, ideologies, and structures of power to political in-

stitutions, electoral systems, and public policies, the chapters analyze possibilities for and obstacles to inclusive democratic practices and identify interventions essential to democratic governance.

Faculty Highlights: Publications



***Rethinking Economic Policy for Social Justice: The Radical Potential of Human Rights*, Radhika Balakrishnan, James Heintz, and Diane Elson (Routledge, 2016)**

Rethinking Economic Policy for Social Justice (2016) shows how human rights have the potential to transform economic thinking and policy-making with far-reaching consequences for social justice. The authors make the case for a new normative and analytical framework, based on a broader range of objectives which have the potential to increase the substantive freedoms and choices people enjoy in the course of their lives and not on not upon narrow goals such as the growth of gross domestic product. The book covers a range of issues including inequality, fiscal and monetary policy,

international development assistance, financial markets, globalization, and economic instability. This new approach allows for a complex interaction between individual rights, collective rights and collective action, as well as encompassing a legal framework through which unjust policy can be protested.

This highly original and accessible book will be essential reading for human rights advocates, economists, policy-makers and those working on questions of social justice.



***Gender and Transformative Leadership
(A Contextualized Curriculum for Nigeria)*
Abena P.A. Busia and Ousseina Alidou (UNESCO, 2016)**

The development of this course curriculum on gender and transformative leadership and its training manual is a collaborative project of UNESCO, regional office Nigeria and the Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) 11 Project sponsored by the European Union Commission, United Kingdom Aid, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, United Nations Development Programme.

The entire project was conceived and developed by a team of international experts working in gen-

der and development in UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, four African Universities (The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria), and Civil Society Organisations in these countries and in the West African sub-region. and Professors Ousseina Alidou and Abena Busia of Rutgers University under the auspices of an MOU between Rutgers Center for African Studies and UNESCO for the development of such programs.

Faculty Highlights



Professor Nikol G. Alexander-Floyd received the Hight Summer Writing Fellowship in Orlando, FL. She published an article, “*Black Women Political Scientists at Work: An Interview with Nadia Brown and Wendy Smooth,*” and “*Radical Black Feminism and the Fight for Social*” in volume 17 of the *National Political Review* (NPSR).



Professor Radhika Balakrishnan was awarded grants from the Ford Foundation and an anonymous foundation for the continued work of the center for women’s global leadership. Balakrishnan spearheaded an initiative on the intersection of macroeconomics, women’s economic empowerment and labor rights with AFL-CIO that began with a consultation on September 9, 2015 in Washington, D.C. And will consult with a report to be launched during the UN CSW in March 2016. She was invited to speak on the opening plenary for “*Making The Link: Human rights in tax policy, in Lima Peru*”. The talk she gave was entitled “*Economic Cycles, Tax Policy and Human Rights Obligations.*”



Professor Ethel Brooks received US-UK Fulbright Distinguished Chair, Affiliated with *TRAIN*, The Transnational Center for Art, Identity and Nation, and CCW, the Chelsea-Camberwell-Wimbledon Graduate School. Also received a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Networking Grant and served as Co-Investigator in the project, “*Performing Romani Identities as Strategy and Critique,*” with Jane Collins, University of the Arts London.



Professor Abena P. A. Busia was awarded with Professor Ousseina D. Alidou, A Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship for Collaborative research, training, and co-curricular development and other capacity building projects at Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria; She was keynote speaker on the launch of *Tarnished Gold: Ghana and the Netherlands since 1593* by Gijs Van der Ham. The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, January 27, 2016. She was also a Senior Institute Fellow Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders: Civic Leadership Institute; Rutgers University, 2016.

Faculty Highlights



Professor Susan J. Carrol is co-principal investigator for, *“Women Representing in an Era of Polarization”*, a grant to the center for American women and politics from hunt alternatives fund, 400000, 2015-17



Professor Sylvia Chan-Malik was awarded a fellowship from the national endowment for the humanities/scholar in residence program at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York for the 2015–16 academic year. Professor Sylvia Chan-Malik led a session on “American Muslim Cultural Production” as a visiting faculty member at the National Endowment of the Humanities Summer Seminar.



Professor Brittney Cooper was awarded the Darwin T. Turner prize for best published article on African American Literature in 2014 in the African American review and won the 2016 Northeast Association of Graduate Schools Award for master’s level teaching



Professor Carlos Decena, LCS Department Chair and our own faculty member was selected by Rutgers University to Advance Our Common Purpose (CAP) to receive a Leaders in Faculty Diversity Award for 2016 in advancing the boundaries of interdisciplinary scholarship and research in Ethnic, Queer and Spiritual Studies, he won the 2016 Graduate School New Brunswick Teaching award.



Professor Judith Gerson was invited to the (U.S.) Senior Scholar in residence at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Faculty Highlights



Professor Jasbir Puar won the 2016 Northeast Association of Graduate Schools Award for doctoral level teaching.



Professor Julie Rajan, visiting scholar, GEMMA Erasmus Mundus Program, 2016, will be visiting Italy and Poland to study the rise of Islamophobia in these spaces in accordance with her work on the Islamic State. She also secured her third book contract, to be published later this year: *“Women, Violence, and the Islamic State: Resurrecting the Caliphate through Femicide”*.



Professor Yana Rodgers presented keynote talk on *“Competitiveness: A Blessing or a Curse for Gender Equality?”* at the 2015 annual meeting of the International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium, December 13, 2015, in Clearwater Beach, FL.



Professor Mary K. Trigg was awarded the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education 2015, Rutgers University (May 2015). She was invited to serve as consulting editor and write the introduction to reference volumes *Great Lives from history: American Women* which will be published by Grey House Publishing, Toronto, Canada.



Professor Mary Hawkesworth, Monique Gregory and Suzy Kiefer won this year's Ernest McMahon Class of 1930 Award. This award is given for work which extends the mission of the university to the state of NJ. They were nominated for their exemplary work in establishing and promoting our NNU Certificate in Women's Global a Health Leadership

Graduate Highlights

Recent PhD Graduates:

- ♦ **Jeanne Baptiste**, Dissertation: “*Gender Practices and Relations at the Jamaat Al Muslimeen in Trinidad*”
- ♦ **Adam M. Hantel**, Dissertation: “*Intergenerational Geographies of Race and Gender: Tracing the Confluence of Afro-Caribbean and Feminist Thought Beyond the World of Man*”
- ♦ **Stina Soderling**, Dissertation: “*In the Crevices of Capitalism: Rural Queer Community Formation*”
- ♦ **Miriam Tola**, Dissertation: “*Ecologies of the Commons: A Feminist Reading in Political Theory*”

Recent MA Graduates:

- ♦ **Intimaa Ayman al-Sdudi**, Practicum Site: *Sisterhood is Global Institute/Jordan*
- ♦ **Jessica Amber Cantrell**, Practicum Site: *Institute for Research on Women*
- ♦ **Chelsa Hill**, Practicum Site: *Center for American Women and Politics*
- ♦ **Pat Hurley**, Practicum Site: *Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network of Central New Jersey (GLSEN-CNJ)*
- ♦ **Mahaliah Little**, Thesis: “*The Flesh is Weak: African American Women’s Sexuality and the Utility of Trauma*”
- ♦ **Erica. A. Reed**, Practicum Site: *Keeping Babies Safe*
- ♦ **Michelle St. George**, Practicum Site: *Body Positive Image Interventions for Adolescent Girls*
- ♦ **Carolyn J. Washington**, Practicum Site: *ATO Score Card for United Nations Security Council (UNSCR) 1325*

Other Graduate News:

- ♦ **Snezana Otasevic**, WGS first Mellon Grant recipient to continue her dissertation research
- ♦ **Dr. Ariella Rotramel**, former WGS Ph.D student, has landed a tenure-track position as the Vandana Shiva Assistant Professor in the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies at Connecticut College.
- ♦ **Ashleigh Wade** was selected to attend the National Endowment for Humanities Summer Institute for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities. The theme of the institute is “*Space and Place in Africana/Black Studies : An Institute on Spatial Humanities Theories, Methods and Practice for African Studies.*”
- ♦ **Lindsey Whitmore** was awarded the School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education.
- ♦ **Rosemary Ndubuizu** was awarded a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, which awards her a full year of funding to finish her dissertation.

Staff Highlights



- ◆ **Monique Gregory** received the Staff Excellence Award from the Graduate School New Brunswick
- ◆ We also welcome **Feronda Orders**, our new Program Coordinator to the WGS Department
- ◆ **Monique Gregory, Suzy Kiefer, and Mary Hawkesworth** received the Ernest McMahon Class of 1930 Award for their exemplary work in establishing and promoting our NNU Certificate in Women's Global Health Leadership.

2016 Laurie Chair and 2015-2016 Visiting Scholars

- **June Cross**, the Emmy award winning filmmaker and journalist, is our 2016 Laurie Chair in Women's Studies. She will be working with the IWL consortium, Douglass Residential College, and the Department of Women's and Gender Studies to produce a documentary film on 250 years of women at Rutgers. This exciting project is a collaborative initiative of the IWL consortium and funded in part by the new Mary S. Hartman, Edwin M. Hartman, and Samuel M. Hartman Founder's Fund at the IWL.
- **Dr. Elzbieta Oleksy**, Chair of Department of American Studies and Mass Media and Director of the Women's Studies Centre, University of Lodz in Poland will be a visiting GEMMA Scholar during the month of August 2016. She visits here to research on Gender Perspectives on Intersectional Pedagogy.
- **Dr. Sandra Harding**, Rutgers 250 Fellow will join other distinguished alumni sharing their knowledge and expertise as part of A Day of Revolutionary Thinking, to be held on November 10, 2016 concluding the Rutgers 250 anniversary year. Dr. Harding will also give a lecture to approximately 700 students in Women's and Gender Studies Knowledge and Power: Issues in Women's Leadership course and conclude her stay with a meet and greet with faculty and graduate students in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies.
- **Dr. Anne Emanuelle Berger**, will be a visiting scholar in the fall from the Universite Paris VIII. As part of the exchange program between Paris VIII and Rutgers, Dr. Berger will conduct a series of seminars for the graduate students in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies.
- **Dr. Binitha Velayudhan Thampi**, will be a visiting Fulbright Scholar under the Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Fellowship during the 2016-2017 academic year. Dr. Thampi comes from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM). Dr. Thampi research is on Aesthetic Labour: Feminized, Racialized Bodies in India and the United States.

PLEN: Women Unlocking Nonprofits Seminar

By Jessica Mazzeo, WGS Major and IWL Scholar

From February 25th-27th, I was given the opportunity to immerse myself in an area teeming with opportunity and inspiration for those who wish to work in the non-profit field — Washington, D.C.. With funding from Douglass Residential College, five DRC students, including myself, attended the *PLEN: Women Unlocking Nonprofits Seminar*. For three days, at multiple non-profit-centered locations such as AAUE (American Association for University Women) and Martha's Table, 20-30 University women from across the country got the opportunity to hear women who have led careers in the non-profit industry tell us the details of the career journey — sometimes terrifying, sometimes stressful, but always rewarding.

I entered the seminar with plenty of information on directions and logistics provided by PLEN, yet still slightly nervous about finding my way around D.C. and especially networking with my peers and the women leading the panels. It turns out, as it often does, that I had nothing to worry about. I immediately made friends with three Douglass students. We traveled around the city together, had open dialogues in regards to feminist and social justice issues, and made time after the panels to explore D.C., whether it was at a second-hand bookstore or the Washington Monument. We still text each other and tell each other about events such as open mics and campus projects such as Reclaiming Revolution.

During the panels and workshops, I took tons of notes, learned to improve my resume and interview skills, and was able to speak one-on-one with particular speakers who stood out to me. There was a topic — and a speaker — for everyone. Jeryl Hayes, who has focused her legal training on reproduc-



tive health, rights, and justice and worked with youth facing sexual violence and abuse, all the while fighting for reproductive rights, stood out to me. She was great to talk to about education and empowerment through the arts for young girls (esp. those who have faced abuse), which is what I want to focus my career on. Most importantly, I gained the necessary vocabulary to verbalize exactly what I want to do in the non-profit field and thus mold my major and classes around that. What I was most afraid of — networking — turned out to be extremely easy and even enjoyable once I got some practice. Now, I can hand someone my business card and give an “elevator pitch” of my career goals without hesitation.

I must say, there is nothing like sitting around a conference table with like-minded feminist

women and getting to hear older, successful women speak about careers that we could all see ourselves in. There is something to be said for representation, especially race and gender representation; for inspiring young people to realize: “That person looks like me, or came from a similar background, or faced similar obstacles, and they did it. That means I can, too.”

Women mentoring younger women with similar interests is vital because it allows for the inspiration and empowerment of girls who may not have the support or assurance to believe in themselves. One of the panel leaders, for example, Gloria S. Chan, taught us about ways we can believe in our talents enough to negotiate for salary raises and promotions. She taught us to take the negative thoughts which women in particular often have, such as “I am being too dependent” or “I don’t deserve this”, and change them to positive statements such as “I am simply asking for pay equity that matches my amount of hard work.”

I left the seminar not only believing so much more in my ability to find a career that not only funds me but fulfills me, but believing in the power of a collective community of like-minded, dedicated people. We are the next generation of feminist thinkers, writers, artists, and policy-makers, and we have the power, especially if we work with ourselves and future generations, to create the changes that we talk about in class and push for in our creative and academic endeavors.

2016 WGS

Undergraduate Award Recipients

Eleanor Brilliant Award for Outstanding Senior in Women’s and Gender Studies

Katherine Ritter

Gilda Morales Award for Outstanding Student Activist

Kaylan Michas

Dorothy Hamilton Balliet Award for Outstanding Research

Charlotte Morabito

Elizabeth Hallowell Award for the Advancement of Women’s Rights

Ebony Johnson

Douglass College Women’s and Gender Studies Alumnae Prize

Vanessa Gonzalez-Siegel

2016 Women’s and Gender Studies Department Award

Lauren H. Jacquish

Alyssa A. Vakulchik

Feminist Tidbits



Professors Brittney Cooper and Jasbir Puar
Northeast Assoc. of Graduate Schools Teaching Awards



The Ernest E. McMahon Award



Professor Nikol Alexander Floyd - Undergraduate Director and Alyssa Vakulchik—WGS Department Award and First Student to complete the Women's Global Health Leadership Certificate Program



Graduate School Staff Excellence Award—
Monique Gregory

Feminist Tidbits



Jay Bernard (L) & Bernardine Evaristo (R) Two of the ten writers made Rutgers their first stop of the **“Breaking Ground: Black British Writers U.S. Tour”**



Professor Jasbir Puar presenting at the 2015 National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference



Professor June Cross
2016 Laurie Chair in
Women's Studies

Feminist Tidbits

2016 WGS Graduation Ceremony





Remembering Alison Bernstein

We are mourning the loss of Alison Bernstein, Director of our Institute for Women's Leadership, and faculty member jointly with us and the department of History. Even for those of us who knew she had been battling cancer this last eighteen months or so, the end came too suddenly, especially as the last time many of us saw her was in May at the IWL Scholars graduation, generous, brave, and always for our sakes, buoyant.

Alison Bernstein was a change-maker, and a visionary philanthropist, intrepid in her determination to empower herself and others to reshape the world and leave it better than they found it. A true humanist, and Humanities scholar, she knew how profoundly ideas and ways of thinking mattered and there are thousands of us around the world who can attest to the legacy she leaves behind,

especially through the projects she supported in her nearly three decades at the Ford Foundation (1982-2010). Almost every project on diversity and curriculum transformation for race, gender and Africa that I know of, or was a part of, in my thirty years as a scholar, here at Rutgers and other institutions in North America and Sub-Saharan Africa, was underwritten by Alison in those years at Ford. Her legacy here will of course be the Minor in Women and Media and the Gloria Steinem Endowed Chair. For those wishing to contribute to a fitting memorial, the link to make online gifts is here. Checks may also be made out to Rutgers University Foundation, noting the gift is for the Gloria Steinem Endowed Chair, c/o Lisa Hetfield, Institute for Women's Leadership, 162 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick NJ, 08901.

On a directly personal level, I met her two decades before she came to Rutgers when she approved the seed grant, the first of many, for Women Writing Africa, in 1994, a grant which enabled us to bring scholars and editors from around the world for our initial planning meeting to launch the project in Accra, Ghana. That is to say, Alison Bernstein underwrote what was to become the project most central to my academic career even before we became colleagues here at the IWL. We had hoped for more years here, but with her inimical sense of timing, Alison passed away on the day her contract expired. There is to be no renewal.

— Abena P.A. Busia

On **Wednesday, October 19th** The Institute for Women's Leadership and the Office of the Chancellor, Rutgers University-New Brunswick will be hosting the Rutgers Memorial honoring Alison Bernstein in **Winants Hall Assembly Room, Old Queens, 7 College Avenue, New Bruns.** **at 5:30,** with a reception to follow.

Innovative educator, visionary, philanthropist, feminist leader, advocate for human rights, and community builder, Alison was a game changer and champion for a more just world. She served as Director of the IWL and professor of History and Women's & Gender Studies from 2011 until her untimely death in June 2016. **Join us as we celebrate her contributions to women's education here and throughout the world.**

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Enclosed is my generous gift of \$ _____

Chair: Abena P.A. Busia

Graduate Director: Jasbir Puar

Master's Program Director: Julie Rajan

Undergraduate Director: Nikol Alexander-Floyd

Department Administrator: Monique Gregory

Program Coordinator I Feronda Orders

Administrative Assistant: Suzy Kiefer

Newsletter Coordination & Design: Asha A.
Alexander and Monique Gregory

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