

# Women's *and* Gender Studies

It is a great honor to write this annual letter to let you know where we are as a program and a community. It is an opportunity to share our achievements with faculty and students at this university, as well as many colleagues and alumni all over the country.

This fall the College of Arts and Sciences welcomed our new Dean, Joseph Francisco. We look forward to taking advantage of his new ideas and initiatives and hope that he will be inspired by ideas from our outstanding faculty, students, community members, and supporters.



**Chantal Kalisa,  
WGS Director**

The Women's and Gender Studies program remains a truly interdisciplinary academic program, spanning six colleges and 26 disciplines, and includes a growing number of campus/community associates. These members play a major role in all sections of our program. As is evident throughout this newsletter, core and affiliated faculty members once again made outstanding contributions to women's and gender studies through their research, teaching, service, community outreach, and other professional activities.

Though we continue to educate the larger community about the importance of our program for students, we have grown significantly in recent years. This past year we graduated at least 40 undergraduate and graduate students during 2013-2014 (see page 7). In addition to classes, our students take advantage of other learning experiences that include internships, writing honor theses, presenting at conferences, and collaborating with faculty through UNL's UCARE program. In the last two years, we have purposefully incorporated student research into our colloquium series. This has included Danielle Rue's excellent presentation on the history of our program, in which she led us through the intersectional ways in which this program came about (see page 4).

WGS is also engaged in important current topics, especially the issues of race and diversity in the global world. In Spring 2014, the Transnational Feminism Working Group began a series of activities titled "Teaching Ourselves to Talk about Race and Gender," as a way to encourage campus conversations on difficult topics. We know that many instructors are eager to find ways to incorporate racial matters in their classes much more effectively and we are pleased to help them as this is a timely issue not only on our campus but also nationally.

Finally, WGS is appreciative of your support and expertise which helps grow and advance our priorities. We wish you the best in the year 2015.

## WGS Colloquium Series “Saving the Muslim Woman”

Professor Basuli Deb

Landon Sadler (Junior, English and Political Science)

On September 5, 1995, Hillary Clinton famously declared that women’s rights are human rights. Compare this quotation to Laura Bush’s, who when speaking about the US War on Terror, stated in November 2001, “The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women.” In “Saving the Muslim Woman,” Dr. Basuli Deb—Assistant Professor of English and Women’s and Gender Studies at UNL—examined the clashing of imperial feminism and transnational feminism regarding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, exploring what and for whom was the role of Muslim women.

As Bush’s quotation illustrates, several argued that the fight against terrorism was a fight for women’s rights. Nonetheless, as Dr. Deb observed, many of the West’s policies after 9/11 challenged this notion. For instance, citing data from the 2003 documentary “Breaking the Silence: Truth and Lies in the War on Terror,” Dr. Deb explained that when the documentary had launched, only three percent of all international aid in Afghanistan had went to reconstruction, a disenchanting statistic when remembering the devastation of the bombing campaign on Afghani families and civilians—many of whom were mothers and daughters who lost everything. Indeed, according to Dr. Deb, this abandonment clashed with “the dream of global sisterhood” that America and its allies promised. Moreover, remembering the torture and prisoner abuse of Iraqis in Abu Ghraib, one must question America’s motivations; as Dr. Deb suggested, by Othering the Muslim man and by then saving the Muslim woman from him, America was able to justify war and assert its imperial masculinity. This—along with the discrimination and unwarranted arrests and detentions of Muslims abroad and at home—supports that in unfortunate actuality, the Brown woman was merely a chess piece on a white imperial chess board: the feminist paradise, only a veil.



## WGS Colloquium Series “‘Travelling Bodies’: Theorizing Subaltern Women’s Movements in(to) Protoimperialist England, c. 1560-1580”

Professor Bernadette Andrea

Kelsey Comfort (Senior, English and Journalism)

UNL was honored to host Dr. Bernadette Andrea from the University of Texas at San Antonio as part of the ninth annual James A. Rawley Graduate Conference in the Humanities as well as the Women’s and Gender Studies Colloquium Series. On March 14, 2014, Andrea, a professor of English, presented her talk, “‘Travelling Bodies’: Theorizing Subaltern Movements into Protoimperialist England,” which examined Islamic women who transcended borders in early modern England.

Drawing upon a literary perspective, Andrea focused on the tales of Islamic women who made the trek from their homelands to England, thus debunking common misconceptions that this was a largely male experience. Arguing that these women’s stories are often overlooked in modern scholarship, Andrea shared the story of Muslim women from the Caucasus who were transported to England by the Muscovy Company and treated as wonders from a different world, prizes for patrons and oddities to be displayed. Andrea showed the strong cultural constructions of gender in the early modern period and the how those constructions were challenged by “exotic” people with drastically different ideas and expectations.

Andrea’s lecture shed light on the vast underrepresentation of women of color, particularly Islamic women, travelling to England during this time period. Travel literature was often authored by men for an audience of men, frequently overlooking the number and experience of female travelers. Andrea argued that these women deserve recognition because it gives greater insight into traveling and cultural convergence during the early modern period. This research recognizes the strong women who made this tough journey and allows their stories to be told.



## WGS Colloquium Series “The Grasp That Reaches Beyond the Grave: The Ancestral Call in Black Women’s Literature”

**Professor Venetria K. Patton**

Catherine Medici-Thiemann (PhD Student, History and WGS)

In her talk at UNL on March 18, 2014, Venetria Patton—director of the African American Studies & Research Center and professor of English and African American Studies at Purdue University—examined the importance of the ancestral figure in Black American culture and literature and the distinct role, both historically and culturally, black women have in regards to ancestral presence.

In part, she focused on the novel *Stigmata* by Phyllis Alesia Perry and argued that the way Perry treats reincarnation is tied to beliefs about ancestral presence. Patton also examined works by other black female authors who directly respond to the stereotype, drawn from slavery, that black slave women were not maternal. For example, Toni Cade Banbara, Toni Morrison, and Julie Dash highlight and emphasize black women’s maternal connections, especially with their daughters. Moreover, by calling up the maternal ancestral figure, these authors show that the stereotype of non-maternal black women was never accurate.

Patton argued that literature is an outlet for understanding issues of belief and identity and can help us think about our own and others beliefs, which can further cultural understanding.



## WGS Colloquium Series “‘AIDS Knows No Borders’: Activist Rhetoric Against the US Ban on HIV+ Immigration”

**Professor Karma R. Chávez**

Lindsay Spaulding (Senior, Psychology)

On October 3, Dr. Karma Chávez spoke at the first event of the Fall 2014 Women’s and Gender Studies Colloquium Series. Dr. Chávez began by discussing her decision to write on the topic of AIDS and the transnational effect of the movement.

Dr. Chávez spoke primarily about what is becoming the third chapter of her book, which covers the boycotts of the 1990 and 1992 International AIDS Conferences. She explained how xenophobia contributed to the ban from 1987 to 2010. At first, individuals who were AIDS/HIV+ were not allowed into the United States; later they were granted entry, but not without their status being displayed on their visa or passport. Subsequently, many individuals were barred from traveling to the US in order to attend the 1990 International AIDS Conference held in San Francisco. In response, many countries boycotted the American conference and in 1992 its location was changed from Boston to Amsterdam. This change, however, led to many protests by AIDS activists in the United States against the US’s restrictive immigration policy—because although they could attend the conference overseas, they could not return without their AIDS/HIV+ status being printed on their visa or passport. Chávez noted how serious this issue was for many who traveled to countries that continued to bar AIDS/HIV+ individuals or where the tie of AIDS/HIV+ to homosexuality put them in danger.

As a whole, Dr. Chávez brought to light the intersection between AIDS/HIV+, immigration, and citizenship. She also discussed the rhetorical framing of the AIDS movement in the 1990s and how it may still be relevant today with the outbreak of the Ebola virus. Dr. Chávez’s talk was informative and engaging, and ultimately provided insight into an uncovered topic to many on a Friday afternoon.



## WGS Colloquium Series

### “Women’s Studies at the University of Nebraska Lincoln: A Brief Digital History”

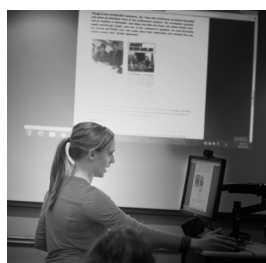
Danielle Rue

Morgan Spiels (Senior, Journalism )

On Monday, October 27, Danielle Rue—an undergraduate majoring in Women’s & Gender Studies and English and minoring in Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs—presented her talk, “Women’s Studies at the University of Nebraska Lincoln: A Brief Digital History,” as a part of the Fall 2014 Women’s and Gender Studies Colloquium Series. For her project, Rue created a webpage outlining an abbreviated history of UNL’s Women’s and Gender Studies program, which was created in 1976 under the name “Women’s Studies.” Rue’s interest in the topic began in her WMNS 101 class, when she wrote a paper on the history of the program. She then received funding through UNL’s UCARE program and continued her research on the subject, focusing on the university’s positions on race, sexuality, and women’s issues during the 1960s and 1970s and the beginnings of the Women’s Studies program.

Rue described several revolutionary events in the history of the university that helped shape our current Ethnic Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies programs. Within a short period of time, black students protested in order to gain representation on campus as well as implement a Black Studies program; students advocated against a university-wide curfew for women; and prominent local political figures protested a conference and a course related to sexuality studies. Through non-violent protests and other means, students and sympathetic faculty were instrumental in changing the university’s policies and expanding its curriculum within a few short years.

Rue closed her talk by briefly describing some of the obstacles the Women’s Studies program faced for more than two decades, including lack of funding for office space, courses, and faculty and personnel, as well as its successes that have enabled dramatic growth in recent years. Rue’s project can be seen at <http://unlwgshistory.wordpress.com/>.



## WGS Colloquium Series

### “If Everyone Cared: Transnational Indigenous Women’s Activism and Child Welfare, 1960-1980”

Professor Margaret Jacobs

Gabriella Parsons (Freshman, Journalism)

On November 10, 2014, Professor Margaret Jacobs gave a talk in the Bailey Library about transnational indigenous women’s activism. Throughout, Jacobs told the story of two women, Molly Dyer from Melbourne, Australia, and Maxine Robbins from the Yakima Indian Reservation in the US. Molly was a foster parent for many years and Maxine educated people about fostering indigenous children, which made them both activists for the child welfare system.

In the 1960s through the 1980s, many Indian families were torn apart by local enforcement who deemed the families unsuitable to raise their own children. Indian children were taken from their families, often times for inaccurate reasons based on racist assumptions. They were put into the child welfare system where many were adopted by wealthy, white Australian and American families.

This indigenous style of feminism that Molly and Maxine shared ended up bringing them together years later. Jacobs shared their stories and explained how, after they met, they were part of the movement for the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. This act required that the highest documentation of neglect be reported before children were away from their homes. It also prioritized other Indian families first on the adoption lists to avoid the wealthy, white families using these children as glamour assets.

I thought this talk was very interesting, especially because it was followed by the showing of a short film later that week. One thing I still question is if this type of adoption process still occurs, but isn’t as well-known, given that the women Jacobs spoke of were doing activist work in the 1960s-1980s. Overall, this was an informational and beneficial event to attend.



# Faculty and Student Achievements

**Tom Carr** (French) presented his paper “Learning, Gender, and Self-Representation among 18th-Century Jansenist Women” at the colloquium Portraits and Fictions of the Self: Representations of Women’s Knowledge in the 16th-18th Centuries. He also presented at the biennial conference of the American Council of Quebec Studies in October 2014.

**Sidnie White Crawford’s** (Classics and Religious Studies) essay, “Rewritten Scriptures as a Clue to Scribal Traditions in the Second Temple Period,” was published in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques?* In January 2015 she will begin a three-year term as a member of the Governing Council of the Society of Biblical Literature.

**Iker González-Allende** (Spanish) published his book *Epistolario de Pilar de Zubiaurre (1906-1970)*. The book compiles 188 unpublished letters which Pilar de Zubiaurre wrote to and received from numerous Hispanic intellectuals and artists from 1906 until 1970.

**Rose Holz** (WGS) presented “Spooning Between Ellis and Kinsey: Dr. Robert L. Dickinson – Gynecologist, Sexologist, and Artist” with Sarah Rodriguez at the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality conference in November 2014.

**Carole Levin** (History) received the Sorensen award for teaching from the University of Nebraska in spring 2014. She will be a Fulbright Scholar attached to the Center for Renaissance and Early Modern Studies at the University of York in spring 2015. She presented a paper on Margaret of Anjou at the Kings and Queens Conference at the University of Winchester in July 2014.

**Margaret Jacobs** (History) published *A Generation Removed: The Fostering and Adoption of Indigenous Children in the Postwar World* with the University of Nebraska Press this fall. She will be spending the 2015-2016 academic year at Cambridge University in England as the Pitt Professor of American History.

**Jennifer McKittrick’s** (Philosophy) paper, “A Dispositional Account of Gender,” will be published in a special issue of *Philosophical Studies* dedicated to the 2014 meeting of the Pacific American Philosophical Society.

**Julia Schleck** (English) organized and led a seminar entitled “Brothers and Others” with Elizabeth Bearden at the Shakespeare Association of America’s annual meeting in Saint Louis in March 2014. Her essay, “Stranger than fiction: early modern travel narratives and the

anti-racist classroom” will be published this winter in *Teaching Medieval and Early Modern Cross-Cultural Encounters Across Disciplines and Eras*.

**Pat Teatreault** (LGBTQA Resource Center) served on an invited panel at the 40th Anniversary of the Law-Psychology Program Conference held at UNL in October. She also authored the section on Nebraska in the forthcoming *Proud Heritage: People, Issues and Documents of the LGBT Experience*.

**Carly Woods** (Communication Studies and WGS) received the 2014 Bruce Kendall Award for Excellence in Teaching from UNL’s Department of Communication Studies. She also presented at the Rhetoric Society of America conference.

## Student Achievements

**Joshua Bivins** (WGS Minor) was invited to “A Research Introduction to the Holocaust in the Soviet Union,” a funded research seminar at The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

**Lee Heerten** (LGBTQ/ Sexuality Studies Minor Alum) will be starting a doctoral degree in the Cognition, Learning and Development program

in the Educational Psychology department at UNL in spring 2015.

**Samantha Lunde** (WGS and Psychology) received the Franco’s List Award from the Character Council and Dr. Juan Franco, UNL vice chancellor for student affairs.

**Catherine Medici-Thiemann** (History, WGS Grad Spec.) participated in the Mellon English Paleography Institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. in June 2014.

**Julia Moore** (Communication Studies, WGS Grad Spec.) published “Reconsidering childfreedom: A feminist exploration of discursive identity construction in childfree LiveJournal communities” in *Women’s Studies in Communication*. She received the Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award and the Phyllis Japp Scholar Award from UNL’s Department of Communication Studies in 2014.

**Laura Roost** (Political Science, WGS Grad Spec.) accepted a three year lecturer position at Penn State in political theory.

**Catherine Tran** (WGS Alum) participated in the study abroad program “India: Critical Issues” in summer 2014 as a med student at UNMC.

## Rose Holz and Sarah Rodriguez Share Their Research on Sexologist and Artist Dr. Dickinson

**Karen Anderson (Senior, Child, Youth, and Family Studies)**

When I heard about this talk, I was immediately intrigued; but when I heard it would include a number of pictures, because Dickinson was also an artist, I wondered whether it would be something I would find accessible as a blind student. After talking to Professor Holz, I decided to attend and see what happened.

In many ways, it seems that Dickinson was well ahead of his time. He drew pictures of the female anatomy, many of which Holz and Rodriguez showed and described in their presentation. He also researched the similarities and differences between women, including size and shape of their sex organs. Dickinson significantly affected how doctors looked at reproduction and motherhood, and how they treated infants who were born prematurely. Interestingly, despite the radical nature of his research and his art, Dickinson was very focused on how these things impacted the family. Perhaps this is what allowed the sculptures Dickinson designed depicting different stages of fetal development, known as the "Birth Series," to be displayed at the 1939/40 World's Fair. This is perhaps also why people allowed themselves to find it so fascinating.

The most exciting part of the talk came at the end. The University of Nebraska State History Museum had a set of the "Birth Series" sculptures on display for several decades, and a few of the sculptures were brought out of storage and shown at the event. This helped the audience connect with the presentation material in a direct way. For me, this also gave me an opportunity to get a hands-on idea of what Dickinson's art looked like, and connect with the artistic aspect of the presentation. More dramatically, this was the first time I had ever been able to get a real idea of what some of these concepts physically look like. Descriptions can only go so far, and Dickinson's "Birth Series" gave me a chance to get a real understanding of what my sighted Holz and Rodriguez's presentation brought several periods of history together and helped provide connections between them. I am also incredibly fortunate to attend a university with professors who are so enthusiastic about their research, and so willing to find ways for all students to understand their findings.



## Spring 2015 Special Topics Courses

WMNS 492/892

Iker González-Allende

**Special Topics in Masculinities: Masculinities in Motion**

This course is an introduction to the study of men and masculinities from multiple perspectives. The objective is to analyze the diversity of masculinities in society and their intersection with other forms of identity such as race, social class, and age. We will also explore how masculinity changes and transforms throughout a man's life due to aspects such as work, family, migration, or participation in the army.

The course will also include other topics such as queer masculinities, men's sexuality and body.

For further information about this course, please see the course description booklet on the WGS website.

For news, events, & info, go to:  
<http://www.unl.edu/wgs>

## WGS 2014 Scholarship and Award Winners

**Karen Dunning Women's and Gender Studies  
Scholarly Paper/Creative Activity Awards**

Undergraduate Student: Meredith Cain

Graduate Students: Kristi Carter, Katherine Hunt

Graduate Student Honorable Mention: Kathleen Lacey

**Outstanding Student Achievement Award**

Samantha Mussman

**Melba Cope Scholarship**

Samantha Lunde

**Melba Cope Community Associate Award**

Dika Eckersley

## No Limits 2015

University of Nebraska-Omaha

Friday, March 13, 2015

**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Mary S. Hartman**

**Founding Director, Rutgers Institute for Women's  
Leadership**

"No Limits" is a regional academic conference dedicated to crossing boundaries between disciplines and exploring a wide range of women's and gender issues. All student projects related to women and/or gender issues are welcome.

**Proposal Deadline: Friday, February 13, 2015.**

For the full Call for Papers and more information, see the No Limits page on the WGS website.

## Spring 2015 Colloquium

WGS's Spring 2015 Colloquium Series will include talks on a variety of topics. Please see the colloquium series page on the WGS website for more information.

## SAGE and Students for Choice Update

The student groups affiliated with the WGS program have been active on campus over the last year.

One of their most popular programs has been the "Wage Gap" bake sales, in which they sell cupcakes to male customers for \$1 and to women for \$0.77 in order to illustrate the wage gap between men and women. The sales proved very popular, selling out in a few hours, and were held three times during the spring 2014 semester at the Nebraska Union and the Sheldon Museum of Art. The events raised awareness of the wage gap and have increased the visibility of SAGE and S4C on campus. "People say 'It's not fair!' Well, that's the point," says Audrey Nance co-leader of SAGE. "The whole purpose of the exercise is to become aware of that. Women don't get a discount for buying things, but they're still getting paid less. Whether it's 77 cents or 98 cents, it's less, every time."

Group members also participated in the "Great American Condom Campaign" and continue to distribute free condoms at their events. In October 2014, they participated in the Friendship Home's "Safe Quarters" drive to collect financial donations for Lincoln's domestic violence shelters.



## Website Update

We are in the process of converting to a new website. While we hope this transition will go smoothly, please bear with us. If you have trouble accessing the new site, find broken links, or can't find the page you are looking for, please let us know via email or phone so we can make the needed improvements.

## Alumni Outreach

**We would love to hear more about what our Alumni are doing and want to keep in touch. If you are a WGS Alum, please send your current email address to WGS's program assistant, Paige Glasshoff, at [paige.glasshoff@unl.edu](mailto:paige.glasshoff@unl.edu).**

## Congratulations Graduates!

During the academic year of 2013-2014, WGS celebrated 40 graduating WGS majors, minors, and graduate specialization students as well as LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies minors at our December and May graduation receptions.



**Majors:** Paige Ahart, Machaela Anchondo, Emmilie Baker, Ardelle Buck, SaRena Freet, Leslie Kravitz, Samantha Mussman, Olivia Rejda, Heather Sipes, Dottie Urbanek

**Minors:** Kayla Batt, Katherine Blank, Morgan Condello, Hannah Crabtree, Chelsea Ermer, Rebecca Fedorko, Kayla Glesinger, Sara Helmink, Ashley Hick, Erin Hotovy, Audrey Lutz, Krista Mansfield, Bonnie Martin, Allison Morton, Haley Muggy, Emily Rejda, Taylor Sidles, Joseph Toscano  
**LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies Minors:** Hannah Crabtree, Katherine Miller, Julia Slagle, Samuel Zeitner

### Graduate Specializations:

Lesley Bartlett, Jaclyn Cruikshank Vogt, Kris Gandara, Heather Jerónimo, Marianne Kunkel, Ashley Lawson, Allysha Martin

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Campaign: LASWMNS07

If you would like to contribute to the Women's and Gender Studies Development Fund, please cut out the above contribution card and mail it to: University of Nebraska Foundation, P.O. Box. 82555, Lincoln, NE 68501-2555.

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