

# Women's *and* Gender Studies



## From the Director: Greetings from Women's & Gender Studies!



**Chantal Kalisa, WGS Director**

WGS continues to enjoy the support of its growing Core and Program Faculty who serve on several committees and teach courses crucial to our undergraduate and graduate curriculum. For those who do not know, we have five core faculty members, four of whom hold joint appointments in other departments. We also have 66 Affiliate Faculty, also known as Program Faculty, and several campus community members.

In the 2013 calendar year, we continued to pursue our goals and mission of educating students by facilitating discussions on important topics in women's and gender studies. In the spring, we hosted the student conference *No Limits* with a focus on Science and Gender Matters. Dr. Janet Kourany, a philosopher from the University of Notre-Dame, delivered a keynote speech entitled "But What Happens When the Scientists Are Women?" We had 16 panels with a total of 130 participants in various roles. Congratulations for this success go to WGS Associate Director Dr. Rose Holz and Graduate Assistant Catherine Medici-Thiemann who did the bulk of the work. We also wish to thank graduate students and community associates who helped organize the conference. The focus on gender and science continued with Dr. Jeannette Jones' (UNL historian) well-attended lecture, "Gender, Race, and the Missing Link: Science and the Transatlantic Debate on "The Negro Question."

Our Fall Colloquium Series was dedicated to LGBTQ Perspectives on Health and Well-being. Kudos to WGS core faculty members who undertook different events and used their various expertise in selecting speakers! Dr. Carly Woods (Communication Studies) convened a panel with five UNL graduate students. Dr. Emily Kazyak (Sociology) invited Dr. Mignon Moore from UCLA who presented on social support and health challenges among older African American sexual minorities. Drs. Jay Irwin and Christopher Fisher respectively from UNO and UNMC finished the series with a talk on transgender health issues, focusing particularly on Nebraska. Our Spring 2014 Colloquium Series will focus on global and transnational issues with expected talks by Dr. Basuli Deb (English) and post-9/11 feminism scholar Zillah Eisenstein. We are also co-sponsoring a visit by Prof. Bernadette Andrea who will be the keynote speaker for the Rawley Graduate Conference in the Humanities organized by the History Graduate Student Association.

Finally, many of you are aware of some changes in WGS staff with the departure of long-term Program Assistant Glenda Moore. We thank her for the 14+ years of service to our program. I am also happy to announce that Paige Glasshoff is our new Administrative Support Associate. She comes from Brainard and is married with three children. Additionally, WGS now houses UNL's Humanities in Medicine Program with Rose serving as its current interim coordinator.



**Paige Glasshoff, WGS  
Administrative Support Associate**

We congratulate all of you for your professional and personal accomplishments this year and wish you the best for 2014.

## Science and Gender Matters: No Limits 2013 A Student's Response

Jacqueline Harris, (PhD Student, English, WGS Graduate Specialization)

The *No Limits Conference* "Science & Gender Matters: No Limits 2013" was, yet again, a wonderful opportunity to hear diverse research presentations and participate in dialogue with other scholars about issues concerning women and gender.

On Friday of the conference, Dr. Janet Kourany, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, gave a thought-provoking keynote titled, "But What Happen When the Scientists Are Women." Dr. Kourany began her address by referencing the infamous 2005 national controversy about women in math and science that arose after Lawrence Summers, then president at Harvard University, suggested female professors are rightly underrepresented in certain areas of academia due to what he believed are their innate biological shortcomings compared to their male counterparts. This debate has continued to reappear within debates concerning nature vs. nurture, cognitive science, evolutionary biology, intellectual aptitude, and, as Dr. Kourany has also shown, numerous philosophical and psychological theories. Her well-researched intellectual response to Summers' and other like-minded individuals was both thoughtful and empowering.

On Saturday morning I attended student presentations that covered such topics as self-objectification, transgender identity, the CrossFit gender phenomena, and *Seventeen* magazine's failed attempts to rebrand and advocate "real girls." I was also pleased to moderate a panel titled, "Gendering Childhood," which included topics the audience greatly enjoyed discussing afterward. Jacqueline Horani (UNO) evaluated gendered teaching methods within early childhood education, Leandra Hernandez (Texas A&M) analyzed the sexualization of girlhood as a type of Lolita spectacle within TLC's hit show "Toddlers & Tiaras," and Rebecca Boellstorff (Nebraska Wesleyan) broke down progressive gendered fairy tale within Guillermo del Toro's 2006 fantasy film, *Pan's Labyrinth*.

I thoroughly enjoyed participating in *No Limits* this year and I would encourage others to join us in the future.



## WGS Colloquium Series

### “Gender, Race, and the Missing Link: Science and the Transatlantic Debate on ‘The Negro Question’”

Professor Jeannette Eileen Jones

Clare LaFrance (PhD Student, Philosophy, WGS Graduate Specialization)

On April 16, 2013, Dr. Jeanette Eileen Jones, UNL professor of History and Ethnic Studies, presented her work “Gender, Race, and the Missing Link” as part of WGS’s Colloquium Series devoted to “Science and Gender Matters.” Jones examined scientific literature from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. She found that a popular mode of scientific analysis was to compare white female brains to black male brains as well as black male and female brains to those of apes. In essence, scientists grasped to substantiate the distorted Darwinian claim that current human populations were actually the “missing link” to animal species or a lesser version of white humans, using the functional paradigm that it was women who were lesser white humans. This rhetorical move was also bound up with anxieties over the status of freed slaves. A scientific account that conferred a lesser human status on blacks would then justify a lesser legal status. Jones thus revealed the interplay between the political and scientific discourses.

While Jones’ work is of obvious value to historical scholarship, her methodology can be used to unearth contemporary racial dehumanization. Psychologist Jennifer Eberhardt, for example, has shown that animal associations are still implicitly in play in the U.S. and lend to harsher criminal punishments in the case of blacks. It is vitally important that we bring this issue to light in order to combat dehumanization.



## WGS Colloquium Series

### “Spotlight on Graduate Student Research: LGBTQ Health and Well-Being”

Annie Pigaga (Senior, Advertising and Public Relations)

The Fall 2013 colloquium series opened on September 16 with a panel of graduate students presenting their research. Master’s student Amy Vanderpool discussed gender inclusive language and how the failure to use inclusive language can affect a person’s health, especially their mental well-being. Peter Meidlinger presented his research on how disclosure and concealment affects LGB individuals. Finally, doctoral students Amy Arellano, Allison Bonander, and Christina Ivey presented their joint research on the turning points in the lives of parents with LGBT children.

This seminar offered new ways to look at these different topics. For example, Vanderpool described how our gendered language is a result of colonization and the imposition of a hegemonic two gender system. As she noted, it is wrong to assume that there are only two genders and that all people will fit into one of them. It is best, therefore, to ask people what gender they identify as and which pronoun they prefer.

Meidlinger explained the differences between disclosure and concealment and how these affect people in different ways. Disclosure is a person coming out about their gender or sexual identity to a person. Concealment is a person actively trying to hide or disguise their gender or sexual identity. His research showed that concealment seemed to give LGB people more stress and affect them negatively in terms of health.

Arellano, Bonander, and Ivey took an interesting look at the disclosure process in the lives of LGBT children. They wanted to know about the parents to whom these adolescents were coming out. Their goal was to discover how parents navigated the news of their children’s sexuality. Their research showed that most parents used various means, such as making an effort to expand their LGBT knowledge, to help guide and protect their children as best they could.



## WGS Colloquium Series “In the Shadow of Sexuality: Social Support and Health Challenges in the Lives of Older African American Sexual Minorities”

**Professor Mignon Moore**

**Brandi Woodell and Alexis Swendener (PhD students, Sociology)**

On October 7th, 2013, Dr. Mignon Moore, professor of Sociology and African American Studies at UCLA, presented her ongoing research as a part of the WGS Colloquium Series devoted to “LGBTQ Perspectives on Health and Well-being.” Dr. Moore’s research seeks to uncover the associations between mechanisms of social support and various health challenges among older African American sexual minorities. Dr. Moore examined how the onset of HIV/AIDS, mental and physical health concerns, barriers in access to healthcare, and laws and policies affect social support systems. Social support resources include emotional support, affection, aid, and affirmation. Her preliminary findings suggest that this population is more vulnerable to difficulties in accessing care due to physical health concerns, such as lack of mobility and other morbidity-related factors, as well as mental health concerns like social isolation and depressive symptoms.

These issues are present among aging populations, yet Dr. Moore has found unique challenges that her respondents face. Past research assumed that LGBT people experienced distant relationships with their families due to homophobia. However, this research indicates that older African American LGBT individuals are a resource of social support within their families and many continue to live near their kin. But these individuals still also experience social isolation due to their non-parent status specifically related to being viewed as “not fit to be parents.” Therefore they are less likely to have adult children who serve as a key source of social support in late life.

Future directions for this research include completing data collection in New York City and Los Angeles and examining the effects of current social policies.



## WGS Colloquium Series “Socio, Political, and Medical Impacts on Transgender Health: National Patterns and Local Experience”

**Professors Jay Irwin and Christopher Fisher**

**Brittany Piper (PhD Student, Sociology)**

The third installment of the Women’s and Gender Studies’ Colloquium Series “LGBTQ Perspectives on Health and Well-Being” was presented by Dr. Jay Irwin, Assistant Professor of Sociology at University of Nebraska-Omaha, and Dr. Christopher Fisher, Assistant Professor of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center on October 28, 2013.

Irwin and Fisher discussed political, medical, and social issues trans\* people face, including the requirement of an official diagnosis by a mental health professional for accessing health care and loopholes that allow insurance companies to deny coverage for many trans\* people. Additionally, transgender people are still subject to employment discrimination, which disproportionately forces trans\* women into sex work.

Irwin and Fisher also discussed a study they conducted in Nebraska to measure the health and well being of self-identified trans\* people. Although LGBT Nebraskans consider themselves to be physically healthy, they found mental health support is critical for those who identify as transgender. Irwin and Fisher found that suicide ideation rates, as well as rates of depression and many other negative health indicators, were exceptionally high among transgender Nebraskans.

Dr. Fisher noted a need for medical professionals to obtain training in basic trans\* health issues. Comprehensive education in this area is often voluntary, and many areas are underserved, forcing people in transition to travel to receive care. Lack of access to medical services has led to many problems, such as trans\* individuals purchasing unregulated hormone drugs on the black market and transitioning without adequate medical oversight. Some medical practitioners recognize the demand and offer services to the trans\* community with only minimal training. Fisher is working to expand and promote UNMC’s education on trans\* health.



# Faculty and Student Achievements

**Grace Bauer's** (English) collection of poems, *Nowhere All At Once*, won the Stephen F. Austin University Press annual book award and will be published in February 2014. A chapbook, *Café Culture*, is forthcoming (shortly) from Imaginary Friend Press. Her poems have recently appeared in *Route 7 Review*, *Alimentum*, *Ars Medica*, *Pilgrimage*, and the anthology, *Women Write Resistance: Poets Resist Gender Violence*, edited by UNL graduate Laura Madeline Wiseman.

**Joy Castro's** (English) second novel *Nearer Home* (St. Martin's) appeared in July 2013, and her edited collection *Family Trouble: Memoirists on the Hazards and Rewards of Revealing Family* (Univ. of Nebraska) was published in October. Her memoir collection *Island of Bones* was named a 2013 PEN Center USA Finalist in creative nonfiction, and her novel *Hell or High Water* won the 2013 Nebraska Book Award for fiction.

**Sidnie White Crawford** (Classics & Religious Studies) presented "Interpreting the Pentateuch through Scribal Processes: The Evidence from the Qumran Manuscripts," at conferences in Germany and Finland.

**Mary Anne Holmes** (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) and **Julia McQuillan** (Sociology)

received the 2013 Chancellor's Outstanding Contribution to Women Award from the university for their work on the ADVANCE-Nebraska program. They were honored for their efforts to create a climate that encourages women to succeed at the university. Holmes directed the ADVANCE program and McQuillan was the co-principal investigator.

**Alice Kang** (Political Science) received a National Science Foundation Collaborative Research award from the Law and Social Sciences program, for "Diffusing Equality: International Influences on Women's Appointment to High Courts." Kang and her colleagues will compile the first global data set of women who have served on supreme and constitutional courts for the period 1970-2010. Kang is supervising a team of UNL students to collect data for countries in Africa and the Middle East.

**Julia Schleck** (English) was selected to participate in the NEH Summer Institute "Empires and Interactions Across the Early Modern World 1400-1800" hosted by St. Louis University.

**Carly Woods** (Communication Studies and WGS) published two articles this year "Repunctuated Feminism: Marketing Menstrual Suppression

through the Rhetoric of Choice" in *Women's Studies in Communication* and "A Matter of Regionalism: Remembering Brandon Teena and Willa Cather at the Nebraska History Museum" in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*.

## Student / Alumni Achievements

**Rebecca Fedorko** (WGS Major) will be teaching at Dongdaemun SLP, a private school in Seoul, South Korea, starting in March of 2014.

**Jackie Harris** (English, WGS Grad Specialization) will present at the October 2013 North American Victorian Studies Association Conference in Pasadena, California. Jackie also recently published numerous book reviews appearing in *Rocky Mountain Review*, *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, and *Prairie Schooner: Briefly Noted*.

**Kate Hunt's** (Political Science, WGS Grad Specialization) paper "J.S. Mill's Feminism and the Third Dimension of Power" was published in the *Journal of Research in Gender Studies*. She also attended and presented at the Great Plains Political Science Association in Kearney and was awarded "Best Graduate Student Paper" for her paper on CEDAW and abortion policies cross-nationally.

**Clare LaFrance** (Philosophy, WGS Grad

Specialization) coached and organized the UNL Ethics Bowl team, which won the Rocky Mountain Regional Competition at the University of Colorado and will compete at the national tournament in spring 2014.

**Catherine Thiemann** (History, WGS Grad Specialization) presented papers on Katherine Dudley Hastings' patronage at the South Central Renaissance Conference and the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference. Her essay "Mary Dudley Sidney and her Dudley Siblings" will be published in the *Ashgate Companion to the Sidneys: Volume 1 Lives*.

**Catherine Tran** (WGS Alum) is a first year medical student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

**Dottie Urbanek** (WGS Major) defended her thesis, "The Ideological Exportation of Western Wedding Culture into an Online International Romance Site: A Study of Shifting Marriage/Wedding Values Across Mediated Texts," and will graduate with distinction.

**Garbiñe Vidal Torreira** (Spanish, WGS Grad Specialization) accepted a tenure-track position at Hendrix College as Assistant Professor of Spanish.

## Helen Moore Receives Distinguished Career Award from Faculty Senate

Helen Moore, Aaron Douglas Professor of Sociology and a long time member of the Women's and Gender Studies Program faculty received the Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award from the University of Nebraska Faculty Senate. The awards honors those who have made an exceptional contribution to the university during their career at UNL, through teaching, research, public service, and administration. The award also reflects an individual's long-standing commitment to the university.

Moore joins two other women winners of the Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award with a long standing commitment to the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Theo Sonderegger was the first woman to win this award in 1996 and was one of the early mothers of the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Brabara DiBernarnd, another early founder and past director of Women's and Gender Studies received the award in 2011. Congratulations, Helen!



### Spring 2014 Colloquium

WGS's Spring 2014 Colloquium Series will focus on global and transnational feminism. Please see the colloquium series page on the WGS website for more information, [www.unl.edu/wgs/events/colloquium](http://www.unl.edu/wgs/events/colloquium).

### No Limits 2014

#### Intersectionality: Gender, Race, and Class

University of Nebraska-Kearney  
Friday, March 7, 2014

Keynote Speaker **Dr. Shireen Roshanravan**  
(Kansas State University)

"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 7, 2014.**

For the full Call for Papers and more information, see the No Limits page on the WGS website: <http://www.unl.edu/wgs/no-limits-conference>.

## Spring 2014 Special Topics Courses

This spring WGS will offer two special topics courses. For further information about these courses, please see the course description booklet on the WGS website.

**WMNS 492/892**

**Jan Deeds**

### Introduction to Men's Studies

This course is an introduction to the field of men's studies from its beginnings in the 1970s to the present. Drawing from multiple disciplines, we will examine the history of men's movements, the definitions of masculinities, and the intersection of masculine identity with race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender performance, age, and other characteristics. Class will include readings and discussion, films, guest speakers, and other experiential activities.

**WMNS 498/898**

**Donna Woudenberg**

### Gender and Global Food Politics

Where does our food come from and how does it get to our tables? What differing gender roles are involved in that process? These might seem like very simple questions but exploring them together in this class will expose us to complex structures of power and inequality on a local, national, and global scale. In our class we will work together to look at the gendered politics of food, including the impact of these issues on women, how women participate in the local and global politics of food, and how gender intersects with other systems of power in the politics of food.

## WGS 2013 Scholarship and Award Winners

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

Undergraduates: Catherine Tran, Lauren Schaal  
Undergraduate Honorable Mention: Audrey Lutz  
Graduates: Hali Sofala, Rachel Schmitz  
Graduate Honorable Mention: Julia Moore

### *Outstanding Achievement Award*

Catherine Tran

### *Melba Cope and Tannehill-Evans Scholarships*

Henry Cabrera and Danielle Rue

## New WGS Faculty Member

WGS is pleased to welcome Nora Peterson as a new affiliated faculty member to the program. Nora received her Ph.D. in comparative literature from Brown University. She teaches courses on medieval and Renaissance French literature and culture. Her research has focused on moments in which the body loses control of itself in religious, courtly, and demonological contexts.

## New Graduate Student Group

Starting this fall, WGS will focus on developing a graduate student community and fostering professional growth for graduate students in Women's and Gender Studies. Since the graduate program was started in 2007 the number of graduate students involved has grown significantly. We are excited about the increased graduate student interest in the program and want to encourage them to build a community. We also want to provide them with resources to become professionals in the field. As part of this focus a group for graduate students has been started.

This fall the group held a "getting to know you" brown bag picnic, organized a workshop on how to apply for Women's and Gender Studies or joint appointment positions, and participated in a workshop on incorporating transnational feminism into their courses.

This group is open to all UNL graduate students interested in issues of women and gender. For more information or to join the group, please contact the group's coordinator, Catherine Medici-Thiemann, [catherine.medici@unl.edu](mailto:catherine.medici@unl.edu).

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

## Senior Seminar Receives Recognition from the College of Arts and Sciences

WGS major Catherine Tran was a runner up for the College of Arts and Sciences' "Win Dean Manderscheid's Money" Contest in spring 2013.

Catherine answered the competition's question, why should Dean Manderscheid attend your class?, with a glowing review of Chantal Kalisa's senior seminar class in Women's and Gender Studies. Tran wrote, "although transnational and global issues may feel far removed from Lincoln, Dr. Kalisa reminds us in our Women's and Gender Studies capstone that we are all intimately connected. This class' focus on international issues, as well as different races, cultures, and religions has helped me learn more about and celebrate my identity as a Vietnamese-American woman. Dean Manderscheid should drop in for our discussions on our personal role on the global stage and the relationship between academia, theory, and activism!"



## SAGE and Students for Choice

WGS's two student groups, Students Advocating Gender Equity (SAGE) and Students for Choice, have been revitalized for the 2013-2014 academic year by Audrey Nance and Meredith Cain. Group members participated in the SlutWalk and the Great American Condom Campaign in October.

This year the group plans to hold floor talks in the residence halls to discuss contraception and to go on "condom crawls," where group members hand out condoms outside of bars to promote safe sex. They also plan to organize fundraisers to help local non-profits, such as Voices of Hope, Friendship Home, and Planned Parenthood, as well as to go into fraternities and sororities to talk about date rape and various anti-rape ideas.

If you are interested in joining the group or would like more information, you can find them on facebook ([facebook.com/SAGE.UNL](http://facebook.com/SAGE.UNL)) and the WGS website (<http://www.unl.edu/wgs/about/sage>).



## Congratulations Graduates!

During the academic year of 2012-2013, WGS celebrated 31 graduating WGS majors, minors, and graduate specialization students as well as LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies minors.

### Majors:

Teal Briner, Angela Everley, Vienna Kopischke, Cassy May, Courtney Poppe-Weber, Kris Pothast, Marneé Royer, Catherine Tran

### Minors:

Kelsey Anderson, Scarlett Bailey, Anneli Dudley, Meghan Henderson, Alexandria Lierz, Molly Morgaridge, Kathleen Oltman, Rhiannon Root, Lauren Schaal, Angelena Shasteen, Jenay Solomon

### LGBTQ/Sexuality Studies Minors:

Brad Chapin, Adelle Garske, Audrey Martinez, Kelsey Maxfield, Jessica Sheldon, Luke Wells

### Graduate Specializations:

Jill Allen, Neelee Glasco, Rachel Schmitz, Garbiñe Vidal Torreira

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