

The 30th Anniversary Celebration Issue!



WOMEN'S, GENDER & SEXUALITY STUDIES PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



Left. Nancy McIntire opening the Women's Center in 1982. *Center.* Mireya Hurtado ('97) reunited with Marcela Villada Peacock. *Right.* 1971 protest sign about the arrival of women on campus reading, "Keep Williams Pure. Coeds Go Home. Keep Girls Out."

Dear WGSS friends--

It has been a busy and exciting fall here in Williamstown. The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program is again experiencing high enrollments in both our core classes as well as electives, serving not only our fifteen junior and senior majors but students from across the college.

In October we hosted two extraordinary Ugandan activists for several weeks. Beyonce Karungi and Flavia Kyomukama are working on HIV, LGBT issues, and transgender rights, and they spent their time on campus interacting with a number of different groups of faculty, staff, and students.

Later that month, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the formal establishment of Women's Studies at Williams with a reunion and anniversary celebration. Events included welcoming comments by Dean of the College Sarah Bolton; a panel of reflections by former WGSS chairs Lynda Bundtzen, Suzanne Graver, Jana Sawicki, and Katie Kent; panels in which alumni discussed their work and how WGSS affected their paths; and an inspiring keynote address by Mireya Hurtado, an administrative law judge with a successful career

as a congressional aide and, later, the highest ranking Latina in her state government. Our alumni panels gave a real sense of the wide variety of careers possible for WGSS students after graduation. One common thread was that our alumni are striving to make a difference in the world - through their jobs and their volunteer activities.

Another theme that emerged from the reunion was the idea that WGSS -- since its formation by a group of formidable female faculty in the early years of coeducation at Williams -- has long been a place where faculty, students, and staff with interests in gender, social justice, and LGBTQ issues could feel at home.

We are proud to be able to provide that home to our students and alumni, and look forward to the next 30 years.

All best wishes,



Lucie Schmidt
Chair, WGSS



Top. Christine Case ('15), Liz Dietz ('15), and Justin Adkins. *Center.* Katie Kent ('88) and Tracey Vitchers ('10). *Right.* Carla Gutierrez ('98).

WGSS Hosts 30th Anniversary

On the weekend of October 25th, WGSS hosted its 30th anniversary celebration, welcoming alumni, students, faculty and staff to reflect on its history. Events included a historical slideshow, a panel with past heads of the program, a mentoring lunch for students to meet with alumni, and panels for alumni to share their thoughts on the program and their current work.

Several notable themes emerged from these discussions. First, the program's history is intimately and permanently bound up with the feminist movement, including integration of female students into the college and the hiring of female faculty. In 1970, women arriving on campus had just six female faculty members to look up to. Second, WGSS has been a home not only to its own majors/concentrators, but also a refuge for many other students, including students of color, especially during the decades before other programs were founded. Several alumni spoke of formative experiences in WGSS courses wherein women writers of color were valued, which was rare then, highlighting the importance of intersectionality and collaboration with other programs. To that end, it was a revealing moment when Professor Kent showed lists of cross-listed courses over the decades and audiences could see the gradual proliferation leading to today's current panoply of courses.

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The Reunion weekend provided a wonderful chance to catch up with former students, as well as colleagues and other supporters of the Program. The panel on the history of WGSS was well-attended and it was especially fascinating to hear about the early days, when I was just a student and had little idea of what went on behind the scenes. It was very inspiring to hear what alums are doing--the breadth of their experiences post-Williams made me want to find a way to share their stories with the entire Williams campus. I also enjoyed all the informal moments where we were able to catch up, meet one another for the first time, or, in my case, see an old friend I haven't encountered in over 20 years. Here's to another successful 30 years of WGSS! - Katie Kent ('88)



Above. Katie Kent and Lucie Schmidt

Counterclockwise from right.

Mireya Hurtado ('97);
Lynda Bundtzen teaching
one of the first integrated
classes; Alana Kaczmarek
('02); Nancy McIntire;
Lynda Bundtzen and
Suzanne Graver on the
Chairs' panel.

(Continued from previous...)

However, it all began with Women's Studies 101, and this course has become almost legendary over the years. Professor Kent offered sample syllabi from across the decades, and it was striking to everyone how certain authors and texts have remained while also allowing an increasing attention to other issues, including sexuality. A final theme was the importance of direct action and active social engagement has always been integral to the program, especially for alumni reflecting on the development of their own political consciousness at Williams.



Counterclockwise. Amy Holzapfel with Carla Gutierrez ('98) and Mireya Hurtado ('97); Jana Sawicki making a virtual appearance; Carla Gutierrez ('98), Vickie Vértiz ('98), Gregory Mitchell, and Marcela Villada Peacock; Bonnie O'Keefe ('09); Julia Brown ('05) and Kevin Poole.



I bought my first-ever Williams T-shirt this October. I had not been compelled to represent the college, since, as a student, the class, gender, and racially-based prejudices present at the school weighed heavily on my shoulders. But there were some things I could not see while I was a student that I see now. The

WGSS Conference introduced me to women who integrated the college when it first went co-ed. Their value and intelligence was dismissed at Williams because of who they were. I knew how they felt. Meeting women who had also struggled for me to be at Williams allowed me to see myself in them. After I read a poem called "Lucky" from my collection Swallows, many of those women recognized my working class scars and saw themselves in me. Students from groups such as Vista and the Mellon Fellows also shared their experiences. All these years later and I am still finding solidarity with other students; that's how I survived as a student: walking with friends. Visiting reminded me how important it is for working class, queer, and people of color alumnus to connect with current students, connecting with our essential selves. Reading my writing at Williams allowed me to build solidarity with faculty and students in a new way and it freed me from the lack I used to feel as a student. Now I have several communities to stand with and say, that like them, I cleaved myself away from home, made my way to Williams, and paid for my education with my work. Williams IS for us. I have the shirt and the poems to prove it.

Thank you to Greg Mitchell, Marcela Villada-Peacock, and Molly Magavern who made my trip possible. Thank you for still making sure our students and staff thrive, connect, and persist at Williams.

Vickie Vértiz '98, Political Science
vertiz.wordpress.com





Left. Justin Adkins and Katie Kent ('88). Center. Ashley Weeks-Cart ('02). Right. Karen Swann, Alison Case, Meredith Hoppin.

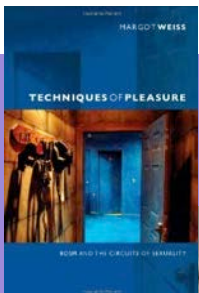


NEW SEASON of WGSS PODCAST, *THE CRITICAL LEDE*

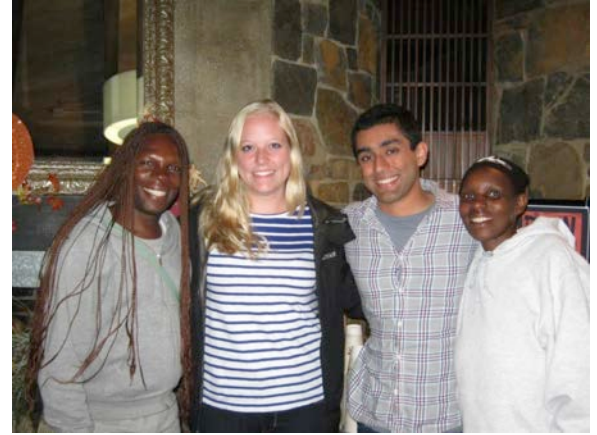
This semester WGSS senior Marissa Lowe and student producer Iman Lipumba launched a new season of *The Critical Lede*, a podcast featuring interviews with authors of new and notable books in the fields of gender studies, sexuality, and queer theory. Together with Professor Mitchell, they interviewed Sarah Schulman (CUNY), author of *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International*, Margot Weiss (Wesleyan), author of *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM & the Circuits of Sexuality*, and Erica Lorraine Williams (Spelman), author of *Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Encounters*. They also interviewed WGSS alum, Johannes Mosquera Wilson about his work with LGBT prisoners through the prison abolitionist organization Black & Pink along with cofounder, Jason Lydon.



Left to Right. Gregory Mitchell, Johannes Mosquera Wilson ('11), Jason Lydon, Marissa Lowe ('14).



WGSS Welcomes Ugandan HIV and LGBT Activists



For several weeks in October WGSS hosted three Ugandan activists who work on HIV, sexuality and transgender rights. Beyonce Amooti, founder of Transgender Equality Uganda, Flavia Kyomukama, National Coordinator of the Global Coalition of Women Against AIDS in Uganda, and Rev. Mark Kiyimba, a Unitarian Universalist minister who has been speaking out against Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, came to many of our classes, were on a panel discussion after a well-attended screening of *God Loves Uganda*, gave an Oakley Center colloquium, and found many other ways to meet students and faculty informally. Mountain Day was one of their highlights, as was a trip to NYC to meet activists working with trans women of color. Kiaran Honderich, Justin Adkins and Jonathan Leamon-Morgan will be leading a winter study trip to



Uganda in January to continue working with them, creating cooperatively-run income generating activities with their and other marginalized groups. Prof. Honderich explained, "We have been working with these activists for several years in Uganda, and it was very exciting to deepen our relationship by bringing them to Williamstown, having them stay in our homes and eat in the dining halls. We are grateful to the Oakley Center, the Gaudino Fund, the Center for Learning in Action, the Dively Fund, the QSU, WASO, Dean Sneed, the Davis Center and many others for

making it possible." Meanwhile, Flavia was amazed to learn that there are people in the US, which is the wealthiest of countries, who die of AIDS for lack of good medical care. She also asked students and faculty how we could be carrying on classes as usual in the middle of a government shutdown, rather than being out in the streets demonstrating. Beyonce said she especially enjoyed Prof. Mitchell's lecture on Brazilian trans sex workers, seeing

commonalities and differences with her own experiences in Uganda. Students in Prof. Honderich's HIV class had the chance to learn from our guests in small group discussions about the realities of trans Ugandan women and other marginalized groups' vulnerability to rape and HIV transmission, and about their healthcare needs. Beyonce explained that trans women who had been raped were unable to receive healthcare, including post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV transmission, since doctors would respond so badly to their being trans women. The US mission has recently identified a particular doctor who is willing and able to work with them at an international hospital in the capital, Kampala, so now if one of Beyonce's group is raped Beyonce can accompany her to that hospital, use a kind of code that has been supplied by the Mission, and they will receive free treatment. Discussions even got so lively that during the Gaudino dinner, everyone closed down Dodd for the night!



Clockwise from Upper Left. Beyonce Amooti, Kiaran Honderich, Flavia Kyomukama, and Zanele Muholi; Amooti and Kyomukama with Kairav Sinha ('15) and Kelsey Loy ('15); Amooti with Helen O'Brien ('16); Melissa Minor (Northwestern University), Amooti, Prof. Honderich, Rev. Mark Kiyimba; Amooti and Kyomukama with Max Magana ('14).

Williams Students Get a First-Hand Look at Drag Show... and Community

Students in WGSS 240: Performing Masculinity in Global Popular Culture took a recent field trip to Northampton to Diva's, the region's premiere performance venue for drag competitions, to attend the first annual Mr./Miss Diva's Pageant in which six drag kings and queens competed for the respective titles. "I was fascinated to watch the restroom doors and see the people going in and out whose presentation was so incongruous with the sign on the door. I very much enjoyed watching the diversity of people and gender presentations. It felt nice to be in a *queer space*, which is so often missing from my life," said Maia McCormick ('14). For many of the two dozen students, the show was a first for them. "It was my first time watching a drag show in person," said Hector Trujillo ('16), noting that he'd been excited about it for days. He



continued, "Obviously, a lot of things have changed since Jack Halberstam [a queer theorist and the keynote speaker at last year's Worlds of Wonder conference at Williams] wrote about masculinity and performance.... They didn't rely on an effortless masculinity that the first drag kings in San Francisco historically called upon or what the white male heterosexual norm seems to perpetuate. These drag kings [relied] on over-the-top

performances - masculinity that was portrayed as all but effortless here." Penny Sun commented, "I was surprised by the insight of some of [the contestants] in answering their questions because they were able to make their answers personally relevant in a way that tied themselves to the greater Diva's/LGBTQ community." Indeed, several contestants mentioned proposing to their spouses at Diva's, and many spoke about how the relationships they forged through the drag performing community had sustained them through difficult times, allowing the students to understand drag as much more than just a fun hobby, but as something historically important for queer communities and a means for exploring the construction of gender.

Have an update or an idea for a feature in the next newsletter?

Email Professor Mitchell at gm1@williams.edu

ALUMNI and FACULTY UPDATES

Ilona Bell, Clarke Professor of English, is returning from a sabbatical which she spent working on Mary Wroth, the first English woman to write and publish a substantial collection of secular poems. Bell was working on a critical study and an edition of Wroth's poems which juxtapose the seemingly conventional text printed in 1621 with Wroth's own handwritten version which explores some of the most sensitive and explosive topics of the day: the anguish of undesired arranged marriage; the thrill and danger of carrying on a furtive premarital and then extramarital love affair; the strain of appeasing an irate spouse; the fear and anxiety of extramarital pregnancy; the fate of children conceived out of wedlock. The seminar Bell is teaching this spring, WGSS 348, examines the ways in which challenges to conventional gender norms propel and disturb the poetry of Shakespeare, Donne, and Wroth. Please note that this course has been changed from a 400 level seminar to a tutorial which may appeal more to WGSS.

Lynda Bundtzen, Professor Emerita, published "Traumatic Repetition in *Capriccio*" in the book, *Ted Hughes: From Cambridge to Collected*. It is about Ted Hughes's collaboration with artist Leonard Baskin in a series of poems and engravings about his mistress, Assia Wevill. In it, Bundtzen gives a feminist critique of these poems as essentially denying Weyll's humanity in order for him to bury her in myth. He doesn't really succeed.



Latonya Trotter ('98). I am an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. And what a long, strange road it's been. When I left Williams, an academic career was the furthest thing from my mind. I moved to San Francisco and worked within a number non-profits that provided either direct service or did health research. Many years later, I completed an MPH, eventually traveling back to the east coast to complete a doctorate. Today, I am a medical sociologist and ethnographer who studies the intersection of medical work and social life. My current project, *Medical Work/Nursing Work*, is a multi-sited ethnography that investigates the rise of the nurse practitioner in primary care. I'm interested in how changes in the medical workplace are altering our ideas about what it means to care for the sick. Moving to Nashville has been quite a cultural shift, but I am excited to find myself in new terrain. Being here has already impacted the shape of my work

as well as the rest of my life. So far, luring visitors to Nashville is turning out to be a pretty easy thing to do!

Kathryn V. White '88

For pure fun and in response to full schedules, short attention spans, and desires for immediate gratification, I've embraced short story and flash fiction writing. Flash fictions are short stories--but usually in the 500 to 1,000 word range. My intent is to share stories that are meaningful, playful, inspirational, and insightful. I like to weave in spiritual and philosophical themes and alternative perspectives.

To find out more, please visit: www.kathrynVwhite.com



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W G S S F A L L 2 0 1 3 C O U R S E S

101: Intro to Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies	Cowden/Mitchell	MR 2:35-3:50
129: Blacks, Jews & Women	Singham	M 7:00-9:40
200: Nordic Lights: Literary & Cultural Diversity in Modern Scandinavia	Martin	TR 9:55-11:10
203: Chicana/o Film & Video	Chavoya	WF 11:00-12:15 M 7:00 – 9:40 (Screening)
205: Gender & Economics	Schmidt	MWF 11-12:15
209: Poverty in America	Johnson	MR 1:10 – 2:25
213: Race, Gender & the Alien Body: Octavia Butler's Science Fiction	Manigault-Bryant, R.	Tutorial
224: Sexuality and Seduction in 19 th & 20 th c. France	Martin	TR 11:20-12:35
228: Feminist Bioethics	Pedroni	TF 2:35-3:50
250: Gender, Sexuality & the Modern Stage	Holzapfel	Tutorial
252: Modern Women Writers and the City	Druxes	MR 1:10 – 2:25
254: Manet to Matisse	Ockman	TR 11:20 – 12:35
328: Jane Austen and George Eliot	Sokolsky	MR 2:35 – 3:50
332: Postwar Britain: Gender, Race, Sexuality & Social Change (1945-1990)	Waters	MR 2:35 – 3:50
334: Sex & Psyche: A Cultural History of Fin-de-Siecle Europe	Fishzon	TR 11:20 – 12:35
348: Donne, Shakespeare, and Wroth	Bell, I.	TF 1:10 – 2:25
379: Black Women in the United States	Long	TF 1:10 – 2:25
396: Modern Pleasure	Cowden	W 1:10-3:50
402: Global Sex: Identities, Migration, Globalization (WGSS Senior Seminar)	Mitchell	M 7:00 – 9:40
451: Ideal Bodies: The Modern Nude and Its Dilemmas	Ockman	W 1:10 – 3:50
452: Women in America, 1620-1865	Long	W 1:10 – 3:50