Study of Women and Gender

SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER
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[Māhealani Wendt sharing knowledge with Hōkūao Pellegrino during “Water Is Life” event on March 21]
[Photo courtesy of Jade Chiara]
Meet Jina Kim, New SWG Professor for the 2018-2019 Academic Year!

- Tell us about yourself and your interests!

First of all, I want to express how excited I am to be joining the faculty at Smith, in part because I completed my undergraduate degree at another historically women’s college, Agnes Scott (where I double majored in English and Studio Art). I did my graduate training at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where I received a joint PhD in English and Women's Studies. In terms of scholarship, my research engages the intersections of womxn-of-color feminisms, critical disability studies, and contemporary ethnic American literatures and cultures.

Outside of the classroom, I’m a total art nerd--I was a printmaker and book artist in a past life and I try to exercise that craft whenever I can. I was involved in Asian American as well as food justice activism in Detroit, which is where I lived before I came to the Five Colleges, and am currently figuring out how to get involved in a similar capacity here. Finally, true to every SWG stereotype, I am a dedicated cat lady, and enjoy being with my cats every chance I get.

- What kinds of books/theorists are you reading these days, and what kinds of reading would you recommend to students?

In terms of scholarship, I’m currently working through Mimi Thi Nguyen’s The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and other Refugee Passages, Uri McMillan’s Embodied Avatars: Genealogies of Black Feminist Art and Performance, and Alexander Weheliye’s Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human. Most of the scholarship I read, broadly speaking, is in the fields of critical ethnic studies, disability studies, and queer of color/ feminist of color critique. As of now, I’m particularly interested in how critics are writing about agency and humanness in the context of racial capitalism.

Classic scholarly texts I always turn to (and highly recommend) include Roderick Ferguson’s Aberrations in Black, Cathy Cohen’s "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens,” Rosemarie Garland-Thomson’s Extraordinary Bodies, and Patricia Yaeger’s Dirt and Desire.

In terms of non-academic writing, I’m currently enjoying Samantha Irby’s blog "bitches gotta eat" and Jesmyn Ward’s Men We Reaped. I also just finished teaching Marilyn Chin's Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen and highly recommend it!

- What brought you to academia, and what is your teaching pedagogy?

I came to academia because it gave me the structure and intellectual freedom to engage with the kinds of ideas--on disability, race, and gender--that few other spaces can afford. It's a huge bonus that I am able to teach the kinds of students--at Mount Holyoke now, and at Smith soon--that not only welcome these ideas, but push my own thinking to new levels.

I employ a feminist disability pedagogy in the classroom, which means I acknowledge, honor, and aim to validate the many ways in which students can process and practice knowledge. For instance, I offer a range of assignment types that appeal to different types of learning. For their final project, I often allow students to choose between a traditional research-based essay, a creative project (i.e. poetry, performance, video, and so forth), and an action project (i.e. an activist or community engagement project). Because disability studies scholars believe that students can demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways (other than writing or examinations), I try to offer a number of possible platforms through which students can engage course ideas. Also, I am aware that there are many forms that participation can take (other than regular spoken contributions to classroom discussion), so I structure activities like free-writes, small group discussions, or even craft activities (where
students create a visual interpretation of a concept) into my class sessions. These are just a couple of the strategies I employ in the classroom that I believe reflect a feminist disability pedagogy, which of course is always evolving!

- What would be your dream class to teach at Smith College?

I would love to teach my Narratives of Race, Disability, and Illness course at Smith College, which places disability studies/activism/writing in conversation with feminist-of-color studies/activism/writing. Some people we read include: Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, Aurora Levins Morales, and Loretta Ross, the latter of which have papers in the Sophia Smith archives. I would also love to teach a course on literatures of environmental justice, as well as a course on feminist-of-color health activism and politics. Oh! And I would absolutely love to bring my Gender and Sexuality in Asian America course to the Smith campus. I also am very open to suggestions from students, so please don’t hesitate to get in touch!

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**SWG Fellowships and Awards**

The Jeanne McFarland and Valeria Dean Burgess Stevens Prizes are awarded annually by the Program for the Study of Women and Gender and the Project on Women and Social Change for excellent work in the study of women and gender.

The Schuster Van Dyne Prize in Queer Studies is awarded annually by the Program for the Study of Women and Gender for excellent work in queer studies.

The Meg Quigley Prize is awarded annually for the best work in SWG 150 Introduction to the Study of Women and Gender.

[Papers are due by 4pm on Monday, May 1, 2017, by electronic submission to rsiegel@smith.edu. Items that cannot be submitted electronically may be submitted in hard copy to the program office, Seelye 207b. More information found at www.smith.edu/swg/prizes.php]

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**Congratulations!**

Ginetta Candelario ’90, Professor of Sociology and Latin American and Latino/a studies, as one of three professors chosen for this year’s Sherrerd Awards.

The honorees were chosen based on nominations submitted by Smith students, faculty and alumnae, who cited passion, accessibility and humor as among the exceptional attributes of the 2017 award winners.

This year’s award recipients will be formally recognized at an October ceremony and reception that are open to the campus community.

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**This Year’s Graduating SWG Majors**

Becca Damante, Sophia Ladner, Eli Bergman, Marta Vivanco, Tegan Waring, Alison DeBois, Jade Chihara, Sam Davis, Leah Henry, Alexis Hott, Mimi Moses, Hanna Pennington, Vanessa Pius, Hana Sarfan, Tori Schaer, Kate Whitney, Katharine Cooney, Cecelia Lim, Sonia Lawrence, and Camille Williams Ginsberg
Upcoming Events

Laverne Cox
Monday April 17th at 7pm
John M. Greene Hall
Laverne Cox—the Emmy Award-winning actress, producer and activist, is perhaps best known for her role as Sophia Burset in Orange Is the New Black. Cox will offer prepared remarks and then participate in a moderated question-and-answer session with Jennifer DeClue, assistant professor of the Study of Women and Gender at Smith.

In Our Own Words: On Being Trans at Smith
An auto-ethnographic documentary directed by Sam Davis
Thursday April 20th at 8pm
Seelye 106
As society's definition of who constitutes a gender-minority evolves, how do traditionally all-female colleges decide to or not to adapt? Over the span of one year, Sam Davis ('17) interviewed up to 40 current Smith students and alumni who identify as trans and/or non-binary to create the first trans archive at Smith College. This film is a collection of footage from these interviews--it examines the relationship between Smith and their trans and non-binary students through the lens of one trans student. "In Our Own Words" asks--how do these trans students fit into Smith’s vision of "women for the world"? How are trans students supported or unsupported by the administration and their fellow students? This film explores erasure, hypervisibility, transphobia, views about trans students at all levels of the institution, and the ongoing debate of who does and does not "belong" at Smith.

“Intersectional in the Streets: Resistance in a Time of Trump” with Linda Sarsour
Wednesday April 26th from 7pm - 9pm
Weinstein Auditorium
Palestinian American activist Linda Sarsour was the co-chair of the 2017 Women’s March, held the day after the inauguration of Donald Trump, and of the recent Day Without Women protest on International Women's Day. Sarsour was, until recently, the executive director of the Arab Association of New York and has been part of a host of other progressive movements, including Black Lives Matter and Respond With Love.
There will be a talk followed by a Q and A. Event is open to the public!

Queer Undertakings: An Ethnographic Analysis of the Funeral Industry in Transition
SWG Honors Thesis Presentation, Vanessa Plus
Thursday April 27th at 4:15pm
Seelye 207
The funeral industry is undergoing a transition from the hands of men to women, as well as the shift from funeral families to first generation funeral directors without family ties. These thesis analyzes interviews from 40 interviews with funeral directors from 15 states using queer theory and other theoretical frameworks.

End of the Year Study of Women and Gender Major Celebration: Postcards and Pie
Thursday April 27th from 7:30pm - 9pm
Seelye 207
Join the SWG Department Faculty and Students for a celebratory end of year gathering. This year we will be celebrating with pie and political postcard writing! Come, have a piece of local pie, shmooze, and craft a postcard with a message to your local or state representatives.
[From February 3rd - March 9th, students, professors, community members, and local partners gathered in the "Undesigning the Redline" exhibit in the Knowledge Lab to discuss the historical and current implications of redlining, particularly as it pertains to Western Massachusetts. Here, Jade Chihara, SWG ’17, Mariana Delmonte-Gladstone, UMass, Ibrahim Ali, Co-Director of Gardening the Community, April de Simone, co-founder of Designing the We, Lisa Armstrong, Professor of SWG, and Leah Parker-Bernstein, SWG ’18 gather to present the GIS mapping work of students in SWG 230, “Gender, Land, and Food Movement”.]

[5 college Hawai‘i students with Hōkūao after “Water is Life” presentation]
[Photo courtesy of Jade Chihara]
‘Asian American Feminism: Not Your Asian Sidekick’ Conference
Saturday, April 8th, Neilson Browsing Room

[A student-led workshop was held during the day to facilitate discussions on AAPI feminist activism, allyship, and identity.]

[The Smith College activism org Pan Asians in Action (PAIA) with the keynote speakers of the day, Prof. Miliann Kang (UMass) and activist Miriam Yeung.]

[A group photo with attendees, PAIA (Pan Asians In Action) organizers, keynote Miliann Kang (UMass), and panelists Prof. Floyd Cheung, Prof. Laura Fugihawa, and Prof. Karen M. Cardozo.]
WHO? The Five College Certificate in Reproductive Health, Rights and Justice is the first of its kind in the country. This certificate, which will be co-directed by Carrie Baker and Jennifer Nye (at UMass) next year, has over 50 students in the program thus far. Sarah Shannon will be the first Smith Student to graduate with this certificate, this spring!

WHAT? The Reproductive Health, Rights and Justice Certificate offers Five College students the opportunity to develop a strong understanding of the social, economic, legal and political conditions that influence human reproduction in both U.S. and transnational contexts. Working across disciplines, students gain a strong understanding of reproductive health, rights, and justice, including knowledge of the historical and global context for current policy debates, how race and class influence the reproduction of individuals and communities, and the reproductive justice framing of abortion and contraception. The certificate requires a community engagement/activist component that enables students to expand upon and apply what they are learning in the classroom.

HOW? To obtain a Five College Certificate in Reproductive Health, Rights and Justice, students complete six courses, including one foundational course, one transnational course, and one upper-level course. Students also complete a community engagement/activist experience of at least 40 hours that engages the student with issues of reproductive health, rights, or justice. Students work with their advisers to choose an appropriate community engagement/activist experience. Smith advisers are SWG’s Carrie Baker (cbaker@smith.edu) and Sociology’s Leslie King (lesking@smith.edu).

MORE INFO? Find more information at: https://www.fivecolleges.edu/reproductive-health-rights-justice

[Students in Carrie Baker’s Reproductive Justice Class, SWG 271, on March 21st]
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SWG Course Offerings: Fall 2017

SWG 101 SWG Reads
Payal Banerjee and Ginetta E. B. Candelario
W 7:30 -9:30pm

SWG 200 The Queer '90s
Jennifer M. DeClue
MW 1:10-2:30pm

SWG 204 This Bridge Called My Back: Women of Color Cultural Production
Laura Fugikawa
T TH 10:30- 11:50am

SWG 222 Gender, Law and Policy
Carrie N. Baker
MWF 11:00am -12:10pm

3xx LGBTQ Politics and Post Colonialism
Svati Shah
T 7:30-9:30pm

SWG 324 Queering Displacement: Race, Sexuality and Space
Laura Fugikawa
T 1-2:50pm

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@ https://www.facebook.com/SmithSWG/