

Women's Studies News

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Teaching Activism: Women's Studies in the 21st Century



Rory Kennedy, to speak at this year's conference, on April 30th.

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As a regional branch of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) for 32 years, the New England Women's Studies Association (NEWSA) seeks to bring together regional women's/gender studies programs, departments, and women's centers to share scholarship, community events, and educational opportunities for students. NEWSA's mission, to be a feminist anti-racist network open to all and which actively seeks new meeting ground for discussions about Women's Studies and social change, is reflected in the themes of NEWSA's conferences in previous years: "Culture, Work and Power: Building Working Relationships among Women of Color and White Women" at Bentley College; "International Feminism, Human Rights and the Women's Studies Classroom" at Suffolk Law School; "Code Red: A Feminist Call to Action" at UConn, Storrs; and "Performing Activism" at UMass Dartmouth.

This year's conference, "Teaching Activism: Women's Studies in the 21st Century," is being held at UMass Dartmouth April 30th–May 1st. Highlights include a workshop on April 30th from 2:00-5:00P.M. with Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy

Richards, who are celebrating the 10th anniversary of *Manifesto: Young Women, Feminism and the Future*, on the afternoon of April 30th. Baumgardner and Richards workshop will focus on activism and ways to integrate activism into our teaching, our learning, and our lives. Undergraduate students on the UMass Dartmouth campus will be invited to the workshop.

The conference keynote is Rory Kennedy, a well-known activist and documentary filmmaker, who will speak at 7:00P.M. on April 30th. Her talk will be followed at 8:00P.M. with a viewing of her award-winning documentary *American Hollow*, which tells the story of the Bowling clan in Kentucky's Appalachian mountains. The film explores family history, tradition, and the life force of Iree Bowling, the clan's matriarch. This event is free and open to the public.

The events of May 1st include a broad range of presentations and workshops. For a detailed schedule and a conference registration form, please go to: <http://newsa.nwsa.org/>

A Word from WMS Majors and Minors

South Africa—Expanding Horizons

Samantha Coffin



Hello Again! Last semester I was writing to you from Washington, DC. I am a little farther away this semester, studying in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Stellenbosch is in the Western Cape, very close to Cape Town. Thus far my experience has been amazing. The flight here was very long and by the time we landed I was not sure what time it was here or there. I have been living in Stellenbosch for a little over a month now and I can surely say I am in love with South Africa. The people, the 11+ languages, the food and the way of life are all unique. I have eaten ostrich, learned a few words of Xhosa and Afrikaans, and have been gifted with a Xhosa name, Mbalentle, meaning beautiful rose.

The first month here has been extremely active. I hiked the cracks in the Cederberg Mountains, visited Cape Point, where the two oceans

meet, spent Valentine's Day with the penguins and skydived over Cape Town. Yes, believe it or not, I am also taking classes and doing service work while here. My most proud achievement has been volunteering as an after school coordinator with the Ikaya Primary After School Program in Kayamandi, a local township near Stellenbosch. Two days a week from 2 until 5 I work with approximately forty 7th graders on Math, English and Arts and Crafts. I encourage them to think about their dreams and their future and help them push themselves to succeed. The project is so rewarding for both me and the students.

There are several more student organizations at Stellenbosch University compared to UMD. One that I joined was UN-A-SA. UN-A-SA is a United Nations branch at the University. I have not done a lot with them yet since we have only

been here about a month. However, we did do a day of HIV/AIDS testing at a local township. I learned more in that day from the patient faces than I could ever learn from any book or article and it is an experience I would have a great difficulty putting into words.

I am also a member of Habitat for Humanity at Stellenbosch University. We haven't been able to do much thus far with that organization either, but plan on working with them consistently over the next few months and joining once I return back home as well. The program I am here through is AIFS and if anyone is thinking about studying abroad in South Africa (which I highly recommend) you should do it through them. They keep you busy but relaxed at the same time.

Also for more information and constant updates visit my blog as sammins.tumblr.com

Living Feminism

Shara Sarnelli



I have been passionate about feminist and humanitarian issues since I was a young girl. I am a driven feminist because equality for all is my ultimate hope for our world. The significance of equality for all sparked from my mother, and is continually supported by the UMass Dartmouth Women's Studies Department.

As a Women's Studies (WMS) minor, I have taken several WMS classes, including global feminism and gender in Brazilian cinema. Courses such as these broaden my knowledge of women of the world, teaching about their struggles and triumphs. Learning about women of foreign lands is uplifting and motivational, driving me to become more active in my beliefs. I now have a deeper understanding of women in other countries, of feminism across the globe, and of my own feminism. I now have a deeper understanding of women in other countries, of

"Being a Women's Studies major has opened my eyes to so many things I would not have noticed before. I am deeply interested in politics and thought it would be great to see how women factor into running for political office, finding jobs, discrimination, public policy or social policy. Through working in the Women's Resource Center I have really grown to love reaching out to others and educating people on the different obstacles, violence or challenges women face and how women can overcome or grow from them."

— Kendra Pereira, Women's Studies Major

"The things I learn in all of my Women's Studies classes make me feel like a strong, independent woman. My professors are so understanding. Being a Women's Studies major has given me so many opportunities on campus. As I prepare to graduate I know that I will set out into the world well prepared to face anything because of what I have studied and learned as a Women's Studies major."

—Kayleigh Moore, Women's Studies's Major

feminism across the globe, and of my own feminism. Exploring the feminist within me has been the most influential part of taking WMS courses. Like I said, I've been a feminist for a long time; but with the background of WMS courses, I am able to understand how my views developed and keep developing, and how to connect my outlooks with feminist theory. My confidence in myself as a feminist is stronger, and I find that I stand up for myself and others more firmly than ever before. I speak out more often when someone is degrading someone else based on gender, sex, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnicity, culture, age, and so on. From the work that I have read in WMS courses, such as "The Story of an Hour," by Kate Chopin, I am more likely to persevere and reach for my dreams, no matter how intangible they seem. The class discussions that transpired in each WMS course have also been encouraging and educational. College women, just like me, are brave enough to openly express themselves in the classroom, offering multiple perspectives on feminism topics. This ability to freely speak, both challenging and agreeing with others, is a right women have had to fight for centuries; some women still do not have this right. I am thankful that the silence here has been broken, and I plan to continue the fight to break that silence elsewhere, as it still lurks and taunts. I plan to battle discrimination each day until it is entirely extirpated. The UMass Dartmouth WMS Department has instilled within me the power and confidence to stand strong and speak intelligently about my beliefs.

"After taking a Women's Studies introduction course I knew I wanted to learn more; I became so passionate about WMS, I decided to switch my major. The classes I've taken have opened up my mind about so much, everything from women & politics to sexual assault and domestic violence. Because of my WMS classes I have become more involved on campus and more inclined to advocate what I have learned. I'm in my second year of working at the Women's Resource Center as a health advocate and my second year of being a Mentor in Violence Prevention (MVP). After I graduate I plan on attending graduate school to get my Master's in Gender Studies."

—Rebecca Ide, Women's Studies Major

This is the major you've been seeking!

WMS Faculty & Affiliates

Welcoming New WMS Affiliates



Pamela Karimi,
Assistant Professor,
of Art History

Pamela Karimi recently received her Ph.D. in History and Theory of Art and Architecture from the Department of Architecture at MIT. Her book project, 'Interior Revolutions: Gender, Domesticity and Consumer Culture in Modern Iran,' for which she has received fellowships from the SSRC, AAUW, and the ACLS, takes the Iranian home and its contents as its subject, treating the modernization of domesticity in Iran both as a historical phenomenon and as a study of local actors responding to the homogenizing pressures of capitalism and globalization. Previous to her appointment at UMass Dartmouth, Pamela had taught at NYU, Brandeis University, and Wellesley College and her articles and reviews have appeared in *Persica*, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *The Art Journal*, *Thresholds*, *Bidoun*, *The Arab Studies Journal*, and *The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*. She is the recipient of 2009 I.B. Tauris Best Essay Award for Anthropology of Iran and the 2010 Scott Opler Grant for Emerging Professionals from the Society of Architectural Historians. This semester Pamela is teaching, "WMS 300: Women, Gender, and Domesticity in Contemporary Art," an advanced undergraduate seminar designed to introduce students to important concepts found at the intersection of gender studies, architectural design, art, and visual culture.



Chunbei Wang,
Assistant Professor
of Economics.

Chunbei Wang joined the Economics department at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in 2008 after receiving her Ph.D. degree from the University of Texas at Dallas. She was an adjunct professor at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota from 2006 to 2008 while pursuing her degree. Her teaching interests are in Econometrics and Labor Economics, including such topics as immigration, entrepreneurship, race discrimination, and gender. She has written a few research papers on the economics of immigration and entrepreneurship, investigating causes of the low self employment rates among Mexican-Americans and the effect of 9/11 terrorist attacks on the self employment decisions of immigrants. Her work has been published in *Research in Labor Economics*, *International Journal of Manpower*, and *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. She will teach the Economics of Sex and Race Discrimination in Fall 2010. This course will use economic tools to examine gender and race discrimination. Traditional economic models such as the theories of comparative advantage, supply and demand, and consumer choices will be introduced to provide interesting insight on the issues of family and work, discrimination, and related government policies. Students will learn to apply the "economic way of thinking" to analyze the decisions of marriage, fertility, household production, and work, and to answer questions such as: Why do people marry? Why have marriage and fertility rates fallen? Why do men and women work in different occupations? Why are men paid more than women, and whites paid more than nonwhites? How do government policies affect women's marriage and work decisions? What are the gender differences in earnings in other countries?

Scholarships:

WMS Major/ Minor Tuition Scholarship
Dr. Janet A. Freedman Book Scholarship

Deadline to apply is May 20th.

Please e-mail Claire Travers at C1Travers@umassd.edu for further information.

Affiliate News

Dário Borim Associate Professor and chair of the Department of

Portuguese at UMass Dartmouth, Borim is also a translator, creative writer, concert producer, and radio Internet programmer at WUMD (89.3 FM and www.893wumd.org). He has two books out: the first one is of personal and political essays, *Paisagens Humanas* (Papiro, 2002) and, the second, of cultural and literary analysis, *Perplexidades* (EdUFF 2004). He is currently translating a book on bossas nova comp-oser Antonio Carlos Jobim into English. Much of his research focuses on the interplay between literature and music, from socio-historical and cultural studies perspectives. He has published widely on Caetano Veloso, lectured on Brazil's women composers, and produced radio specials on Brazilian classical and choro music. Professor Borim will be teaching "Gender & Society in Brazilian Cinema" (WMS/POR 371) in Fall 2010.

Michael Baum, Associate Professor and Chair of the Political Science

Department has published his and coauthor Ana Espirito-Santo's analysis of the passage of Portugal's gender quota law in an edited volume in Portugal. "As causas para a adopcao da Lei de Paridade em Portugal," [Explaining the Adoption of the Parity Law in Portugal] in Andre Freire and Jose M. L. Viegas (Eds.) *Representacao Politica: o caso Portugues em perspectiva comparada* [Political Representation: the Portuguese case in comparative perspective. Lisbon: Sextante, 2009, pps: 375–414. An abbreviated English-language version is forthcoming in the journal *West European Politics* in 2010.

Anna M. Klobucka, Professor of Portugese, has written a book: *O Formato Mulher: A Emergência da Autoria Feminina na Poesia Portuguesa* [Format Woman: The Emergence of Female Authorship in Portuguese Poetry] was published in Coimbra (Portugal) by Angelus Novus. Through an in-depth study of the writings of six prominent Portuguese women poets from early twentieth century to the present, it traces the gradual and diverse articulation of female-gendered lyric subjectivity and authorial personae against the background of a national literary tradition that has gendered literary, and especially poetic, authorship as an exclusively male prerogative for many centuries. At the book signing held at the Casa Fernando Pessoa in Lisbon on January 14th, *O Formato Mulher* was presented by Portugal's leading woman poet and a noted feminist literary scholar Ana Luísa Amaral. Dr. Klobucka was also interviewed on Portuguese radio and TV and her book and other recent publications were discussed in a profile published in late January in the cultural supplement of Portugal's principal newspaper *Público*.

Juli Parker, Director of the Women's Resource Center is publishing and edited an anthology on literary representations of women who murder. She is also currently in a play at 2ND Story Theater in Warren Rhode Island, and is hoping to direct this spring at Your Theatre.

Third Annual WMS Scholarship Fundraiser

Empowering and Educating through Community Engagement



This year's Women's Studies Program and Women's Resource Center dinner event, featuring Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, marks the third annual Women's Studies scholarship fundraiser, and celebrates the Women's Resource Center's 40th Anniversary. Ms. Braun's initial presentation in the Auditorium from 2–3 P.M. on April 15, 2010, was free and open to the UMass Dartmouth Community as well as the public. Over 100 people attended the event and learned about Ambassador Braun's journey to her current work creating sustainable and organic food products.

At the evening fundraiser to benefit the Women's Studies Program and Women's Resource Center, Ambassador Braun provided an uplifting talk about making a difference in our communities. Braun stressed the importance of individual commitment to ideals and goals, as one of the most effective and ultimately far-reaching avenues to enabling and fostering change in our society and throughout the world. According to Braun, conversations and discussions with family, friends, and small groups have a much greater influence than most of us realize and can be the catalyst to major changes.

She gave an example using the victory of the 19TH Amendment to the constitution, making woman suffrage the law of the land: Harry Burn, a young representative from Tennessee, wore the red rose of the anti-suffragists on his lapel as he stood and quickly cast his "Aye" vote in the House Chamber. That one vote made the difference—the vote was 49 to 47. It seems that his mother back home had

been reading the newspapers about the debate and had written her son asking him to vote for the amendment. When asked to explain himself when the assembly reconvened the next day, he rose in the House chamber and said, "I know that a mother's advice is always safest for her boy to follow, and my mother wanted me to vote for ratification." Whatever the origin of the comment or conversation that made his mother write to him to cast his vote in favor of suffrage for woman, it helped to shape history.

After nearly 30 years of public service, Braun has transitioned to the private sector and returned to her agricultural roots where she has embraced biodynamics as a holistic, sustainable agricultural system that could provide the American people with a healthier environment and better quality food production. In her afternoon talk, Braun spoke of the toxins in pesticides which are allowed in trace amounts, to kill the insect that destroys the coffee bean; and bovine injections that promote cows to give more milk. Again, she challenged the individual, the family, to be the elements of change in our eating habits, simply by reading food labels, by becoming more aware of what we are eating, and making decisions to change bad habits and eat healthier.

Carol Moseley Braun's visit to UMass Dartmouth revealed a strong proponent of sustainability and her firm commitment to leave a better world for our children. Her time on campus and talks with the community left us with a challenge: What will our legacy be for the future? What role will you play in making history?

Course Highlights

POR371/WMS 371, Gender and Society in Brazilian Cinema, taught by Dário Borim Associate Professor of Portuguese

A thematic study of cinematographic representations of gender identities and practices within social contexts. Fostering global awareness and artistic literacy (Gen ED C & G), topics include construction of feminine and feminist identities; masculinity and power relations; sexuality and national identity; same-sex and other non-traditional relations of love and intimacy; and machismo, ethnic and socio-economic disparity and alienation in contemporary life under women film-makers' scrutiny. After viewing releases from the last half-century, we will discuss sexual icons in the cinematic industry; self-image, beauty patterns, and social alienation; sexuality, traditional wifehood, and adultery; prostitution, power relations, and upward mobility; women's political engagement and myth making; polygamy, tolerance, and pragmatism; same-sex relations and trans gender identities; poverty, loneliness and ethical fallacies.

HST 376/WMS 300 History of Brazil, taught by Cristina Mehrtens, Assistant Professor of History

HST/WMS 376 revisits Brazilian history from European contact, colonial rule, independence, to integration in the world economy in the nineteenth century. It explores the development of industry and agriculture in the twentieth-century to globalization. Through the analysis of texts and images, students examine historical processes embedded in meanings of ethnicity and the representations of national identity. Students use and critique significant web sources and original documents. The course incorporates active learning techniques and special events (e.g., guest lecturers, films, and presentations). The course requires readings, lectures, different assignments, and both in-class and online class discussion.

HST/WMS 403 Modern Brazil: Gender, Urban Space, and Race, taught by Cristina Mehrtens, Assistant Professor of History

HST/WMS 403 examines historical processes embedded in the modern representations of gender and urban space in Brazil and their relation to different parts of Latin America. The course revisits Brazilian history and focuses on how categories of gender, race, and nation permeated the twentieth-century political discourses of identity. Students critically inquiry into the literature to explore how gender permeated the biographical discourse embedded in different political projects. The seminar focuses on how historical interpretations of national event have differently valued Brazilian men and women. Classes consist primarily of seminar discussions, short lectures, and in-class activities. The course requires attendance, readings, in-class/online discussions, and an original research paper.

ECO 343/WMS 343 The Economics of Sex and Race Discrimination, taught by Chunbei Wang, Assistant Professor of Economics

This course will use economic tools to examine gender and race discrimination. Traditional economic models such as the theories of comparative advantage, supply and demand, and consumer choices will be introduced to provide interesting insight on the issues of family and work, discrimination, and related government policies. Students will learn to apply the "economic way of thinking" to analyze the decisions of marriage, fertility, household production, and work, and to answer questions such as: Why do people marry? Why have marriage and fertility rates fallen? Why do men and women work in different occupations? Why are men paid more than women, and whites paid more than nonwhites? How do government policies affect women's marriage and work decisions? What are the gender differences in earnings in other countries?

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The Women's Studies program would like to extend a special thank you to Gerard M. Koot, Chancellor Professor and Chairperson of History and Teaching & Learning Departments and Director of (MAT) Masters of Art in Teaching, as he retires at the end of this semester. Prof. Koot taught the first women's history course at UMass Dartmouth in 1978 and has taught dozens of women's history classes since then. We thank him for his many contributions to the Women's Studies and wish him a good, long and healthy retirement.

We would also like to thank the Women's Studies Affiliates for their enthusiasm and willingness to teach cross listed courses, serve on WMS committees and organize and participate in women's studies events. They play a vital part in all Women's Studies accomplishments.

Allison Terkowitz, our WMS Newsletter designer, also deserves our thanks for her professional attitude, good humor, patience and commitment in creating our Newsletter.

Finally, all our Women's Studies majors and minors are essential to the program; we thank them for their interest, concern and commitment to the future of feminism.

Edited by: Claire Travers
Designed by: Allison Terkowitz

