

Director's Note

by *Ranjana Khanna, Margaret Taylor Smith Director of Women's Studies*

This newsletter, I was planning to write about the division between work and life, and to describe what is probably familiar to most of you—the juggling of work with all its different aspects, and life—which often is everything *not* under the rubric of work. Of course, feminists have done much to undo this binary—those elements of life that have traditionally not been considered work are full of different kinds of work. The distinction between work and labor (elaborated in Marxist thought and then revised by Hannah Arendt)—in which labor is repetitive but private, and work is public—seems to have broken down entirely. Similarly, academic work frequently spills over into what one may normally consider life, with very little distinction between work and life, or between public and private. That is the life of the mind... one of the virtues of academia and one of its shortfalls. Well, I was going to write about all this and tell you about my full, crazy, fulfilling life these days, juggling my teaching, research, advising, and running the Women's

Studies program with a small child and a partner whose academic life is equally busy, but it all simply overwhelmed me so this time I decided to crawl under a blanket and not write anything at all...

Not really—don't worry—I'm still standing! The truth of the matter is that along with my juggling, this year we have a number of wonderful seniors in the capstone major seminar and we wanted to give more space to them. Since we don't have unlimited funds to make our newsletter simply larger (and many of you tell us that you enjoy reading and don't want to give up the newsletter in this form), I'm very happy to give up my space for the undergraduates I'm teaching this semester. The newsletter includes a longer piece with one senior who is also doing an independent study with me. You can read about the lives of these seniors in Women's Studies and what they intend to do next. Until next time...

OUR GRADUATING SENIORS



Taking a moment from their busy academic lives and their Senior Seminar in Women's Studies, pictured are:

Top left to right:
Catalina Blanco,
Jackie Eisner,
Chelsey Amelkin,
Lauren Coleman,
Kristin Heckler

Bottom left to right:
Viviana Santiago,
Courtney Wallace,
Lianne Sheffy

Not pictured: Victoria Bright

Gender, Race and Visual Culture



This fall, students taking WST 360 – *Visualizing Archives: The Sight and Sense of Race*, shared in a cutting-edge media classroom experience through a team-taught video-linked seminar with **Tina Campt** and **Saidya Hartman** (Columbia University). In addition to their weekly meetings via video-link, Duke's students traveled north for two sessions (photo left) to have face-to-face discussions as an extension of the work of the semester.

As the culminating event of our 2009-10 thematic year on Gender, Race, and Visual Culture, Women's Studies will host **Gender-Race-Visuality: The Photograph as Site of Redress**.

This one-day symposium will engage the complicities and potentialities of the photographic image as an ambivalent site of redress. Conference presentations will probe the positive and negative impact of photography as a critical medium for articulating the status of racialized citizens and subjects, and the gendered modalities through which racialization is challenged and produced.



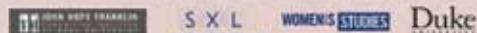
Credit: David Shankbone

Thursday, February 25, 2010

Lecture 5:00 PM Richard White Auditorium	Roundtable 7:00 PM East Duke Parlors
After the Good Life, an Improbable Note on the Cinema of Precarity Lauren Berlant George M. Pullman Professor of English University of Chicago	Tyler Curtain Associate Professor of English and Cultural Studies UNC-Chapel Hill
Reception to follow lecture East Duke Parlors	Maurice Wallace Associate Professor of English and African & African-American Studies, Duke University
	Robyn Wiegman Professor of Women's Studies and Literature, Duke University

After the roundtable, audience members are invited to join in the conversation and share brief reflections on Sedgwick's work in articles, tweets, or collages.

The Duke East Campus Press, a division of the Department of English and the Center for the Study of the Public Sphere, is pleased to announce the publication of this book. The Department of English and the Center for the Study of the Public Sphere are proud to be part of the Duke University community.



Co-sponsors Ian Baucom, Ranjana Khanna, lecturer Lauren Berlant, Ara Wilson

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, who died April 2009, taught in the English Department at Duke from 1988 to 1998. She is well-known for her remarkable pedagogy and her role in helping to create a new mode of interpretation that reappropriated the derogatory word “queer” in order to challenge repression around sexuality and gender. This March, the program in the study of sexualities and Women's Studies, along with the Franklin Humanities Institute, organized an event to honor the work of Eve Sedgwick. The program, attended by over 100, included a lecture by noted Queer Theorist and literary scholar Lauren Berlant, as well as a roundtable featuring reflective talks by Berlant (University of Chicago), Tyler Curtain (UNC-Chapel Hill), Maurice Wallace (Duke) — both former students of Eve's — and Robyn Wiegman.

Spring Events

**GENDER-RACE-VISUALITY:
The Photograph as Site of Redress**

Friday March 26, 2010
10 am to 3 pm
240 John Hope Franklin Center

10am
Maurice Wallace
"Picturing the Promised Land:
Faith, Photography and the Many
Looks of Martin Luther King, Jr."

11:30am
Saidiya Hartman
"The Studio"

2pm
Ariella Azoulay
"The Necessity to Discuss
Photographs That Were
Not Taken"

re-dress: "a re-membering of the social body that occurs through the recognition and articulation of devastation, captivity and enslavement..."

- Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*

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Co-sponsored by African and African American Studies, Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, The Asian/Pacific Studies Institute, The Duke University Center for International Studies, The English Department, The Literature Program, the program in the study of sexualities, Psychology and Neuroscience, Theater Studies

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Credit: Woman Holding Stick by John Cooper (b.1939) Private Collection/
Special Photographers Archive/The Bragelman Art Library

The Pipeline Project

Women are under-represented in the political process, both at the state and federal level. In the US, there are 17 women senators and in the North Carolina senate only 6 women. Just twenty-five per cent of legislators in North Carolina are women (a combination of house and senate).

To help address this issue, on January 15 and 16, Duke students and others, from the Durham, Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem areas, participated in a two-day workshop designed to help prepare women to run for office at the local, state or federal level. **Martha Reeves**, Visiting Professor in Sociology and Women's Studies and **Barbara Ferris**, Executive Director of the International Women's Democracy Center in Washington, DC, organized and conducted the Pipeline Project workshop.

The program covered all of the steps needed to prepare and run a successful campaign. Among the many topics, participants learned the steps required to get on the ballot; how to manage a team of volunteers and campaign staff; how to raise money and develop a budget; how to craft one's message; and how to effectively deal with the media. A lunch-time seminar featuring **Ellie Kinnaird**, state senator from North Carolina, and **Randee Haven-O'Donnell**, alderperson from Carrboro, NC provided the attendees with first-hand knowledge of both the challenges and rewards of public service.

1/20

In-Print: A Celebration of Recent Publications by Duke Professors Tina Campt, Denise Comer, Micaela Jana, Ranjana Khanna, Ellen McLarney, Sean Metzger, Diane Nelson, Rebecca L. Stein

1/27

Kathryn E. Flynn Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences *Profiles in Sexuality Research*, co-sponsored by the program in the study of sexualities and the Center for LGBT Life

2/1

Lindsey Green-Simms "Nollywood/Gollywood Visions: Lesbian Water Spirits, Occult Anxiety, and West African Video Film" *Gender, Race and Visual Culture*

2/18

"Remembering Mary Daly: A Reflection on Her Life and Work" with Elizabeth Clark (Religion), Mary McClintock Fulkerson (Divinity), Amy Laura Hall (Divinity), Kathy Rudy (Women's Studies), Randall Styers (Religious Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill), and reflections by Duke and UNC graduate students

2/21

The End of the Line followed by a panel of Nicholas School of the Environment students from DukeFish, the Durham-based community-supported fishery *New Eco-Feminism Film Series: The Oceans*

2/25

"After Eve" honoring Eve Sedgwick Lecture, Lauren Berlant, George M. Pullman Professor, English, University of Chicago. Roundtable with Tyler Curtain, Maurice Wallace, Robyn Wiegman Co-sponsored by the program in the study of sexualities, the Franklin Humanities Institute, English, and the Program in Literature

2/26-2/27

Money, Sex and Power with Ranjana Khanna and Ara Wilson *Duke in Depth Alumnae Weekend*

3/19-3/20

Feminist Theory Workshop featuring Rey Chow (Duke), Coco Fusco (Parsons The New School for Design), Catherine Mills (University of Sydney, Australia), and Robyn Wiegman

3/26

Gender-Race-Visuality: The Photograph as Site of Redress with Ariella Azoulay, Bar Ilan University, Israel; Saidiya Hartman, Columbia University; Maurice Wallace, Duke University *Gender, Race and Visual Culture*

3/28

The Cove followed by a panel discussion including Anne Allison and Eva Hayward *New Eco-Feminism Film Series: The Oceans*

3/31

Richard N. Pitt, Jr Assistant Professor, Sociology, Vanderbilt University *Profiles in Sexuality Research*, co-sponsored by the program in the study of sexualities and the Center for LGBT Life

Please check our website for more information.

Senior Perspectives



Chelsey Amelkin

Chelsey plans to move to New York City after graduation. Accepted into Teach For America, she is also considering work with one of the public defender offices. She hopes to pursue her JD in the future.

As a freshman I came to college believing that my four years at Duke would help me figure out my place in society. But, what I learned as a member of Women's Studies is that one's "place in society" goes beyond what I originally thought. Determining my "place" came from the work I did in tandem with my curriculum as a minor in the African and African American Studies Department. I would sit in classes, like **Black Love**, and confront issues of identity, and of how gender, race, and class factor into one's identity, with classmates very different from me. In these classes, I was usually the only white student. I believed that immersing myself in the culture I was so eager to learn about would make the learning more real. However, I discovered that because of my hair, my build, or my (insert non-white feature here), most of my classmates thought I was biracial until I identified myself as a "white female." But what did that mean? Why did my race or my identity matter? **Women's Studies helped me grapple with this question and learn that societal forces allow the social constructions of race, class, and gender to form and inform different identities.** These identities gain power, create stigmas, and contribute to the social hierarchy we live in. They create dividing lines or they create a means of unification within groups. **I then understood why it would matter whether I was black or white, because people of different races, and therefore identities, would respond differently to readings and discussions about these culturally charged topics.** I learned that identities hold a lot of power.

Like most of my peers, I entered the department afraid to call myself the "F Word" (feminist, of course), but I leave Duke taking pride in my identity as such. What I've learned from Women's Studies cannot be isolated from any single decision or action I take. It is there when I watch a movie, get into heated political debates, or enter into new relationships. My personal identity as a woman has been deeply impacted by the women I have read, have read about, have been taught by, and have sat in class with. The woman I am today is a woman who feels confident with her place in society, and for that, I am truly and forever grateful.



Victoria Bright

Victoria will be returning in fall and officially graduate in December 2010. After that she hopes to pursue law school and public interest law.

Up until last semester, I somehow could not bring myself to claim the title of feminist. When people would ask, I'd proudly decree my love affair with Women's Studies. My college experience has been profoundly impacted by the study of those powerful, awe-inspiring, x-chromosome yielding creatures whose histories and stories inspire me on a daily basis. And yet when asked whether or not I was a feminist, usually I shrugged and smiled and changed the subject. As an African-American woman, "feminism" has never felt particularly relevant to me and despite years of feminist studies, the word still seems akin to a slightly uncomfortable hand-me-down sweater.

"If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense. Nothing would be what it is, because everything would be what it isn't" – Alice, *Alice in Wonderland*

I have always been fascinated by puzzles and riddles in which the obvious is not as it appears. The exploration of the apparent compels me, while the discovery of the unexpected is thrilling. No, this is not an explanation of how I aced my LSAT (I have yet to take the test), but it *does* explain my attraction to my minor and major. Political behavior and systems of government have always intrigued and mystified me and, as an underclassman, Political Science pulled me into its bewigged forest. But it was the class **Women in the Political Process** that sucked me into the Women's Studies rabbit hole—rivaling anything in *Alice in Wonderland*.

It was this course, and the many taken afterward, that challenged me to question what I had previously perceived to be reality. No longer were the terms "woman" and "gender" collecting dust and grime in the section of my mind assigned to easily defined (and therefore irrelevant) words. Instead, as if they had ingested a growth-increasing cookie, the words became enormous terms consisting of many elements and groups. In each interdisciplinary class I found myself dusting off and rethinking more and more words like *race*, *class*, and *sexuality*. Classroom discussions attacked these words head on with: "What is sex?" "How do we know this information?" and "What does this tell us about the society in which we live?" It became clear that my understanding of what was, and what could possibly be, had been molded into many tightly bound creations that instead were meant to flex, flow and transform.

Feminism in the Historical Context caused me to say to a friend, "I don't know what I know anymore." Like Alice, stuck in the nonsensical world of Wonderland, I felt both exhilarated and petrified. From then on, my experience in the major would be a rebuilding process as my opinions and presumptions were replaced or substantiated by the coursework.

If this had happened at any other time in my highly structured (some would call it overachieving) life, I would have lost my mind, but this was college and rethinking who I was and the way I viewed the world was exactly what I signed up for.

Alice in that magical, if absurd, fairytale couldn't stay in Wonderland forever and unfortunately, the time for me to leave the rabbit hole, my friends, and Duke is quickly approaching. If I were leaving today, I would do so knowing that I received a superior education that challenged me to think in extraordinary ways and built critical analytical skills that will stay with me as I move on to new adventures.



Lauren "LC" Coleman plans to change the world. But she may go to grad school first.

Lauren "LC" Coleman

Over the years, affixing the "Strong Black Woman" badge to my lapel seemed an adequate substitute for claiming feminism. After all, my momma, and all who came before her, had somehow managed to cook, clean, raise children (and often times, raise a husband as well) and work full time without any so-called feminist identification. Joan Morgan says it best in her book, *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: My Life as a Hip-Hop Feminist*: "I did not know that feminism is what you call black warrior women who moved mountains and walked on water. Growing up in their company, I considered these things ordinary." For me, the strength and resilience of black women could be considered, if not a rousing success, then at least holding their own in the department of feminism.

And yet, **from the moment I walked into my first Women Studies class, I felt more at home than I ever had in any academic setting. It may have had something to do with the fact that for the first time (in an academic setting), I felt that it was my story that was being told and validated.** Almost immediately, I was introduced to the concept that "the personal is political" and challenged to find my place within the historical and cultural milieu that modern-day women are lucky/privileged/unfortunate enough to call their own.

Oscar Wilde once said: "Anybody can make history. Only a great man can write it." And while Oscar was a bit on the unenlightened side (only a "man" can write it – c'mon now), he had the right idea. As history is only the recounting of events past, anyone can take part in its making. What is important, and often has the most tangible social and political consequences, is its retelling. Historians are charged with the heady task of putting our lives in context through the storytelling of our ancestors and the appreciation of others. Men, women and children of all ages and races have taken part in this thing we call "history" although not all stories have been equally documented. My major has given me the chance to explore some of these lesser known histories, not the least of which is my own.



Jackie is exploring a range of potential opportunities from working with marine mammals to teaching to working for a film festival.

Jackie Eisner

Before my matriculation in the fall of 2006, my mom invited me to attend her 25th Duke reunion and I was incredibly excited to visit the university that would soon be my own. On a whim, we attended the "Why Women's Studies" panel and immediately, I was sold. What really impressed me was not so much *what* was being said, but the women who were saying it. The three majors who were speaking were three of the most articulate and confident young women I had ever seen. I hoped that by pursuing a major in Women's Studies, I would not only acquire a particular set of skills but, that I would be transformed into a particular type of student.

In high school, I spent a significant amount of time wondering how what I was learning would be applicable to my life after school, but with my current coursework the answer was very clear. After **Gender, Politics, and Higher Education** I began to understand the importance of a mentoring relationship for women in a university setting and sought one out for myself. The search turned out to be very easy for me in a small department filled with strong, professional women. In **Women at Work**, I learned about varying communication styles between men and women. The information helped explain my previous discomfort with the tendency of men to speak over me during group projects. As it happens, the turn-taking patterns in dialogue are a direct result of the different play patterns of little boys and girls based on society's expectation of them. I soon found myself able to communicate more effectively with *both* men and women.

Women's Studies became even more meaningful for me when I realized that the ways I was learning to think about women could be extended to animals and the environments they inhabit. I discovered that the issue of environmental degradation was an important one for Women's Studies, not because of essentialist assumptions that women are closer to nature, but because women understand the danger of not having a voice. I spent a lot of time considering to what extent animals would like to be represented by humans and how best to preserve the legacy of those animals that I worry will soon become extinct. My love of the ocean soon got me thinking about fish, and because fish are further removed from humans, they have been exploited to unimaginable lengths. In the same way that women's bodies have been divided into parts for advertisement and ultimately profit, sharks have been separated from their fins to be consumed as a delicacy. At times the situation seems daunting, but when I remember the confidence and potential of those past WST majors, I remember that Women's Studies has provided me with the same tools and the potential to make the world a better place for others.



Kristin Heckler

Kristin hopes to move to New York and work in a place that provides equal opportunities for women within the theater world. Her eventual dream is to own and operate a community theater.

Since before I can remember I have been interested in women's rights and the treatment of women. I came to Duke aspiring to be an OB-GYN, so Pre-Med and Women's Studies was a logical combination. I could simultaneously save women and quench my thirst for a medical career. My first semester, I took **Gender and Everyday Life** with Kathy Rudy and discovered that Women's Studies was very different from what I had envisioned. I pictured discussions of under-valued women and some man-bashing. This class wasn't like that at all. We watched the film *Live Nude Girls Unite!* and Professor Rudy suggested that stripping didn't have to be degrading. What? Isn't it a given that women selling their bodies do not have respect for themselves nor earn it from others? We read *The Morning After* by Katie Roiphe, who implored readers to consider that the one-in-four sexually abused women statistic may be an overestimate. Perhaps some women are victimizing themselves by retelling a night of mistakes as one of rape. What? Weren't women the victimized gender? Isn't rape rape? From that class, I learned there were many types of women and feminists, and they didn't all need saving.

From the Greek Symposium to Redstockings Radical Feminists, I learned that some people believed things that resonated with me, and others had ideas I completely rejected. Two years in, I quit Pre-Med and added a Theater Studies minor. Although I still wanted to learn about and help women,

I was starting to realize that women didn't necessarily need to be "saved." From studying the Ancient World to the present, I learned that there are so many female perspectives there is no way to know what is best for another woman. Sex work is a choice some women make and enjoy. Motherhood is a profession to some, but others believe relinquishing a career for children is selling out. Everybody has a different path. Every woman is empowered in different ways. It is not my place to tell other women what to believe.

I am still infinitely passionate about equal rights and treatment for women in all walks of life. Now, I would love to work for a theater company that focuses their efforts on promoting women as playwrights, directors, producers, and in other positions of power. Theater is a unique form of expression; and feminism, with its many forms and variations, needs a forum for its voice. Through theater, I would love to help more women find their own voices and leave the "saving" to them.



Viviana Santiago - Candidate for Graduation with Distinction

Viviana hopes to continue paying forward the gifts she received from Women's Studies in her work with young Latina women.

I never imagined that I would study Women's Studies in college. My exposure to the discipline and feminist movement came during my first year. The major's interdisciplinary approach to learning gave me the language to speak of my experiences as a queer 1.5-generation immigrant woman of color. I no longer saw my issues with body image, gender, and sexuality as an individual story, but as part of the greater narrative of women's oppression. The strict definition of femininity with which I was raised was exposed as an illusion. I was not the problem—the definitions and artificial categories that had limited me were the problem; they should and could be broken.

Having long yearned for a new lens through which to see my story, I knew from the first Women's Studies course I took that I had found my academic path. After moving past the "you must study science in order to be a successful Duke student" attitude, I declared WST my major. **I felt drawn to the idea that I was an agent in the production of new knowledge, that my writing and voice as a queer woman of color was both important and necessary to pushing the boundaries of the discipline.** Women's Studies demanded

that truth claims be constantly questioned. Instead of being asked to leave my personal life at the door, I was invited and encouraged to use it to inform everything I read, wrote, and said.

Finding the work of Gloria Anzaldua, a lesbian Chicana feminist writer who spoke of borders and identity conflict, was healing for me. As a similarly identified border dweller who struggled to claim an identity, Anzaldua inspired me to write a thesis on ecofeminism, spirituality, and the borderlands. Furthermore, at an institution which rarely addressed my experience as a "Duke Woman" —**because I was not white, privileged, or a member of the Greek system—Women's Studies was the only place I could openly grapple with my marginal position at Duke and in the world.** Anzaldua's work will stay with me as I embark on a career of immigration law, focused on U.S. border policies, gender, and sexuality.

From building close relationships with faculty in the department to studying gender and sexuality from an international perspective with Muslim lesbian women in The Netherlands, I am grateful for all the opportunities I have had through Women's Studies. These experiences also inspired me to start a Duke Latina women's mentoring network for Latina girls at Rogers Herr Middle School. This has been most rewarding as I have had the chance to become the teacher, the strong woman who says to them that they *do not* have to leave their personal lives at the door, but should speak of and find power in their stories and survival.



Lianne will be returning to New York in May, where she hopes to pursue a career at an intersection of fashion and new media.

Lianne Sheffy

For me, Women's Studies has not necessarily been about finding the answers to societal woes, but rather, about learning to ask the right questions. When I first arrived at Duke four years ago, I made it my duty to enroll in classes that offered the most obscure and unfamiliar content I could find. I thought it was criminal to require a person to declare a major and commit to the study of just one subject. Why limit one's education? Initially, what brought me to Women's Studies, was that it seemed to offer limitless possibilities. I recall one of my earliest conversations with my pre-major advisor, our very own Lillian Spiller, who described Women's Studies as an extra lens to view the world; an expanded critical eye for the intellectually curious.

What I have loved so much about the major was how deeply it required me to engage with the course material. I initially began to understand the value of this introspection during my first year, while I was still transitioning into college life. I was learning to interpret and understand the significance of my own relativity in my studies, at the same time that, literally, I was learning to place myself in a new social environment. Analyzing the world through this critical lens, I've

learned to question why certain messages are consistently present in mainstream media and why others are absent. I've learned to investigate and critique the source of the messages I encounter, and know that the media's definitions of beauty and success do not have to define mine.

Just as this life-skill is unimaginably empowering, it can be incredibly exhausting. The social awareness that comes with the WST major is not like some simple theoretical concept that goes away every time you close your textbook. This lens is tattooed in your mind forever. It means that your questioning never stops. It means that your studying never stops. This awareness is one that informs virtually every way you conduct yourself... it is a responsibility. And it is a responsibility that I am proud to take with me beyond graduation. With my sights set on a career in the fashion industry, one might wonder why I would choose to take part in forms of media that have played such a contentious role in the debate surrounding the media's definition of femininity and beauty. My answer is that I am prepared. I believe that the fashion industry has the same capacity to empower women as it does to exploit them, and I am prepared to prove the prior, thanks to a major that has taught me to never stop asking questions.



Courtney will be finishing up her undergraduate studies at Duke in the fall and studying for the MCAT. She plans to apply to medical school within the next two years.

Courtney Wallace

Before I even came to Duke, I had already decided that my major was going to be biology. But in the summer of 2008, after taking **Bodies of Evidence** with Kinohi Nishikawa, I was thoroughly intrigued with the role of the female protagonist in detective fiction and films — how it has slowly changed over the years, from women being portrayed as the victims to developing into the femme fatale to *finally* becoming the detectives themselves. The class left me wanting to know more, and in some sense, I became the detective myself, attempting to discern how women view themselves and how they are viewed by those around them. I was drawn to Women's Studies and realized that it was the major for me. Every class I have taken has given me better insight into what WST is truly about.

What has surprised me the most about this major is how much the classes allow both men and women to gather in an academic space in order to learn about and discuss the issue of gender and the many topics—LGBT issues, sex, sexuality, race, class, power—that in one way or another relate to it. After careful investigation, it's evident to me that Women's Studies is an encompassing major that enables students to scrutinize the relationships between gender and the sciences and other humanities.

I have come to realize that what interests me the most are the concepts of gender and sexuality and how these two terms have caused so much controversy over the years and continue to today. There is not one specific definition for either, and it appears that both are continuing to change as people begin to grasp a better understanding of them. Since my interest in biology has never diminished and I am aspiring to become a surgeon, I have made it my minor. And through an independent study, **I'm going to delve deeper into the two things that interest me the most—sexuality and biology—and explore the notion of sexuality in humans and animals; how they are similar and how they differ, in order to determine (or at least attempt to determine) whether or not sexuality itself is truly inherent or simply learned.** In Women's Studies throughout my years at Duke, I've had the opportunity to explore these issues and I "detect" that I've changed my way of thinking about sex, gender, and sexuality in my everyday life.

From Asylum to Asylum: *An interview with Catalina Blanco*



Catalina Blanco is a Candidate for Graduation with Distinction and hopes to attend law school and pursue a career in asylum law. At some point, Catalina would also like to hike the Appalachian Trail and kayak the Mississippi.

The United Nations Refugee Agency says: “Nobody chooses to give up everything, to leave their home to go on a long and dangerous journey, in order to seek asylum in a foreign country; that decision has been made for them by others; you never flee voluntarily.”

What was your home country and the reason you left?

My home country is Colombia in South America and we fled because my father was a politician who worked for the government and my parents were being blackmailed; they had been blackmailed for maybe fifteen years before we left. But there was a point, when my dad had been kidnapped for the third time, my mother decided it was too much.

So your family left for political reasons...

Yes, the guerrillas were getting strong again in the late 90s. They had sapos (spies) in the government; staying could have easily meant death for my parents...and even us. All I remember was my mother telling me, “Make sure you say goodbye to all your friends. And make sure you tell Nana [my babysitter for my whole life] what you want to take to America.” I didn’t think it was a long-term thing, but I said OK and I said goodbye to my friends and we left...I was 13 or 14.

What were your feelings about going?

My dad had been given for dead, so my mom decided we were going to leave. And I remember thinking that I KNEW something was changing, but it didn’t hit me until I got here. In Colombia we always lived so well; I never needed anything. I always had Ricardo [my bodyguard] with me; and I got here and suddenly, for the first time in my life, I didn’t have Ricardo. I didn’t have a room; I didn’t have my own space and I didn’t have my mom—because she stayed behind—and it was just very hard. I felt like I had been uprooted from everything I loved. Taken and given no choice.

Who were you here with?

My mother had an uncle here. The morning before we left, my mother found out that my father was actually alive—they had found him and he was in a coma. She decided she wasn’t going to put my sister and I at risk anymore, so she sent us to America with my Nana. My mom would come weekly and then go back to see dad and at some point both she and my dad came here.

Your background was one of being loved and cared for, living a life of luxury, full of material things—but was this coupled with a day-to-day sense of fear?

I actually never felt truly afraid. My life in Colombia was lived in a crystal cage. I had the luxuries and the amenities that were a product of my parent’s work. Through glass walls I saw my country’s bloodshed day-in and day-out. But I never felt it touch me. In the news

I heard of the assassinations of my friend’s parents, of the deaths of civilians, and of the kidnappings of my father’s friend. Twice I saw my own father’s photograph in the nightly news after he was kidnapped. The second time I heard the speculations of his death. But it all seemed like part of living.

What sort of response have you encountered in the States? Do people know anything about your country? Do they care?

It really is a mixed bag. There are people who spell Colombia with a “u” and assume that I’m from South Carolina. They don’t even think of the country and when they do, they make an automatic association with drugs. Then there are those who, as part of the American military, have physically fought the war in Colombia. Or those that care but can do nothing more than ask all about Colombia so that they can feel like they are doing their part.

The funny thing is that people don’t care about the country, they care about the human aspect of individual stories. It’s hard to care about a place that you have no ties to, but if Americans can care about just one person, just one story, maybe they’ll decide it’s worth fighting for.

Why did you end up choosing to major in women’s studies?

Ah! Women Studies! My parent’s always told me that I would go to university in America because a degree from an American university would mean more opportunities in life. I fell in love with Duke when I stepped on campus. I fell into Women Studies...I took a class that seemed interesting and then another and then another and next thing I knew I was hooked. My mother always was an activist for the rights of women and children. I think that as I learned a little bit more about my mother and her story, I felt more of a need to connect with what she had once felt was worth fighting for. Through classes in Women Studies I learned to see my life in a different light. I understood why my mother had wanted to help the women and children who were victims of the guerrillas. I understood what this meant for her as a woman and as a human being. But best of all, I understood what I had to do to feel complete: I had to follow in my mother’s steps and help the women and children who are victims of forced displacement. Yet, I knew I didn’t want to help the way my mom had. I knew I didn’t want to work in a shelter for displaced women; I knew I didn’t want to work in a home for the children caught in the middle of Colombia’s violence. I wanted to become a lawyer and help those that had immigrated make a smooth transition.

Being a Women Studies major has taught me to think like a feminist. To go beyond the superficial and into the root of all problems, and I am sure that as a lawyer it will positively color the way I address issues of displaced women and children.

Tell us about your independent study with Professor Khanna: how did it come about, what have you learned thus far, and what do you hope to accomplish?

As a child asylee myself, I can say that the effects of forced migration on a child are great. The move to the States was sudden. I wasn't allowed time to "take-in" the move or process the changes to come. My mother and I packed two suitcases each and sluggishly walked onto an airplane. Those were my last steps on Colombian soil until this day.

The language barrier isolated me from those my age and it took only a couple of weeks to realize that neither bodyguards, nor bullet-proof windows, nor electric fences were common. I now realized I had never had a "normal" life. I was not a *spectator* of the violence in Colombia, I was a victim.

My age took away agency. I suffered from a lack of choice. I was never given the choice of growing up in my homeland or running for cover to another nation. Though my mother made the sensible choice, the process and the lack of understanding I had about the situation made me feel lost.

As a child who has suffered the consequences of asylum, I can vouch for the harm that such displacement can cause on a kid. Adjusting to life in Miami was almost impossible without knowing why I couldn't just be at home with my friends. I missed my room in Colombia. I missed the comfort of my surroundings. But most of all I missed my family. I grew up in a home surrounded by my grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, second-cousins, cousins of my cousins! I missed the known. I felt uprooted. Without closure.

For nine years I have been trying to put together my past so that I can move beyond it. But I found that there were missing pieces. My mother never lied to me, but she never told me the whole story. The answers to my questions always resulted in new, but still vague information. Slowly I created a story with the information that I was given. "Your dad's job was dangerous." That was the only connecting factor in the story. My mom's shame and fear that I would not understand kept her from telling me about my kidnapping as a newborn, her rape—some of the more horrifying situations that the FARC had placed my family in.

In my thesis I want to use a comparative approach to explore how women and children are affected by political asylum. By comparing political asylum cases in the US and Canada—two cases in each country: one successful, one unsuccessful—I would like to show how some of the plights of refugees are further exacerbated

when: (1) the asylum seeker is barely out of puberty, owns nothing but the lint in his/her pockets or (2) when the asylee is a woman who has been rendered defenseless by the violence in her country and cannot afford to return for fear of being physically mistreated, mentally abused, or worse, killed.

What is a family? How do children fit into the family? Do children adjust (or not), and how does all this affect them later on? When referring to adult female asylees, I want to explore what asylum means for them if they travel with a husband and children versus traveling as a single mother. How are these different forms of families treated under the systems of different countries? I believe that the implications of asylum for children and women are much more complex than they are said to be, thus, my goal is to explore how gender and age affects decisions on cases of political asylum in the US and Canada.

My independent study came to be from this sense of emptiness and this need to know and explore asylum in depth. I hope that through this thesis I will be able to understand the effects of political asylum on me and on other people who are forced to immigrate.

I applied to do DukeEngage in Uganda, my focus was going to be children displaced by war. To my great delight, before leaving for Uganda, Dr. Gloria, our program's coordinator, asked if I would be interested in working with a women's rights organization. I agreed since I thought it would work well with my background. But the best part was that I worked with women who were displaced by war. I was able to apply the theory and substance of Women Studies to help promote and protect the rights of Ugandan women who were treated as second-class citizens (with the help and support of Isis-WICEE).

For years the United States has protected minorities who needed a safeguard against their oppressors: affirmative action protects people of color; labor laws protect women and the disabled; insurance legislation defends the rights of the elderly and the ill. I think that asylum is another way that they protect the more vulnerable minorities. Asylum is different from other types of migration. Asylum is not voluntary. Imagine having to leave everyone and everything you know and love. Imagine not being able to go to your grandparent's funeral, or your cousin's wedding, or your best friend's graduation. Imagine taking your memories and nothing more. Imagine having to shed your childhood because you are forced to grow up too quickly, too soon, without knowing why. Imagine feeling lost and knowing that the only way you can find yourself is by facing the demons your family ran from. Through this study of asylum I hope to be able to make sense of my past, to understand every detail of why it came to be, so that I can come to terms with it. I want to be able to fully process what Columbians are still living, what forced my parents to immigrate, and what forced me to leave the people I loved most.

by melanie mitchell

Spring 2010 Courses

WST 101	Animals and Ethics – <i>Kathy Rudy</i>	WST 168	Gender, Sexuality, and Human Rights – <i>Ara Wilson</i>
WST 102S	Food, Farming & Feminism – <i>Kathy Rudy</i>	WST 170AS	Queer Theory – <i>Robyn Wiegman</i>
WST 140	Women at Work – <i>Martha Reeves</i>	WST 195S	Senior Seminar: Feminist Theory – <i>Ranjana Khanna</i>
WST 150S	Taking Our Bodies Back – <i>Shilyh Warren</i>	WST 220	Foundations in Feminist Theory – <i>Robyn Wiegman</i>
WST 150S	Infected: Bodies, Culture & Politics – <i>Fiona Barnett</i>	WST 240	Critical Genealogies: US Studies After American Exceptionalism – <i>Robyn Wiegman</i>
WST 159S	Thinking Gender – <i>Elizabeth Grosz</i> (<i>Visiting Distinguished Professor</i>)	WST 300	Feminism and the Animal – <i>Elizabeth Grosz</i>
WST 163S	Interpreting Bodies – <i>Tina Camp</i>		
WST 164S	Race, Gender & Sexuality – <i>Kadji Amin</i>		

An In-Depth Look at WST 150S Race, Power, and Intimacy: Politics in the US

In his speech, “A More Perfect Union,” President Obama enjoined the nation to “find the common stake that we all have in one another, and let our politics reflect that spirit as well.” This past fall, thirteen students took seriously this sentiment, asking the difficult questions of what it means to find a common stake, to have politics that reflect such a spirit, and what spirit specifically is being reflected. They sought to answer these questions through the lenses of race, power, and intimacy within the United States. The result was a stimulating seminar in which a variety of perspectives, student and theorist, pulled and prodded each other to reveal the complexity of the issues. Though students found no clear answers to many of the questions our seminar raised, they found the philosophical grappling to be an eye-opening process, one that shifted their thinking after a few weeks in the seminar.

Students analyzed the micro-politics of ordinary affairs—the currents of sentiment, ideology, and power, for example, that run through and shape individuals—to determine how power structures affect the political possibility of commonality, of relationships of “common stake” between individuals. Doing so required that we explore the construction of some categories such as race and gender and that we question the necessity of others; i.e. rather than presuming that intimacy belongs only in private relationships, we explored its relevancy in public, political, and ethical practices. Theorists Ann Laura Stoler, bell hooks, W.E.B. DuBois, and James Baldwin provided the groundwork for thinking through how race relations in the United States (past and present) intersect with and avoid “intimacy,” particularly when those interactions are established or legitimated by power structures. Over the course of the semester, as one student observed, each of our lenses gained a mutable quality that blurred borders, even as we struggled to maintain clear definitions and important distinctions.

An unexpected, memorable aspect of our seminar was how vibrant our collective space became. Not only was our classroom a forum for dialogue and discovery, it was a space in which individual perspectives became sites of personal exploration. Michel Foucault, Iris Murdoch, and others were challenging, but the prospect of engaging *one another* motivated students to read difficult texts and collectively break down theory into digestible parts. “Class discussion was really incredible,” one student reminisced, “I remember walking into class on one of those Foucault days, interested but somewhat confused, and during discussion really felt like I was starting to tap into the text.” Whether gaining openness to new ideas or embracing other ways to reading texts, gaining awareness of prevalent issues in race and gender that plague contemporary society or generating new outlooks on life, or beginning to apply a more attentive code of conduct to their interactions with others, students agreed that our seminar fostered both intellectual and personal growth.

by winter brown

The 2009-2010 Graduate Scholars Colloquium

by Colloquium Leaders Fiona Barnett and China Medel

The Women's Studies Graduate Scholars Colloquium continues to be incredibly vibrant and active, supportive and intense, interesting and challenging. Each meeting gathers at least thirty students and faculty to discuss participants' work while sharing a delicious meal. Colloquium discussions create a generous and rigorous forum for the development of works-in-progress, conference papers, and dissertation chapters, and the discussions often continue over email and informal conversations. It continues to be a unique venue where graduate student work can be presented, discussed, critiqued and developed, and we are grateful to Women's Studies for this ongoing support and encouragement.

The colloquium invited Women's Studies and History Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, **Tina Camp**, to kick off the year at the September meeting with **Erica Fretwell**, a PhD student in English, as the respondent. Professor Camp presented a selection, "Family Touches," from her book-in-progress, "Image Matters," on family photography in the black Diaspora in Europe. The presentation and conversation worked through the politics and implications of visual culture, and in particular, the meaning and effects of photographic documents, and noted that the process of engaging with these images might begin with the visual, but is also inextricably linked with the multi-sensory address and appeal of the family photograph. The conversation included questions about the form (and genre) of the photograph in the domestic space, the production of different subjectivities, and the force of recognition in both the photographed subjects and viewer. Professor Camp's colloquium provided a wonderful start to the year's meetings, and her work set the tone for a series of illuminating discussions on visuality, racial visibility, affect, gender and sexuality.

In October **Elaine Yee** (English) presented from a dissertation chapter, "A Chinese-American girl learns how to be/come Asian American: lessons from her token black friends," with Professor **Sharon Holland** (English, Women's Studies, and African and African American Studies) as respondent. The colloquium discussion focused on questions of how the ethnic novel (and in particular the Asian American novel) considers racial and ethnic othering and identity formation, social mobility and its relation to genre mobility and crossover. The process of this identity formation often requires situating one identity against another, and the disentangling of these symbolic and embodied identities allowed Yee to focus on specific examples from one novel, *Mona in the Promised Land*.

Long-time colloquium participant, **Ignacio Adriasola** (Art, Art History and Visual Studies), presented at the November meeting, with Professor **Michael Hardt** (Literature and Italian) as respondent. Adriasola's work, "A Philosophy of Impotence" from his dissertation-in-progress on art in post-war Japan, focused on the relationship of artist Kudo Tsetsumi's work to narratives of the avant-garde, as well as the political climate of 1960s Japan. Adriasola presented the question of impotence as a political and aesthetic category within cultural discourse in the 1960s, and the way that two particular artists worked through this concept. Colloquium members brought up questions about performativity, gender, the difference between the penis and the symbolic phallus, the role of the fetish, and the question of the relationship between agency and impotence.

Spring semester featured **Netta van Vliet's** (Cultural Anthropology) work "What is Alterity? Looking Backward and Forward Toward a Melancholic Anthropology" with respondent Professor **Wahneema Lubiano** (Literature, African and African American Studies, and Women's Studies) on January 25. Van Vliet challenged one concept of anthropology, and what it would mean to think differently about the process of studying and knowing others. She is also rethinking what the term 'the political' entails, especially in relationship to subjectivity, security and sovereignty.

On February 26 we enjoyed a presentation by **Calvin Hui** (Literature). Hui is a former Colloquium organizer and presented a chapter, "The Dialectic of Ideology and Utopia in Consumer Culture: The Case of Fashion." This is part of his fascinating and timely dissertation project entitled, "Depoliticized Politics: the Making of the New Middle Class in Post-Socialist China, 1978-2008." Professor **Anne Allison**, of Cultural Anthropology, was his faculty respondent.

And finally, to close out our colloquium, we are thrilled to feature this year's two Women's Studies postdoctoral fellows, **Lindsey Green-Simms** and **Kimberly Lamm**, for our final session on March 30, when they will present some of their recent writing and share reflections from their year at Duke.

Wish you could join us!



An Interview with Dr. Lindsey Green-Simms by Lindsey Andrews

Lindsey Green-Simms is a 2009-2010 Postdoctoral Fellow in Women's Studies. She received her PhD in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature from the University of Minnesota. Her postdoctoral work explores the simultaneity of the visible and invisible worlds in popular Nigerian and Ghanaian video film and argues for a theory of visual pleasure that incorporates occult sexualities. She is currently at work on a manuscript titled "Postcolonial Auto-mobility: West Africa and the Road to Globalization."



Lindsey Andrews is a third-year graduate student in the Department of English where she studies early 20th-century American literature.

LA: Your new book project, "Spectral Sexualities: Witches, Lesbians, and Prostitutes in African Screen Media," focuses on both avant-garde African films and the mass-produced popular "Nollywood" films coming out of Nigeria. Before I ask you about the content of the project, I'd really like to know how you got interested in Nollywood.

LGS: I first became interested in Nollywood – and Gollywood, the smaller Ghanaian industry – when I was visiting Ghana in 2007. I had already spent several months in Senegal and was surprised that the Senegalese rarely watched African films, despite having one of the richest art film traditions on the continent. In Ghana, however, it seemed like everyone was watching locally made films, albeit not the types of art films made by the Senegalese. Nollywood/Gollywood films are low-budget, straight-to-DVD videos, and they are sold and advertised on nearly every street corner. While in Accra I met a Ghanaian video maker, Socrate

Safo. Safo took me to sets, introduced me to his editors, and even played his films for me on the DVD player of his mini-van as we drove to shoots. I left Ghana with a stack of videos and started to watch them. I was hooked. In addition to finding the melodramatic story lines quite addictive, I realized that video film required an entirely new analytic framework. Unlike the African avant-garde films or even most African novels, these were stories that were widely consumed on the continent. They had no need for a Western audience and so they had very different aesthetic modes of address. I was excited by the challenge of thinking academically about something that was so unlike anything I had ever studied before.

I was really taken by the idea of "spectrality" in your book project. You argue that these figures – the witch, the lesbian, and the prostitute – are spectral, but you also claim spectrality as your research method. Can you talk about what it means to take up the "ghostly" as a site of inquiry?

News about the Feminist Theory Workshop

By the time you read this newsletter, the Fourth Annual Feminist Theory Workshop (March 19-20) will be over; and you'll have to wait until our fall issue to learn more about this event. In the meantime we do want to share some exciting news ... the FTW offers a unique opportunity for recognized faculty and young scholars to engage in sustained dialogue about feminist theory as a scholarly domain of inquiry; it has proven to be a dynamic site of interdisciplinary exploration among academics from philosophy, political science, literature, history, anthropology, and other fields. As diverse voices continue to be crucial to the workshop's drive to understand feminist theory across both disciplinary and national lines, the FTW strives to include participants from institutions world-wide. While keynote speakers and some participants have come from across the globe, predictably we have had far more participants from Western Europe than from less privileged academic sites, and even fewer younger international scholars who are only beginning to build their careers. We are delighted and grateful to announce that as a result of a generous grant from the Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation, we were able to sponsor two international postgraduate scholars, one from Namibia and one from India, to attend this year's FTW. Also exciting is the institutional collaboration between the Program in Women's Studies here at Duke and the London School of Economics' Gender Institute, whose central aim is addressing the major intellectual challenges posed by contemporary changes in gender relations. Stretching back to 2002, when Clare Hemmings (now the LSE Gender Institute's Director) came to Duke as a Visiting Scholar, subsequent exchanges between Robyn Wiegman, Ranjana Khanna and Tina Campt led to a formal commitment of connections involving faculty and students of both institutions over this year (more details in fall). We see the FTW as an opportunity to build an exceptional community of feminist scholars here on Duke's campus—scholars who have a greater understanding of global perspectives and transnational issues, whether they have been able to go abroad or not. Our experience shows us that bringing together disparate voices to tackle common questions yields more rigorous dialogue and a greater scope of solutions simply because our experiences and contexts are more varied.

It's not too early to mark your calendars for March 18-19, 2011!

Spectrality is a concept that lets me do a lot of things at once. In certain Nollywood films, the spectral subjects I highlight – the witch, the lesbian and the prostitute – are linked together as one occult figure. Then, we have a more metaphorical type of haunting in a film like Djibril Diop Mambety's *Hyenas*, where a wealthy prostitute returns home to bring death to the man who expelled her as a young girl. Spectral subjects are those that have been “ghosted” – literally and figuratively – and pushed to the margins of African civil society. Yet, as Avery Gordon suggests, they also return and make known unresolved social violence. This requires a very specific type of “seeing” because spectral subjects, by their very nature, cannot be directly represented – they slip away, confound, and conceal. Spectrality therefore requires that we examine the simultaneity of the visible and invisible worlds.

Your dissertation was on West African auto-mobility. I was intrigued by your finding that for West Africans, cars don't always represent the kind of freedom and (upward) mobility that they often do in American literature and culture. Instead, you claim that they stand for stagnation, or, to use your term, “suspended animation.” How do you account for this difference? And how might this difference challenge the traditional narrative of modernity?

I think that the main thing to point out is that cars in West Africa embody a certain paradox. On the one hand, they do represent the sort of freedom, autonomy, and mastery over nature that they do in the West. But, on the other hand, in most African countries only an elite minority (about 3-6% in most cases) owns a car and inadequately maintained infrastructure makes driving much more dangerous. Therefore, in African films and novels, auto-mobility is more viscerally and visually associated with death, thwarted mobility, individual greed, and patriarchal structures of power. Cars are still modern, but problematically so. We see cars stalling, rusting away, or being associated with witchcraft and occultism. Sometimes they become re-imagined as sites of play and gender rebellion. But typical Fordist and post-Fordist narratives of production and mass consumption don't really apply.

Inasmuch as your work is a feminist critique, it is, perhaps more so, a Marxist critique of certain aspects of the Africa post-colony. In your projects, what is the relationship between feminism and Marxism?

You're right to call my work Marxist insofar as my primary concern is to examine the effects of capitalism and the free market on the everyday lives of West Africans. But whereas

Marx was looking at industrial labor, a wage-based economy, and the abstraction of use-value, I am looking at the absence of industrialization, the burgeoning of an informal economy, and a widening gap between the goods one sees and the goods one can actually purchase. So there are certainly ways that Marxism needs to be retooled in a West African context. Then—to get to your question about feminist critique—we need to look at how privatization and the concomitant rise in religious fundamentalisms have unique consequences for women. As is often the case, women's bodies are over-invested as sites of moral meaning and women's labor goes unremunerated. Participation in the informal economy is also highly gendered. However, I want to recognize that, as Inderpal Grewal points out, there are various forms of contemporary feminism, many of which are conjoined with neo-liberal consumerism. In any major West African city, you'll find successful businesswomen who have been able to take advantage of the opening up of markets. (And I have to mention that they are often called Mama Benzes because they drive Mercedes!) These women—these feminists—aren't critiquing structures of capitalism; they're using creativity and innovation to gain access to its benefits. So there is often a conflict between Marxist critiques of capitalist exploitation and feminist cultural practices. I see this as a productive tension, and one that can't be easily reconciled.

This past fall, you taught a course called *Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. Can you tell us about how you use the classroom and what kinds of topics you explore?

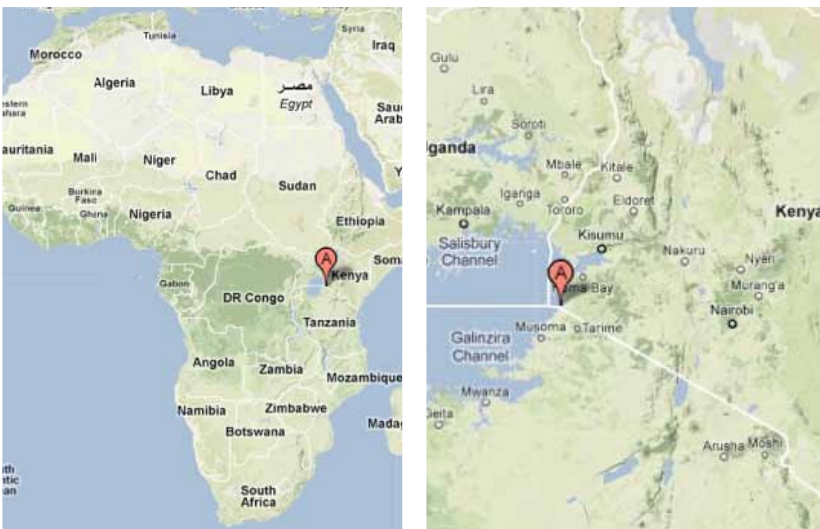
Given my interests, I tried to put a global and transnational spin on the class. We began with a close reading of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* and then moved on to discuss a whole range of topics from Sarah Baartman, to colonial soap advertising, to the Miss World Pageant, to Deepa Mehta's film *Fire*. We also worked a lot with visual images and popular culture, and students were eager to bring in their own material. I think students really enjoyed the variety of topics and the ways that our discussions constantly overlapped and spoke to contemporary issues. I know that I had a great time teaching!

We've known each other for a little while now, and frequently, in order to mark a difference between the two “Lindseys,” you've been labeled “Lindsey 1.” How does it feel to always claim the top spot?

The thing is, Lindsey 2, if we count backwards, then you come first. So it's all a matter of perspective.

Charting a Path from Research to Learning

When I applied for the **Gender and Race Research Award** last March, I proposed a summer project that would investigate the potential of participatory geographic information system mapping to impact gender disparities in health and education in Muhuru Bay, a small fishing village located in Nyanza Province, Kenya. According to the 2007 Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey, Muhuru Bay has one of the highest AIDS prevalence rates in the country at 38%. Located on the edge of Lake Victoria, women and girls of the community are often pressured by fishermen to pay for goods with transactional sex (Mail and Guardian 2006). This helps explain why almost half the population has AIDS.



Google Maps

In my original grant, I proposed to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of (a) cultural conceptions of AIDS in Muhuru Bay, (b) how these conceptions vary by gender, (c) the ways in which these conceptions could be contributing to the disproportionate rate at which HIV affects females, and (d) how these conceptions can help explain the low rate at which females finish secondary school. Did I meet these goals? Yes, almost to my surprise, I suppose I did.

Together with Dr. Eric Green and three other Kenyan research assistants, I created a base map of Muhuru Bay using GPS devices and a free mapping software called QGIS. This map was then used to get parents, teachers, youths, community leaders, and health workers to label, and talk about areas of the community that were good and bad for youths. These discussions occurred during fifteen focus group sessions in Phase Two.

After getting a feel for what community members identified as “bad places” (areas where kids sneak off to have sex or prostitution is common), Phase Three of the project was dedicated to obtaining the exact latitudinal and longitudinal points of these locations. To this end, Dr. Green and I traveled to eight schools and played research games with approximately eighty students (ten students at each school). During each game, we divided people into two teams; each group used GPS compasses to navigate/race to points that were pre-programmed into the units. They were asked to use sophisticated camera phones to log and take pictures of places that fell into certain categories along the way. Categories included: *places where people have sex*; *places where people do drugs*; *places to have fun*; *places to buy things for one's family*; and *important places in the community*. In Phase Four, Green and I interviewed over three hun-

After receiving funding, I collaborated with Dr. **Sherryl Broverman**, Dr. **Eve Puffer**, and Dr. **Eric Green** (of Duke and New York Universities) to develop and investigate methods for using geospatial technologies to represent local knowledge about the ecology of AIDS on a map. Ultimately, this representation would be used to understand how aspects of their social and physical environments influence increased risk for HIV transmission among young girls in the community, and how intervention programs can be designed to alter these environmental circumstances.

dred kids who had already been questioned about their sexual behaviors and attitudes. After asking them to “draw a map of their community” and answer survey questions about their daily routines and the places they frequent, the youths helped us locate and plot these on a satellite image of Muhuru Bay.

At this point in the project, my short-term goal of facilitating an understanding of cultural conceptions of AIDS in Muhuru Bay (how these conceptions vary by gender, and why they end up affecting the health and educational success of females more negatively than males), was met. Having the data collected in focus groups, research games, and interviews displayed on a multi-layered map of Muhuru Bay, will afford Broverman, Green, and Puffer a comprehensive view and the ability to make informed decisions about where placement of HIV intervention programs will most effectively serve females.

I then started moving toward the long-term goal I outlined in my original proposal: to extend my research on mapping and culture into a senior thesis. “Social Studies 3.0: A PGIS Digital Curriculum Unit” is essentially a product of the lessons I learned during my participatory mapping initiative in Muhuru Bay and will represent a contribution to academic discourse regarding how changing educational paradigms can best be put into practice. Using PGIS (Participatory Geographic Information Systems) mapping as a learning portal for elementary students in Durham Public Schools, I will create a digital curriculum that explores the question, “What characterizes a 21st century social studies unit?” Extensive reading in the field of pedagogical theory and information science will result in a five-lesson instructional unit which will not only meet North Carolina educational standards, but provide criteria for best pedagogical practices adapted for “digital natives”—a new generation of students living in a global community.

by Virginia Rieck (T'10)



Become a Friend of Women's Studies!

Your gift of \$50 or more makes it possible to publish this newsletter and support the research efforts and education of our students through awards (such as Virginia's work in Muhuru Bay) on-campus Women's Studies' events, and travel to attend and present at conferences. Please help support our continued outreach to alumnae/i. You may make your gift by credit card at Duke's secure credit card site (<http://secure.giftrecords.duke.edu/oit/gift.nsf/ccform?OpenForm>). Under the section Confirm & Submit, in the Comments box, please include NWS, fund code 399-2735. Or you can send your check (with NWS, 399-2735, on the memo line) to Duke University, Alumni and Development Records, Box 90581, Durham, NC 27708.

**With gratitude to the many donors of our past—
and to those of you who recently sent in gifts and pledges—heartfelt thanks!**

Spring 2010 Newsletter

Starting Fall 2010

Our 2010-2011 themed year on *The Question of Species and WST 360: Human, Animal, and the Question of Gender*, team-taught by Professors Ranjana Khanna and Kathy Rudy, will use the lens of feminism to have a conversation across the emerging fields of Human Animal Studies and Posthumanism. While the two fields have much in common (interest in nonhuman subjects, the boundaries of humanity), they also carry with them significant differences (explicit advocacy for animals versus a more theoretical approach on the construction of the human). Over the course of the year we will triangulate these two fields in relation to feminism in order to increase feminist understanding of the continuities and differences in these new worlds. In the end, we will gain knowledge about how and why the animal is emerging as such a salient figure in the academy today.

For those who miss **Temple Grandin** at Duke's Commencement event this May, Grandin, an autism expert and professor of animal science at Colorado State University, will be returning to Duke next spring at the invitation of Women's Studies to give a public lecture as part of the Question of Species themed year. As an animal science expert (who has authored more than 300 articles), Grandin consults with the livestock industry on facility design, livestock handling and animal welfare. In February 2010 Grandin was the subject of a HBO biopic, *Temple Grandin: Autism Gave her a Vision, She Gave it a Voice*.