

Women & Gender Studies

Volume 1, Issue
10

Spring 2011

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THANKS to Angela Almonte for working on the newsletter!

Letter from the Director Dr. Fawzia Afzal-Khan

Dear WMGS and GLBTQ faculty, staff, students and friends:

Many issues in our purview have played out nationally and globally in ways that continue to remind us of the need for continued analytic vigilance provided by programs such as ours so that we may better understand what's going on around us—and whenever possible, intervene in ways to make the world a better, more just place for all.

In September we held a long-overdue Program Curriculum Retreat which our affiliate faculty attended in good numbers, and where we discussed ideas to make the program and courses more global in nature (in keeping with the overall mission of the university), to offer more cross listed courses with other departments, to strengthen and expand the GLBTQ program by devising more courses and offering Study Abroad options, to begin thinking about a Teacher Ed component for the Program (similar to what TCNJ offers) and to think creatively about how to do more meaningful cross-disciplinary work across colleges in the future, involving Math and Science and Business, as well as the Performing Arts.

This past year an opportunity for cross disciplinary collaboration was presented in the form of a competitive grant application. The grant, put together by myself and Prof Norma Connolly, Chair of Justice Studies, ended up being successfully funded by the NJ Council for the Humanities. The grant enabled us to hold an international symposium that was a highlight of Women's History Month at MSU, on the topic, "EnGendering Justice: Women's Crosscultural Prison Narratives." An inspirational and transformative two-day symposium on campus and at the Newark Public Library, it brought together such feminist luminaries as Professors Barbara Harlow of UT Austin's English Dept and the Rapaport Center for Human Rights and Justice, Megan Sweeney of University of Michigan's Dept of English, Michele Lise Tarter of TCNJ's Dept of English, and internationally acclaimed writer and human and women's rights activist from Egypt, the indomitable octogenarian Dr. Nawal el Saadawi. Listening to these wonderful teachers, scholars, activists who have worked with, about, or like Nawal, been "women in prison"—talk about their experiences witnessing and enacting positive change in the lives of women prisoners the world over was indeed to grapple with issues of social, economic and political justice in our times. This is a struggle that affects "ordinary" citizens as much as "political activists"—and the words of these women helped us become aware of the "bars that bind" all of us, in some cases literally, in other cases invisibly but no less powerfully.

The application process for the grant helped to shine a light on the current economic turmoil we are in. We had to apply for funding outside the University because budget cuts to Higher Education are making it increasingly difficult to sustain such initiatives while the War on Terror has crossed the 1 trillion dollar mark in terms of cost, and only 1 percent of the US population now owns more than a quarter of this rich country's wealth, leaving women, children, communities of color and even the so-called middle class in this country to suffer the consequences. The recent impasse over the Federal budget shows us clearly how urgent it is to stay informed and involved in resisting such ideologically regressive moves as the Republican/Tea Party demands that federal financing be revoked for family planning services and organizations such as Planned Parenthood because they offer abortion counseling and services to the economically disadvantaged; these same forces want aid cut to the UN Population Fund or to countries who might use some of this badly needed money for family planning or abortion services. We are currently in the midst of backlash in our own and other countries against such fundamental human rights as reproductive justice, healthcare, education, jobs and freedom to live in unpolluted environments.

A majority of US senate members who support same-sex marriage were named to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee this year, ensuring for the first time that a same-sex marriage measure would clear the panel and reach the Senate floor for a vote by June. Although it will most likely invite a filibuster by same-sex marriage opponents, it is at least a step in the right direction. This year has brought visibility to the harassment that GLBTQ youth continue to face across the nation, and we saw how the marginalization of this community has led to suicides, physical abuse, and even murder across the GLBTQ student communities in the country. Yet, it is equally important to remember the gains we have made, and continue to make in the fight for gender, class and sexual justice, as the end of the official policy of Don't Ask Don't Tell in the US military has come to an end. Our brothers and sisters all across the Arab world remind us of the importance to fight back against injustice and lack of freedom wherever it occurs, even when this means some of us who are brave have to lay down our lives in the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness. Please join us in making progressive change for gender and economic justice in the WMGS Program!

FACULTY KUDOS. A section dedicated to briefly highlighting our faculty/staff accomplishments
WE THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO

Fawzia Afzal-Khan— In September 2010 Dr. Khan was elected to the Governing Council of the National Women's Studies Association. She, working alongside Professor Norma Conally, won an \$18,000 grant from the NJ council for Humanities to organize the two day symposium "EnGendering Justice". She will serve as Plenary Speaker at South Asian Theatre Conference at University of Pittsburgh.

Jessica Restiano -Presented paper, "Surviving Labor: Thinking Bodies and Writing Work" at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta GA. Also designed and currently teaching--for the first time at MSU--the undergraduate course, "Writing Women Safe: Writing, Rape, Prevention, Advocacy, Education"; this course is now cross-listed between the English dept and WMGS

Francine C. Raguso-developed a narrative arts intervention program for women incarcerated at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility in Clinton, NJ and was invited back in the fall to create a new group.

Yasemin Besen-Cassino-received a \$5,000 grant from the American Association of University Women. She did a research report on "Gender Pay Gap in New Jersey: A Policy Report for the New Jersey American Association of University Women"

Brigid Callahan Harris- *American Democracy Now* (McGraw-Hill December 2010). Dr. Harrison also serves as the president of the National Women's Caucus for Political Science and provides political commentary regularly in print and electronic media.

Nancy C. Carnevale-recipient of a 2010 American Book Award for *A New Language, A New World: Italian Immigrants in the United States, 1890-1945* (University of Illinois Press, 2009). She is a 2010-2011 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow researching her forthcoming book on Italian American and African American relations in urban and suburban New Jersey, 1900s-1960s.

Frances M. Rothstein-awarded the SAW Book Prize by the Society for the Anthropology of Work for her book *Globalization in Rural Mexico: Three Decades of Change*. (University of Texas Press, 2007) and published an article: "New Migrants in a New Age: Globalization, Networks and Gender in Rural Mexico." in *Class, Contention, and a World in Motion*, Winnie Lem and Pauline Gardiner Barber, Eds. Bergahn Books.

Cynthia Eller-published *Gentlemen and Amazons: The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory, 1861-1900*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011) which will also be reviewed in MS. Magazine in the forthcoming April issue.

Jessica Henry- awarded Dean's Recognition Award for Teaching.

Sangeeta Parashar-Parashar, S. and Y. Wang. (2011). *Inequality in a Globalizing World: Perspectives, Processes, and Experiences*. Kendall Hunt Publishing: Dubuque, IA.

Maughn Gregory -published the article "Philosophy for Children and its Critics: A Mendham Dialogue," in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (May 2011), and presented at the Far West Philosophy of Education Society Annual Conference at Utah Valley University in January (Drem, Utah), and at the American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Annual Meeting in April (San Diego).

Esmilda Abreu-keynote speaker at the College of St. Elizabeth Empowerment through Education Conference and Produced and delivered a an LGBT training aimed at understanding and working with LGBTQ victims and meeting the needs of our transgender community in efforts to inform UPD of some national issues pertaining to the safety of LGBTQ students alongside Program Assistant Amie MacMath.

Linda Gould Levine- published *Lidia Falcón: feminismo y los Estados Unidos. Homenaje a Lidia Falcón*. (International Institute, Madrid. 2010) *De hippie y apátrida a feminista: reflexiones sobre la novelística de Lidia Falcón*. (Homenaje a Lidia Falcón. Ateneo de Madrid, Madrid. 2010). She was also the recipient of Dean of College of Humanities and Social Sciences Recognition Award for Scholarship at MSU forthcoming in April.

Julie Landweber-presented her paper at Western Society for French History Annual Meeting, "Taming a Bitter Brew: The Adoption of Coffee in *Ancien Régime* French Cookery" also has a chapter in a forthcoming book: "How Can One Be Turkish? French Responses to Two Ottoman Ambassadors," in *Europa und die Türkei im 18.*

**Highlights of WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH 2011
ENGENDERING JUSTICE**

Tuesday March 1

Flag raising Ceremony and President's Proclamation

Dr. Susan Cole, Esmilda Abreu, Fawzia Afzal-Khan

"Gendered Violence and Cultures of Surveillance in the Private and Public Spheres"

A Roundtable Discussion with Dean of College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dr. Marietta Morrissey, Dr. Linda Gould Levine, Dr. Venezia Michalsen, and Ms. Dorria Fahmy and moderated by Dr. Fawzia Afzal-Khan

Wednesday March 2

GLBTQ Studies Reception and Talk

Same-Sex Marriage: A Social-Legal Perspective by Dr. Gil Zicklin

Love Your Body Workshop

Thursday March 3

Crossing Borders: An Author's Journey Across a Hundred Mountains

Reyna Grande at the Latino/a Caucus Annual Speaker Series Reception

Bona Sforza: Faith, Freedom, and Feminism

Highlighted Speakers :Lah Tere

Lah Tere is the co-founder of Momma's Hip Hop Kitchen: The Soup Kitchen for the Hip Hop Soul (MHHK), a multifaceted hip hop event designed to showcase women artists, especially women of color. MHHK serves as a social justice community-organizing platform that educates and empowers women of color on issues that impact their lives, including HIV/AIDS and reproductive justice.

Dr. Nawal El Saadawi is an Egyptian feminist writer, activist, physician, and psychiatrist. She has written many books on subject of Women in Islam. She was someone who brought us first-hand news of Tahrir Square's revolutionary events, and of women's role in this people's uprising against unjust government rule.

Dr. Dorothy Rodgers

Film screening and panel discussion

Monday March 7

Women's Empowerment in Pakistan: the Behbud Project with the Behbud Association USA, Inc.

President Tahira Piracha and Vice President Fozia Qureshi

Tuesday March 8

Earth Birth and Midwifery in the US

Rachel Zaslow, CPM and Co-Founder and Director of Earth Birth

Thursday March 10

Global Legal Empowerment of Women: Women's Inheritance & Property Rights and Achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals

led by Ugoji Eze

Women of Faith Conversations on Faith and Spirituality

Professor Lisa Sargese

Women's Rights and Accomplishments in Islam

A Women's Halaqua led Muslim Student

Association

Wednesday March 23

Engendering Justice: Women's Cross-Cultural Prison Narratives

Full day conference

Thursday March 24

Engendering Justice: Women's Cross-Cultural Prison Narratives

Full day conference with

Nawal El Saadawi, Dr. Barbara Harlow, Dr. Megan Sweeny, and Dr. Michele Lise Tarter

Monday March 28

Femovolution's Feminist Mural Gallery

Student Center Quad

Women in Hip Hop and Activism: Performance and Discussion

Lah Tere

Thursday March 31

What is Queer About Queer Poetry?

Professor Rachel Simon



Groups and Organizations

Montclair State University offers a wide array of groups that directly pertain to issues discussed in the WMGS major/minor and GLQS minor. Bringing visibility to issues that surround us everyday but too often go unnoticed. Montclair State University also offers Safe Space Training that after completion provides the person receives a decal (a button or sticker) to put in their office or anywhere a student can see. The decal is to let the student know that this place is supportive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people; non-judgmental; understanding and trustworthy should anyone need help, advice or conversation.

Q17

Wednesdays 2:30-3:30

Student Center 413

Q17 is an informal discussion group focusing on issues pertaining to the LGBT community on campus and beyond. Providing a space where any student can come in and be themselves.

SPECTRUMS

Mondays 8:00p.m.-09:00 p.m.

Student Center 411

(Sexuality, Pride, Education, Community, Truth, Respect, Unity at Montclair State)

SPECTRUMS is a student organization dedicated to educating the community to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues. We work to help end bigotry on the Montclair State University campus, to create a safe, supportive, and fun environment for GLBT students and allies, and to celebrate diversity.

Kaleidoscope

(A Group for LGBT Minority Students)

Mondays 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Drop in center

Kaleidoscope is a group aimed at providing a safe space for LGBT minority students and allies. The group will feature weekly discussion topics and support in an affirming and non-judgmental environment. All students are welcome to attend.

Students Against Violence

Mondays 5:30 p.m.

Student Center 416

a Class III Org. of the SGA, Inc. educates the campus community through various programming about different issues of violence to create a safe environment for students

Women's Spirituality Group

Tuesdays 4-5:30 p.m.

Women's center

A discussion group exploring the divine feminine and women's faith experiences.

Team Nicaragua

A learning delegation with a team of students that travels to Nicaragua, with the help of local grassroots organization Witness for Peace, in order to learn about issues of women's and human rights, worker's rights, education, and health and the environment. To learn more visit <http://www.montclair.edu/peace/>



"You must be the change you wish to see in the world"

Mahatma Gandhi

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Lucy Doyle

Here's a student who takes the above quote literally. She started an intense initiative to raise feminist consciousness on campus this semester, through a series of ventures such as a feminist-themed zine, which draws upon the resources and interests of Montclair State University's diverse student population. She has created an outlet to voice concerns and become a political presence on campus called FEMVOLUTION, a week of consciousness raising through discussion groups/film screenings/and performances. She succeeded at reaching out and teaching her peers about feminism in a fun way. She has brought visibility, and started her own revolution. We commend you for your efforts!!

Get Informed

H.R. 1 is a congressional bill that was introduced to the House to help deficit reduction by eliminating national family planning programming as well as prohibiting Planned Parenthood from receiving any federal funds for any purpose.

NOT COOL!!!

South Dakota becomes the first state in the United States to require women seeking abortion to attend a pregnancy crisis center and a 72 hour waiting period.

Wisconsin passes a union law that takes away collective bargaining from unions. Collective bargaining is a necessity for all workers especially women, as it provides the environment where union members are able to negotiate higher wages. Where a gender gap already exists collective bargaining allows protection and advancement.

Governor Chris Christie put forth a budget that cut 7.5 million dollars in family planning services. Although family planning services receive federal money it is only matching funds of what the state provides. In this case there is no money to match.

A Strong Divide in Current News

Obama Administration will no longer defend DOMA. The Defense Of Marriage Act, Obama stated was unconstitutional because "contains numerous expressions reflecting moral disapproval of gays and lesbians and their intimate and family relationships - precisely the kind of stereotype-based thinking and animus the (Constitution's) Equal Protection Clause is designed to guard against."

COOL!!

Vice president Joe Biden at the University of New Hampshire announced comprehensive guidance to help schools, colleges, and universities better understand and deal with sexual assault on campus. The guidelines revealed that 20% of female freshman, and at least 6% of male freshman will be a victim of sexual assault based on data that is reported. The guidelines also make clear the legal obligations under Title IX ,of any school receiving federal funds.

According to USA Today, the gender pay gap has shrunk to it's lowest point ever. Women earned 82.8% of the median weekly wage of men in the second quarter of 2010

Women and Gender Studies Courses Fall 2011

WMGS 102 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies-5 available sections

WMGS 201-01 Inventing Feminism- Thursdays 5:30p.m.-8:00p.m.

WMGS 208-01 Men and Masculinities- Hybrid course Mondays 11:30a.m.-12:45p.m.

WMGS 302-01 Selected Topics: Domestic Violence-Tues/Thurs 11:30a.m.-12:45p.m.

WMGS 303-01 Global Feminism-Tues/Thurs 11:30a.m.-12:45p.m.

WMGS 316-01 Victimology- Wednesdays 5:30p.m.-8:00p.m.

WMGS 410-01 Co-op Education Women and Gender Studies- times to be arranged

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Studies Minor Courses

GLQS 200-01 Introduction to GLBTQ studies-Mon/Wed- 10a.m.-11:15a.m.

HLTH 290 Human Sexuality- 5 available sections

HLTH 295 Sexuality Education in the Schools- 2 available sections

SOCI 430-01 Sociology of Gender- Mondays 5:30p.m.-8:00p.m.

PSCY 227-01 Psychological Aspects of Human Sexuality- Online

Check the WMGS webpage for a complete listing of our elective courses.

Learning beyond the classroom

By Professor Jill Hersh

My experience teaching the pilot section of WMGS 102 SL this spring introduced undergraduates to the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies and the value of feminist thought in analyzing the institutions and ideologies that shape our gendered lives in contemporary society. What made my course different from traditional WMGS Intro courses was it centered around a "service learning" component, a course-based, credit-bearing education experience in which faculty, students and community leaders participate in an organized service activity that addresses an identified community need, in this case that of women, children and families. Students in my service-learning course engaged in meaningful volunteer activities such as mentoring at the Boys and Girls Club, in association with taking classes that present them with experiences related to academic material on sexism, patriarchy, difference, and the social construction of gender. SL is a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote personal growth, civic engagement, and academic enhancement through various forms of critical reflection, helping students move toward a greater understanding of social and political activism and the practice of citizenship today.

"It's Not a Phase; it's My Life"

by Maria Roumiantseva (WMGS graduate, current law student)

Bisexuality means one can develop feelings, sexual and/or romantic, for members of more than one sex. It is a recognition of fluid attraction. But bisexuality is also defined in a variety of other ways. It is always understood by others as "It's just a phase." To them it is temporary, it is confusion. It is about sex, it is promiscuity It's playing gay but not gay enough to suffer the consequences of homophobia. It is a fractured sexuality, broken down question at a time, "How bi? 20% man, 80% woman?" This is what it means to come out as bi in a world of Adam and Eve or Adam and Steve/ Eve and Ana. The problem with the popular-myth questions is *not* that they are being asked but the attempt, underlying each one, to invalidate bisexuality. These questions, especially when asked by members of the LG community, seem not to be asked from a point of open-mindedness or acceptance, but to undermine my ability to define myself. They are asked in a way that forces me not to explain but to defend my bisexuality. The questioning of and the discussion about bisexuality is not to be stopped. But before questions continue, we must first declare that bisexuality *does* exist. There are bisexuals in your class right now. They are on staff at this university. They march at the pride parades. They are men who like men and women. They are women who like women and men. We can no longer spell LGBT with a silent B.

"Applying the Theoretical to the Real World"

By Amanda Glyn (graduating senior)

Member of Team Nicaragua 2011

As a proud Women and Gender Studies major here at MSU I have had the opportunity to broaden my academic education through courses offered through many other amazing departments; therefore, I have been able to learn a plethora of theories, ideologies, and knowledge. Junior year I realized that I have all of this academic knowledge but rarely experienced it applied within the constraints of traditional academia. I was looking for a way to bridge the gap between academia and what this knowledge looks like in the real world; I applied to be apart of Team Nicaragua, a learning delegation that travels as a team to Nicaragua to spend about two weeks with Witness for Peace representatives. Representatives translate the amazing stories and history told by the Nicaraguans who experienced it.

The Nicaraguan people face many obstacles that are extraordinarily interwoven. First, their country is still recovering from the war between the Sandinistas and the Contras that lasted from 1980 until 1990. Second, Nicaragua has been hit with natural disasters such as hurricanes that have placed a great amount of stress on the lives of Nicaraguans and their economy alike. Third, Nicaragua faces a great amount of intervention in their economic affairs that often hampers their ability to create the most beneficial changes for their peo-

Congratulations to our graduating seniors!!!!

Majors:

Lavender Achieng
Lara Aylward
Jessica L. DeProso
Sandra Felz
Amanda L. Glynn
Grace Momanyi
Tiffany Thorton

Minors:

Nicole Rios
Latiffane toler

GLQS Minors:

Amanda L. Glynn
Kankoporn Sanguanchart
Jayson Corvalan

ple. When we are talking about the effects that these factors may have on a society or community we can assume that they are numerous. However, there is always two groups of people who are often most effected by such disastrous events and these are women and children. Beauty in this country is bountiful and community has a whole new meaning. Unfortunately, the majority of people still live in debilitating poverty. Not every mouth gets fed, there are often few luxuries owned and the standard of living is mostly unimaginable to the average American. But it is in this country, in these communities that I have had the opportunity to meet and listen to some of the strongest, most positive women who are working everyday as the leaders of their communities.

We heard several women speak about the courageous and amazing things they are doing for their communities. Maria Ivania, health advocate since 14, has opened up a small health clinic right out of her very own home located within an unrecognized community that is extremely impoverished. This health clinic serves mostly children and some adults in need, providing some basic medical services such as administering medicines for things like respiratory ailments and parasites which are common illnesses caused from living conditions . Another amazing woman, who came to visit and lecture at, MSU is Yamileth Perez. Yamileth's story is one of absolute perseverance. She lives with her family in La Chureca, the largest garbage dump in Central America where unfortunately many families have been forced to make a home. In this community people build houses and meals out of the materials that have been brought to the dump yard. This way of living often leads to a lot of sicknesses similar to those found in Maria Ivania's village such as parasites, infections and hunger. Now Yamileth works at Esperanza en Accion as the director of artisan programs helping woman all over Nicaragua to sell their art for fair prices. There are many more women who are also leaders helping their communities for things like accessible water supplies, electricity, education, etc.

On my trip to Nicaragua I was able to learn the history of a wonderful country filled with amazing people working everyday as advocates and activists trying to

Recognizing the Need For Advocacy

By: Alan Akins (WMGS Major-Freshman)

High school is where I built the foundation of my passion for advocacy. Where there was injustice, I wanted to be there to speak and conquer the problem so I could produce an outcome that created a reminder of what happened. At my school, there was always an issue with the girls fighting with each other over petty arguments, and slowly rejecting the idea that they need an education in order to survive financially. They did not realize they would need an education to survive as a human being. Many could not identify the names of famous women, who were not celebrities, but rather, women who have paved the way so others can dare to dream. I wrote a long feminist article sophomore year in hopes that maybe some would read it, and desire a social change in their favor. I started educating myself on the hot button issues today involving women and opening myself to both sides of every argument. Now, I am a Women and Gender Studies major, and have had the pleasure of taking classes that reinforce my advocacy while exposing new ideas and approaches to feminist. I want one day to write or speak in favor of women's rights and gender equality.

WMGS department welcomes new Program Assistant!!!

On behalf of the WMGS department I would like to welcome Viviana Bernal, who is a graduate of the WMGS program and had worked previously as Outreach Coordinator. She is passionately committed to the field and together with her and other students assistants, we've been able to develop an attractive informational pitch utilizing popular media. She brings a whole new vibe to our department. We thank you for all you do and look forward to how you will help the program grow.

**NEW TO WMGS:
FACULTY SEMINAR SERIES**

This year featured Alice Freed talk on Food and Gender and Professor Gill Zicklin on The History of Same Sex Marriage in the US.

3 NEW WMGS CLASSES:

- WMGS 208-Men& Masculinities
- WMGS 250 Women writing Safely
- WMGS 316-Victimology

Sandra Felz will be presenting her research on a transnational grassroots organization at the College of Humanities Research Symposium. Congratulations and good luck.

Grace Momanyi, Sandra C. Medina, and Lucia Doyle's papers were chosen for The New Jersey Women's and Gender Studies Consortium Undergraduate Research Colloquium.
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The **Edna and Ben Gould Memorial Scholarship** in Women's and Gender Studies was established in 2008 by Linda Gould Levine (former WMGS Director, 1994-2000) in loving memory of her parents. The scholarship, in the amount of \$250, will be awarded annually to a Women's and Gender Studies major or Women's and Gender Studies minor who meets the criteria.

Congratulations!!!

Student Assistant Angela Almonte is the recipient of a WomenTwoWomen-funded scholarship. The scholarship is for a self-identified lesbian who demonstrates leadership to positively impact campus and larger environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities.

We thank our Office Staff:

- Jennifer Arroyo
- Samantha Cox
- Danielle Rodgers

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