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Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Spring 2020

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Newsletter Spring 2020

Sandra L. Faulkner

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Director's Letter

This is my last newsletter as Director of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies @BGSU. I am stepping down after 6.5 years to focus on my teaching and research. This does not mean, however, that I am disappearing; I intend to keep researching, teaching and working with students and colleagues on important issues of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Now, more than ever, we need the intersectional analysis of feminist students and scholars. This is why we devoted this newsletter to all of the accomplishments of our faculty and students this past academic year. I'm sure you will agree that WGSS@BGSU is stronger than ever.

Cheers,



Sandra L. Faulkner



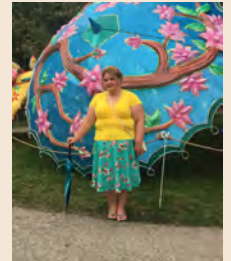
STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Tabetha Violet

Graduate Student

What do you like most about BGSU?

The programs through the College of Musical Arts are fantastic, and provide an opportunity to see world class music for free or nearly free, which is exciting. ICS gives people a platform for engaging public scholarship, and those events are provocative and enjoyable as well.



What projects and classes are you excited to be working on now?

I'm excited to begin work on my dissertation. I'm also developing a paper around a new trend in advertising for late stage cancer drugs. This is an emerging phenomenon in advertising and it's interesting to watch it develop.

What brought you to the Graduate Certificate program in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies?

My BA and MA degrees are in English and Literature, and most of my classes were cross listed with Gender Studies classes, and gender has been a focus for me across my academic career. I think that studying the subtle structures that prop up the kyriarchy is valuable in order to understand how we can work to build a more equitable future.

Who's a woman you really look up to?

Katherine Kerr. As a kid, I read a lot of super masculinist science fiction and Arthur C. Clarke seemed like the most brilliant person I could imagine being like. I didn't read "books for girls" and the thought of any fantasy novel made me cringe. I picked up a copy of Daggertspell at a book sale because it had an owl on the cover and I liked owls. It's feminist high fantasy about a young girl who becomes the most powerful sorcerer in the realm. It changed my opinion of books (and any other art or pop culture) featuring women as the main character, and really opened my mind to how women could be represented.

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program

School of Cultural and Critical Studies

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

CONTINUED

Bernadette Bowen

Graduate Student

What do you like most about BGSU?

What I like most about BGSU is that it willingly funds me to pursue my dreams.

What projects and classes are you excited to be working on now?

Just about everything. I'm currently writing three exciting papers: a) one I'm presenting in June at the Media Ecology Association conference on the bot written script trend, b) a piece I've submitted to MEA @ NCA [National Communication Association] reflecting on the digital love note product called The LoveBox, and c) an essay developing a term I'm coining called requirement politics referring to the phenomena in various institutions in response to sexual harassment/assault ("if my student tells me they've been raped, am I 'required' to report it?")

What brought you to the Graduate Certificate program in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS)?

Pursuing this certificate was a no brainer for me considering the work that I've always done, and plan on continuing to do. My undergrad is in sociology (gender, class, race), my masters I read a lot of personal and academic work of the vegan intersectional feminist variety, and now in my PhD I'm a part of the first ever push for gender and media ecology in the Media Ecology Association. My dissertation is also going to be over sexual ecologies in the algorithmic age.

Who's a woman (a celebrity or someone you know personally) you really look up to?

I look up to my colleague and friend Carolin Aronis, along with every single woman in the Media Ecology Association. Thanks to Carolin and others organizing efforts I can now proudly say the first ever Gender and Media Ecology panel came to fruition at the 2019 National Communication Association. Our panel was comprised of Drs. Julia Hildebrand, Julia Richmond, Lanie Presswood, Carolin Aronis, and Angela Circucci, and I. I can't understand how inspiring that experience was for me. Although long overdue, this historically paramount collaboration was the first time in media ecological history a panel openly celebrated the scholarship created by woman media ecologists. For example, Carolin's contribution was an in-depth critical discourse analysis of many of the foundational texts of media ecology, including Marshall McLuhan's "Understanding Media: The extensions of man". In her piece, Carolin courageously asserted her argument that when McLuhan says, "extensions of man" he did not in fact mean human beings, he meant "males" and "men". Being there and presenting was simply incredible.

Being there and presenting was simply incredible.

A fun fact about yourself?

I built my own gaming computer back in 2015 and play League of Legends everyday.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

During the spring semester, the program highlighted some of our affiliated faculty members on our social media pages.

Dr. Sarah Rainey-Smithback

Associate Professor in the School of Cultural and Critical Studies and the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program.

What are your research interests?

I mostly focus on "marginalized sexual communities," which means I study the sexual and family lives of LGBT people, people who identify as kinky, and people with disabilities.



Dr. Sarah Rainey-Smithback

What projects are you excited to be working on now?

I'm beginning a new project that explores how gender and sexual orientation operate in the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. As you may know, both organizations have undergone lots of changes in the last few years regarding who can and cannot be members and leaders, as well as what kind of programming they should offer their members. I received a grant from the Spencer Foundation to begin this research. I'll be interviewing scouts, leaders, and parents to see how they experience scouting as gendered/sexed beings. I'm particularly interested in how organizational policies and practices shape scouts' understandings of citizenship as gendered and sexed.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I get to teach my "dream course" this spring!! We're calling it "Marginalized Sexualities" and it is all about how and why certain communities get labeled as non-normative. We'll be looking at BDSM/kink, LGBTQ communities, disability and sex, and more!

What brought you to WGSS?

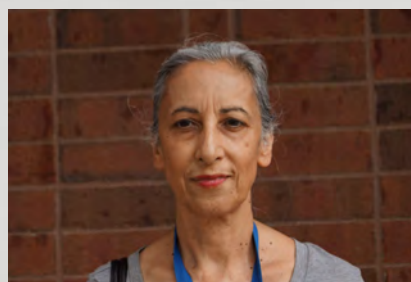
When I started my undergraduate studies in the mid 1990s, I thought I'd be a gynecologist because wanted to focus on women's sexual and reproductive health. I did fine on the pre-med track, but I didn't really enjoy the math and science classes. Then, one fateful quarter I took a Women's Studies course to fulfill a general education course and it changed everything! I realized I could still work on women's issues and sexual health issues in all sorts of ways—I didn't have to struggle through medical school! So, I switched my major. I became very active in sexuality activism in Columbus during my undergraduate years, so I decided to stay at Ohio State and pursue my Master's in WGSS, again focusing on women's sexuality. This time I focused more specifically on feminist sex work. After my Master's degree, I worked for a researcher as a project coordinator. She was doing large studies about how and why people disclose their HIV-positive status to lovers and to family members. I liked that work, but I missed the taste of teaching I got during my Master's program. So after a few years, I went back for my PhD in WGSS! So, I've always done WGSS—it has literally been my entire adult life!

Who is a woman you really look up to?

Ruth Bader Ginsberg. I'm envious of her guts.

A fun fact about yourself?

I have four jobs and 6 kids.



Dr. Khani Begum

Professor, Modern and Contemporary British and Postcolonial Literatures and Film; Postcolonial, Feminist, and Cultural Theories

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS CONTINUED

On September 18th, Dr. Begum was awarded the Faculty Excellence Award for Community-Based Teaching for her English 6750 course: *Filming African Identities: Black Power, Blaxploitation, & Why Black Films Matter Today*. In this course “she engaged students in the Black Issues and Africana Studies Student Research Conferences and a final project of a public screening and discussion at Way Public Library in Perrysburg of the Jordan Peele film *Get Out*. This event and the students’ critical film analyses provided a space for dialogue in response to racial incidents occurring in the community in the Spring of 2019.”

Dr. Begum was also presented the Faculty Senate Distinguished Service Award at the annual Faculty Excellence Awards on April 16. The award was given in “recognition of outstanding, continuous service and to highlight the importance of dedicated faculty to the development and enhancement of the University.”

Congratulations, Dr. Khani Begum!

Dr. Radhika Gajjala

Professor, American Culture Studies Program and the School of Media and Communication



What are your research interests?

Gender, Media, Technology and Globalization.

What brought you to WGSS?

My research is on Feminism and the Internet. I teach courses around gender, race, ethnicity, class, caste, geography and technology. WGSS is the place to be for me.

Could you tell us a little about your recent books?

In the last three years (2017 to 2020 January) I have had two books published - *Online Philanthropy: Connecting, microfinancing, and gaming for change* (2017) and *Digital diasporas: labor, affect in gendered Indian digital publics* (2019).

My two books “*Online Philanthropy*” and “*Digital Diasporas*” include collaborative research (with some collaborators working as co-authors of chapters and sections in these books).

Coresearchers in these two books include past and continuing graduate students at BGSU but also include international non-profit workers, activists and scholars based mostly in India.

Overall, in these books, there is an emphasis on online and offline ethnographic work. I look at different ways in which gender plays out in different digitally domestic spaces and in digital publics. In the contemporary moment, being digital through social media often means being in hashtag publics as well.

Even when we set out privacy settings the data we “become” is not secure and private and this too has implications for what a “public” is and is not. I take a historical approach to both (in the context of Internet history that is) and center issues around the interplay of gendered labor and gendered political subjectivities in all the crafting and activist contexts I examine online and offline.

I have also worked as one of the co-editors on two collections – one is the *The SAGE Handbook of Media and Migration* led by co-editors Kevin Smets I Koen Leurs Myria Georgiou and Saskia Witteborn and the other is *The Routledge Companion to Media and Class* led by co-editors Erika Polson and Lynn Schofield Clark.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I’m looking forward to continuing my research work on some of the themes that emerge from my research in the recent books and elaborating.

I’m also looking forward to extending and further developing my teaching along the lines of social media and social justice. I just completed a winter session (J-term) course on Social Justice movements and Social media (ACS 3000/WS 3000) that was fully online and taught in a fast pace three weeks framework. It was an intense but rewarding experience for me. I am going to be developing this course as a topics graduate class in ACS for the summer and hopefully will have the opportunity to teach it again in another J-term for undergraduates as well.

Who is a woman you really look up to?

This varies from time to time.

Right now I look up to all the young women out there who are doing amazing things. Particularly I want to give a shout out to the young women doing amazing social justice work all over the world.

A fun fact about yourself?

Don’t know if this is fun for anyone but me and my fellow fiber crafter junkies - I spin yarn (actual yarn – not just stories) and own collections of hand spindles and spinning wheels.

Dr. Kacee Ferrell Snyder

Director of the Center for Women and Gender Equity and Co-Director of the Center for Violence Prevention and Education



What projects or research or events are you working on now?

I am working on programming for both Centers for this semester and next for students, faculty and staff – we’re excited to work with so many partners on campus and in the community! I’m also president-elect for the Bowling Green Community Foundation Board of Trustees, so I am really looking forward to that experience as well.

What are you looking forward to this year?

I’m looking forward to establishing new collaborative partnerships for programs. I also love the Women of Distinction event and look forward to that each year.

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What brought you to join WGSS?

As a graduate student both for my master’s and Ph.D., I had some amazing faculty and staff members here who served as role models and mentors. I would not have been successful without the support I received, and I’m hoping to provide as much support and guidance as I can to give back to students on campus.

A fun fact about yourself?

I have two hilarious kiddos. One who is 5 and one who is 9, and they keep us on our toes!

Lisa Hanasono

Associate Professor, School of Media and Communication

What are your research interests?

As a communication scholar, my primary research interests focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Specifically, I examine how people (1) communicate social biases, (2) shatter stigma, and (3) stop discrimination.

What projects are you excited to be working on now?

I’m excited to make connections between my research interests and my passion for faculty development and diversity. Currently, I am a Co-PI on a nearly million-dollar NSF ADVANCE Adaptation grant with an amazing team of BGSU faculty, graduate students, and academic leaders. We are focusing on how allyship (including bystander intervention) and inclusive leadership can remove institutional and interpersonal barriers that hinder the careers of women and nonbinary faculty, faculty of color, and other minoritized faculty in STEM/social behavioral sciences. I’m also working on several communication research projects that investigate how and why people engage in anti-hate bystander intervention.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences mentoring and about the award you recently received?

I was delighted and honored to have been selected as a recipient of the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender’s (OSCLG) 2019 Feminist Teacher/Mentor Award! This recognition is particularly meaningful to me, because it celebrates the ways that teaching, mentoring, and gender equity are interrelated and inform each other.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS CONTINUED

Being a teacher, mentor, and feminist are all incredibly important parts of my identity. I am grateful for all of the amazing students, mentors, teachers, role models, and leaders, and loved ones in my life who have shaped me into the teacher,



feminist, and mentor that I am today. It really takes a village.

What brought you to WGSS?

In addition to naturally gravitating to WGSS due to our shared research interests, core commitments, and values--I am grateful for WGSS Director Sandra Faulkner who connected me to the program. She is an incredible leader, writer, feminist, mentor, role model, and person, and she is doing great things as the program's director!

Who is a woman you really look up to?

My mom!

A fun fact about yourself?

When I was an undergraduate student at Miami University, I was a founding member of a women's a capella group. At the time, there were several men's a capella groups—but there were no women's groups. We decided to do something about it, and we called ourselves the Miami Misfitz. Many years later, the Misfitz are still performing and entertaining crowds—it's fun to return to Oxford, Ohio to listen to them sing.

Dr. Kim Coates

Associate Professor of English and Director/Graduate Coordinator of American Culture Studies

What are your research interests?

My areas of research interest are 20th century transatlantic literature and culture (Transatlantic Modernism); Feminism(s); gender studies/queer theory; trauma theory; psychoanalysis; dance studies.

What projects are you excited to be working on now?

Most immediately, I am finishing a revised

version of my article "Lines of Flight: Dance as Revolutionary Praxis in Emily Holmes Coleman's Surrealist Novel *The Shutter of Snow*" for submission to *Feminist Modernist Studies* at the end of October.

I am working on a book project focusing specifically on what I refer to as a feminist grammar of movement and the relationship between Surrealism, dance, and literary/textual art as it begins circa 1920 and continues on through the thirties. The book manuscript concentrates on answering the question of how the dancing female body, linked as it is to madness, revolt, maternity, and refusal in women Surrealist writers, artists, and performers, protests the ominous rise of the hyper rational logics associated with fascism and nationalism in favor of more fantastic, marvelous, and liberatory social and political landscapes. The manuscript is currently titled *Audacious Limbs: Women's Writing, Dance, Surrealism, and the Politics of Resistance*. Another project I am getting underway comes out of a panel I organized and Chaired at last year's Modernist Studies Association (MSA) Conference in Columbus, Ohio. Playing off of Hillary Chute's book titled *Graphic Women: Life Narrative and Contemporary Comics*, this edited anthology, *Modernism's Graphic Women*, will examine the work of Modernism's *Graphic Women* and will consider, but not be limited to, questions like the following: How are modernist women employing the graphic in their work and to what end? How might we define the relationship between life narrative and the graphic (considered broadly) in these women's texts? Do these women's graphic narratives, like those considered by Chute, also speak to "dominant tropes of unspeakability, invisibility, and inaudibility" associated with trauma and the theory thereof? Or on a less serious note, are they relying on a comic interface between text and image that could be said to critique scenes of domesticity and/or more conservative notions of gender, sexuality, and female subjectivity? How might graphic texts by these modernist women offer up an earlier form of what Chute refers to as "feminist graphic knowledge"? How do these texts define and articulate such knowledge? How do graphic texts by these women offer a new spin on the "personal is political"? What kind of visual intervention in their own historical, political, and cultural moments do these women's graphic narratives offer?

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I am looking very forward to my first AY as Director/Graduate Coordinator of American Culture Studies. I have worked as an Affiliate Faculty member with ACS and WGSS during my time here at BGSU and am excited to be in a position where I can work in a more focused manner with the School of Cultural and Critical Studies, more closely with our graduate students and also advocate on their behalf.

I'm also excited to teach my Spring 2020 graduate seminar *Raging Women: Then and Now*, which I last taught in Spring 2017 pre the #MeToo movement.

What brought you to WGSS?

I have been involved with WS/WGSS from the beginning. I worked closely with the Women's Studies Program at the University of Utah, where I did my PhD and taught introductory Women's Studies courses there as well. When I arrived here, I immediately involved myself with the Women's Studies now Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program.

Who is a woman you really look up to?

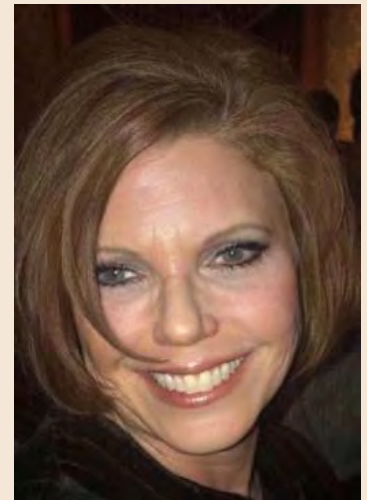
Definitely two of the women I worked with as a graduate student at the University of Utah: Karen R. Lawrence, who was originally my Chair and went on to be Dean of Humanities at UC Irvine, then President of Sarah Lawrence College, and is now the President of the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California.

I deeply admire and have remained close to Kathryn Bond Stockton, who served as my dissertation chair once Karen Lawrence left the University of Utah and who is author of numerous books such as *The Queer Child*, *Beautiful Bottom*, *Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer."*

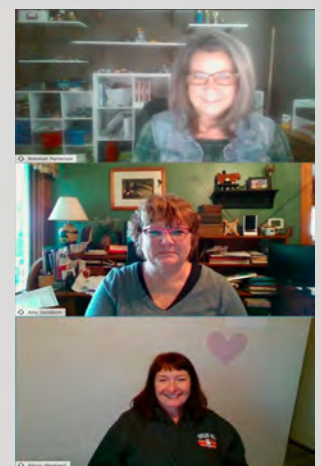
On the national level, two women who I admire and respect and who, sadly, have recently left us, are the writer Toni Morrison and the pioneering journalist Cokie Roberts.

A fun fact about yourself?

Prior to getting an MA and the PhD in English, I was working in Theater and earning my equity points at Boarshead Theater, a professional equity house in Lansing, Michigan.



Dr. Kim Coates



A special thanks to Beka Patterson, Amy Davidson, and DeeDee Wentland for their hard work, professionalism, and dedication to our faculty and students!

Spring Semester Events

- ❖ New and Newly Promoted Women and Non-Binary Faculty Reception
- ❖ A Night of Feminist Poetry with Camille-Yvette Welsch and Phil Memmer
- ❖ WGSS Art and Research Symposium
- ❖ The Confessions of a Sex Ed Teacher
- ❖ A black Women Speaks: Performance and Dialogue



New and Newly Promoted Women and Non-Binary Faculty Reception

Hosted by the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program and the Center for Women and Gender Equity
co-hosted by Jacqueline Nathan on
September 12th



Qualified Rank Faculty

- Dr. Renee Broth, Psychology
- Dr. Michelle Bussard, Public and Allied Health
- Dr. Muge Cakar, Applied Statistics and Operations Research
- Jasmine Crighton, School of Media and Communication
- Dr. Shari Densel, School of Art
- Dr. Megan Green, Humanities
- Dr. Sarah Guensch, Family and Consumer Sciences
- Dr. Amy Kinyon, School of Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Caitlin Marley, World Languages and Culture
- Dr. Crystal Oechsle, Biology
- Dr. Rachel Rickard Rebellino, English
- Dr. Audrey Roberts, Educational Foundations, Leadership and Policy
- Dr. Loraine Ruetz, School of Art
- Dr. Amy Strata, School of Counseling and Special Education
- Dr. Jennifer Stuart, Applied Statistics and Operations Research



Tenure Track

- Dr. Maureen Barry, School of Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Andrea Cardinal, School of Art
- Dr. Carly Dimes, Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Dr. Meagan Doherty, Psychology
- Dr. Elizabeth Gilfillan, School of Counseling and Special Education
- Dr. Melissa G. Keith, Psychology
- Dr. Vician Miller, Human Services
- Dr. Sivalti Ravichandran, Resort and Attractions Management
- Dr. Shuchismita Sarkar, Applied Statistics and Operations Research
- Dr. Jeanelle Sears, Human Services
- Dr. Laura Sheets, School of Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Wan Shen, Public and Allied Health
- Dr. Jenjira "J" Yahrum, Sociology



A Night of Feminist Poetry with Camille-Yvette Welsch and Phil Memmer.

Thanks to those that came out on October 7, 2019 to enjoy a night of poetry with these wonderful people!



WGSS Art and Research Symposium

Gender and Politics: The Legacy of the Suffrage Movements

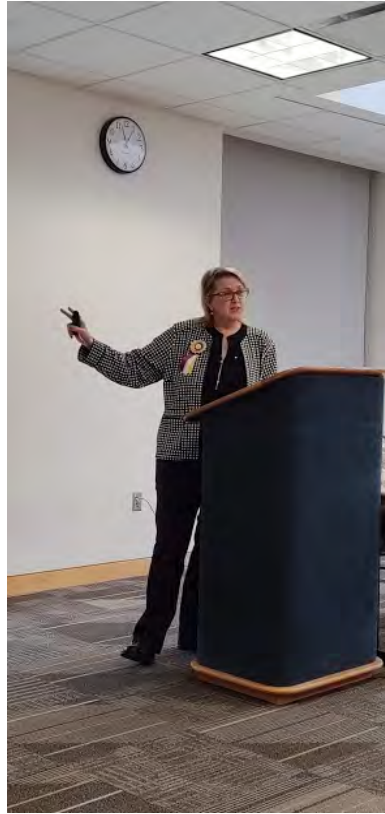
March 6, 2020



Keynote presentation by Lori Liggett, Ph.D.

Dr. Liffett is a 2019-2020 Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society and a teaching professor in the School of Media and Communication.

In celebration of the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment, Dr. Liggett examines the era leading up to its ratification and the robust, often contentious debates that took place in the national popular press. The 72-year-long woman suffrage movement evolved alongside the transformation of America from an agricultural society to a powerful industrial nation strengthened by new technologies, transportation, mass media, and consumer products. As American women began demanding equality in domestic, economic, and legal issues, the right to vote in national elections became central to their demands. The struggle for women's suffrage became the longest, continuous reform movement in American history, full of victories and defeats, progress and setbacks, political in-fighting,



splintered factions, as well as somber race and class issues. Liggett's research explores the spectrum of discursive practices within the popular press that portrayed both the idealized turn-of-the-century icon, also known as the "New Woman," as well as the fear-inducing "maniac or martyr" suffragist. The modern American woman as we know her emerged from the enterprise of the hard-fought right-to-vote movement.

WGSS Art and Essay Contest Winners

The program held its annual student Art and Essay contest with the 2020 Women's History Month theme, Gender and Politics: The Legacy of the Suffrage Movements. Students submitted essays and art that reflected on the theme.

Graduate First Place Art | Femifesta

Kim Kuiper

What was the impetus for your work?

I have always been interested in borders and boundaries: the transition from sky to sea to land, what is connected and what is not, the supposed separation of church and state, and identity negotiation. I wanted to create a dramatic contrast with marked borders, forcefully acknowledging the separateness of some of the areas. This marking of boundaries represents the physical boundary challenges women experience.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

My visual femifesta is structured off of Ahmed's (2017) explanations and descriptions of how to live a feminist life throughout everyday life and were vital in creating my femifesta: asking ethical questions about living in an unjust world, creating more equal relationships, supporting the less supported, and challenging one-dimensional histories.

What would you like to highlight about your work?



The process of creating my femifesta was interwoven with the challenges I faced in reconceptualizing my understanding of feminism and my part in it. There is an interesting aspect of reflexivity involved in the creation process and arts-based research; categories get organized, themes become apparent, and new questions arise. This femifesta also represents the beginning of my personal reflexivity; the challenging of my personal sense of what I am supposed to be compared to who I am and who I want to be; the intentional blurring of boundaries

Graduate Second Place Art | ONE MAN

Bernadette Bowen

Chapbook

SHRINK-A-SIZE ME

We have
so much
to celebrate
in loss.

How much
of Ourselves
can we

Let Go?

"Congratulations,
you look like
you've lost weight.

We are all
so proud of you
for losing
the extra.

The collective
like you small.

We want you to
internalize,
epitomize

[you are,
and should be]
almost, nothing."

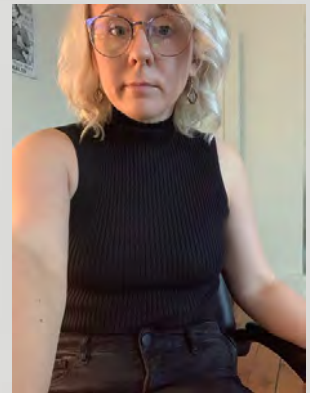
What was the impetus for your work?

Most of the pieces in this chapbook were created two years ago when I had the pleasure of knowing a very special someone who influenced me to express a creative side. This chapbook ONE MAN was meant to be a prequel collection to the chapbook submitted last year (entitled: FROM BOYS TO MEN) where I attempted to account for the taboo, vulnerable, and historically silenced complexities of the cis-women experience post-sexual harassment and assault. The order I arrange my pieces is deliberate, considering the structural markers which typically exemplify experiences of violence. But much like any traumatic experience, occasionally life goes on...even mundanely, and survivors or victims (however, we choose to identify) must learn how to continue on with it.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

My work speaks to feminist issues because it provides explicit accounts of my contemporary female/woman life. As stated last year, on a more micro-level, I consider an enactment of this voice as crucial because typically representations of sexual harassment, abuse, and assault are represented only at a statistical distance. Furthermore, survivors of verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse (if they are represented at all) are still represented as broken or used objects, perpetuated a culture of multifold objectification and dehumanization that does not accurately depict all survivors. This is only further complicated within what I would argue is a worldwide culture, which has yet to set a stage for our justice (socio-politically or legally).

On a macro-level, post-#MeToo, an explosion of silence-breaking has occurred for some, but much is still left unbroken, and we all have our reasons. Whether that be because of the rampant wrist-slapping that



continues to occur within the neoliberal American criminal injustice system, or the world-wide socio-political devaluation of feminine voice and pleasure by and large is irrelevant. Justice isn't and hasn't ever been served in this country. The fact is there has yet to be an actionable capitulation of the current structure, which continues to rationalize away the epidemic that is sexual violence; showing this country's true colors everyday: red (marginalized blood-shed), white (supremacy), and blue (cold-blooded profit-creation).

What would you like to highlight about your work?

A channeling of Tarana Burke: #MeToo declares sexual violence sufferers aren't alone and shouldn't be ashamed, despite the seemingly insurmountable amount of socially normalized and institutionalized gaslighting, victim shaming, and victim blaming.

Graduate Third Place Art | *Jaulus y Fractales (Cages and Fractals)*

Melody E. Freeland



What was the impetus for your work?

The impetus for my work emerges from my recent work related to the representation of women in Hispanic film and literature. My passion for critical and literary studies coupled with my positionality as a female subject and creative inside of a patriarchal society has led to the creation of this work. I sometimes feel constrained by the academic lines that encompass my masters work, so finding an outlet to both engage in and release the deeper sentiments which arise from being involved in literary and cultural studies is a way in which I continue to negotiate my own fractured identity.

I recently published an academic essay relating to my literary and cinematic research in the field, "La mujer silenciada dentro de la máquina patriarcal" (The silenced woman within the patriarchal machine) but had a desire to mold the academic into the poetic. For me, this is unavoidable. As I struggle to define what it means to be human, I reach to the boundless metaphorical and more abstract constructions of the human subject, of which in essence, is subjected to a perpetual becoming. From this becoming-process then, my work has surfaced, declaring for itself as the materialization of humanness and as echoed in the prose, a revolution—a rupture in the Deleuzian y Guattarian abstract machine through the deconstruction of ourselves. This inevitably leads to cages and fractals, as the title of my work reflects.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

My work reflects both the personal and universal struggle and suffrage of women fighting to leave the "cage", or as I would venture to call it, the abstract patriarchal machine.

My first piece, "Rizoma 1" speaks specifically to sexual violence which is a product of this machine. Although reflecting my own personal experiences of aggression as a female subject, it focuses on the concept of 'use', a Body which is violated, subjected to dominance and power, and then thrown away.

My second piece, "Rizoma 2" speaks to the abstract construction of patriarchal society itself which uses a comparison (taken from Deleuze and Guattari) to a physical machine. It describes the movement of a female subject within the inside of this machine. The cyclical nature of the patriarchal system is depicted as the end of the piece reaches back to the beginning of the piece, highlighting the way in which our 'rebellion' against the grander narrative is what creates this disposable outcome of the subject, who is replaced and subjected to continue the cycle again and again, incessantly.

My last piece, "Rizoma 3" speaks to the cage metaphor, but leaves the reader questioning the fate of the bird. It is trapped within the metaphorical patriarchal cage and in the end, we see that we can no longer hear the bird. Did it give up trying to speak? Did it escape? Did the narrator itself leave? Does it matter? Should the rights of the subject even be up for debate? No. Yet the glass ceiling continues constructing itself.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

As a female, bilingual creator in an increasingly fragmented society, I believe the highlight of this work is the intersectionality which displays itself even in the very fabric of the language used in the prose. The duality of the entire installment I think is the most poetic, if you may venture to define it as such. As I struggle to navigate and negotiate my own identity, the observer or reader is called to do the same as they contemplate their own fragmented reflection within the cage.

Graduate First Place Essay | Tie

Turning points from victim to survivor: An examination of sexual violence narratives

Madison Pollino

What was the impetus for your work?

The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN, 2019) reports that someone experiences sexual violence every 73 seconds in the United States. This statistic demonstrates the pervasiveness of sexual violence in contemporary culture; however, it does not represent the tangible experiences of individuals following the assault. Based on extant research, labeling oneself as a survivor creates a sense of empowerment.

However, there is little research dedicated to understanding how an individual makes the transition from self-perceived victimhood to survivorship. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to better understand the turning points from victim to survivor that individuals experience following sexual violence.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

The dominant narratives within our culture that question the legitimacy of sexual violence are produced and reproduced as ways to prevent individuals from articulating their experiences. This silencing of stories also reinforces the assumption that all individuals affected by sexual violence share the same experience. Using feminist standpoint theory, this study deconstructs that misconception by shedding light on the diverse experiences of those affected by sexual violence.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

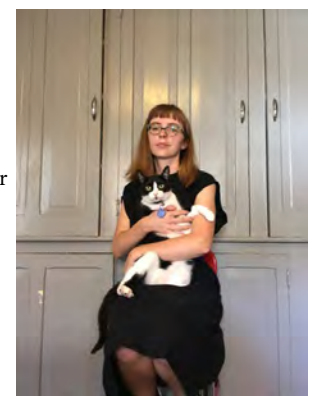
This research seeks to address the systemic issue of sexual violence on both the individual and collective levels. On the individual level, this study can provide those who have experienced sexual violence with a way to navigate the healing process. On the collective level, this study shows how survivors utilize their experiences to help those who still identify as "victims," as well as other advocacy efforts. Therefore, understanding the turning points from victim to survivor is necessary for both individual healing and social transformation at a time of great struggle within contemporary culture.

The Seasons of the Witch: How the Symbol of the Witch Has Been Re-Appropriated and Re-Signified in Feminist Activism from the Suffrage Era to Today

Stevie Scheurich

What was the impetus for your work?

In undergrad, I was an anthropology major, and we were always talking about and reading about religion in ways that were really interested in understanding how religious belief functions in people's inner and social worlds. I transitioned into gender studies in my Master's program, and there was very little focus on religion, except maybe to talk about how it is used to discriminate against queer folks. There's sort of been this assumption, that queer historians and other queer scholars are starting to question, that queer people aren't religious. I looked around at all my queer friends reading tarot cards and carrying crystals in their bras, and I thought queer folks are religious (or spiritual, if you prefer) but maybe in a way that isn't broadly recognized as religious since it's a little unconventional. That is not to say that all queer folks are drawn to witchy spirituality. There are queer folks who are traditionally religious and there are queer folks who are



WGSS ART AND ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS CONTINUED

into more esoteric traditions. I am really drawn to those who resonate with the figure of the witch, probably because I was raised on Sabrina the Teenage Witch, Charmed, and The Craft. The figure of the witch is really resurgent now with all of these reboots of these old shows and the resurrection of the activist group W.I.T.C.H. after the election of Donald Trump. This fall, The New York Times declared we had reached "peak witch," so you know it's really a thing.

It's an exciting time to be studying the witch and witches with the more religious turn that is developing in queer theory and all the witches emerging in pop culture and in "real life". Before I started digging into the history of the witch in feminist discourse, I thought my topic had nothing to do with the history of suffrage.

As I started reading more about the "second-wave" feminist witches there was a lot of reference to this suffragist, Matilda Joslyn Gage. Gage was a prominent suffragist and a contemporary of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, but she was a little too out there for Susan B. Anthony with her vocal criticism of Christian gender norms and her assertion that long before Christianity, women lived in egalitarian Goddess-worshipping societies. She helped popularize the notion that the early-modern witch hunts of Europe were done to consolidate patriarchal power by eradicating any women who still practiced the ways of the ancient matriarchy. Though her work contained inaccuracies (including a gross over-inflation of the number of women actually killed during the witch hunts), it has remained a powerful narrative for feminists seeking some model of empowerment under patriarchy. Gage was this really radical figure who supported abolition and indigenous sovereignty, and she was literally written out of history at the urging of Susan B. Anthony. She is being written back in by feminist scholars, and I think that is really exciting.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

In my work right now, I am exploring how the witch has been a symbol of liberation and empowerment for mostly White women. And I am interested in how the way the witch has been imagined has led to the exclusion of trans women in some sects of spiritual feminism. I am also exploring how some narratives of the witch treat all oppression, including racist, colonial oppression, as a subset of patriarchal oppression and refuse to acknowledge how Black, Indigenous, and queer People of Color might relate differently to the witch. Audre Lorde famously called in Mary Daly in an open letter for the way in which she only portrayed BIWOC as victims of patriarchy and failed to explore the feminist empowerment and goddess worship in those societies. Speaking of Mary Daly, she also espoused some seriously transphobic ideas which still circulate in Trans-Exclusionary Feminist rhetoric. So, I am really interested in taking an intersectional lens to the witch to see if one symbol or figure can make space for differences in race, class, gender, sex, and sexuality without erasing or collapsing important historical and contemporary differences.

So, I am really looking to feminist activism and storytelling and how it can sometimes enact violent exclusions in the name of women's progress, and I really interested in folks who are pushing back against those exclusions and questioning them in their magical practice.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

This work is part of the early stages of my dissertation research, and I am really excited about how it keeps developing. And I am working to find my voice as a critical gender studies scholar and what I have to contribute to the rich discussions that have been happening in feminist theology, feminist religious studies, pagan studies, and anthropologies and sociologies of religion.

Graduate Second Place Essay

"Virtuous Women": An Exploration of the Feminist Ideologies in the Social Purity and Free Love Movements of late Nineteenth-Century America

Lena Ziegler

Graduate Third Place Essay | Tie

Re-claimed and Destabilized: Bryna Turner's Bull in a China Shop as Queer History

Cody Page

What was the impetus for your work?

This work was born out of my graduate seminar class that centered Women and Performance in the Americas. In conceptualizing my final paper for that class, I looked for plays and playwrights that combined ideas of feminism and queerness. During this exploration, I found Bryna Turner's Bull in a China Shop which ultimately became the play that I would focus on for the class, as well as include within my dissertation research.

How does your work speak to feminist issues? This work speaks to feminist issues because I consider the viewpoints that Turner excavates within her play. Bull in a China Shop revolves around the real-life work of Jeanette Marks and Mary Woolley who were educators and activists at the turn of the 1900's, who were also in a committed relationship with each other. Turner's play not only excavates a history that was lost to time, but Turner also writes contemporary feminist issues into her work of the past. Through anachronistic techniques, Turner uses the past to comment on the contemporary.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

Through my work, I would like to highlight Turner and her work. I believe that Bull in a China Shop is an important feminist and queer work that seeks to illuminate forgotten histories lost to time.

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By discussing Turner, it is my hope that people might pick up the script and read it or find a production and see it staged live if possible.

"Justice is Possible, but It is Not Inevitable": Black Women, Black Masculinity, and the Struggle for Racial Equality in American History

Harry Olafson



What was the impetus for your work?

The contributions of black women throughout American history are not nearly as recognized as they should be. I wanted to historicize the contributions black women made toward

shaping black masculinity in the United States to help identify their efforts and contributions more closely.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

Equality is at the core of feminism, and this piece helps demonstrate how black women worked with black men to strive toward a more equitable society during the Jim Crow Era, Civil Rights Era, and today. While this piece focuses on masculinity, the social constructs in which it operates deserves a feminist critique and lens, which I provide in this essay.

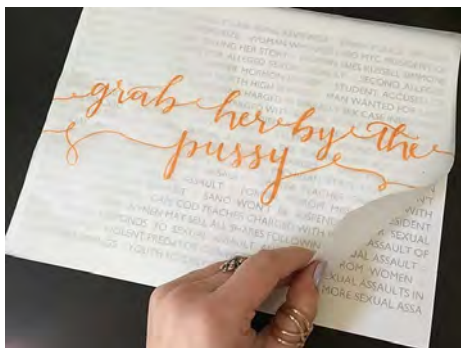
What would you like to highlight about your work?

"Black Women managed to have a voice in a society that oppressed both Blackness and femininity by striving to make advancements, not just in their own lives, but also the lives of Black men. Determined Black women who supported African American men were essential in gaining rights for Black men in the United States. This paper argues that Black women have been central motivators of the drive for Black men to embrace and frame their own definition of masculinity to work to gain de facto equality with white men throughout three distinct periods in American history: the Jim Crow Era, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Lives Matter movement. I trace the contributions of Ida B. Wells, Fannie Lou Hamer, Alicia Garza, Patrice Cullors, and Opal Tometti alongside those of the men who spearheaded reforms in each of the three distinct periods, and how their words and actions match those of the women working with them."



Undergraduate First Place Art The Foundations of Ignorance

Lexi Morris



What was the impetus for your work?

My piece was inspired by the words I've used within it. The quote on top, written in a scrawling, glittery and ultimately distracting font was pulled directly from the POTUS. I found this quote disgusting above all else, and also indicative of the way ignorance and power can so often distract from the reality that lies beneath.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

Sexual assault is too often ignored and diminished by ill-informed, static mindsets that paint violence as locker room humor. Women's stories are silenced by "jokes" and comments that perpetuate the mindset that rape "isn't a big deal," and that it "should be expected." This mindset is regressive and closed-minded. Each time we allow one of these comments to be said, countless heartbreaking stories are covered. This is my visual representation of something we see far too often: male "humor" dominating female tragedy.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

I would like to highlight the fact that the words beneath the top sheet are headlines, all of which were published within 3 days of each other. Approximately one third occurred within 8 hours. Imagine how many stories would be covered if I had broadened my range to 5 days-- or a week, a month, a year. So many voices are being silenced as we continue to allow ignorance to take center-stage.

Undergraduate First Place Essay

Shouting Out Equality

Paige Lyons

What was the impetus for your work?

The Impetus for my work was the energy around me. I felt that something should've been discussed and this was a way of doing so.

How does your work speak to feminist issues?

I believe my work speaks to the feminist issue because we have lost a sense of a true definition for the movement itself. The video I referenced in the essay ("Can Feminist and Non-Feminist Agree On Gender Equality?") had great points that I feel everyone should hear.

What was the impetus for your work?

The Impetus for my work was the energy around me. I felt that something should've been discussed and this was a way of doing so.

What would you like to highlight about your work?

If there is anything I'd like to highlight about my work it would be the point made from the video about feminism being about both genders rather than just females themselves.



The Confessions of a Sex Ed Teacher

A web series performance

Written and performed by Ashley Hendricks



Tell us about your project.

My project is a YouTube show called The Confessions of a Sex Ed Teacher which follows a ninth-grade teacher who is defending her teaching practices in sexual health education. The intent is to talk to a wide audience about how we need to provide better support and guidance for our high school teachers who teach a sensitive, but significant topic to our students through teacher immediacy and inclusive practice pedagogy. The teacher – who is referred to as Ms. Gwendolyn Taylor – talks about how the school is concerned with her teaching style and tells the audience about what she teaches in her classroom. Some topics include putting on a condom, talking about abortion, saying certain words that involve genitalia, and other inclusive pedagogical practices that she encourages in her high school classroom.

Some topics include putting on a condom, talking about abortion, saying certain words that involve genitalia, and other inclusive pedagogical practices that she encourages in her high school classroom.

Although this was intended to be a one-woman show that would be presented in Olscamp Center, the performance quickly changed to a YouTube presentation once

COVID 19 became a concern. My intent was to perform in-person to provide connection between the performer (who is the teacher) and the audience similar to what may be found with close interactions and intimate connections that is found in a classroom or a board meeting. Instead, it quickly changed to what relates to as "confessions" similar to what you may find in a journal or a web blog. I thought that COVID 19 was going to ruin my chances for graduating and ruin the message I had in my mind for my performance.

However, the quick turnaround to switch it to a YouTube presentation was a great alternative – if not, a better result – for my one-woman show.

What were your goals with this project?

I had several goals included in this project. My first goal was to provide an outlook of the abstinence-only approach versus comprehensive sexual health education. There are many studies that say comprehensive sexual education is important to teach in a classroom, but many of our school systems - Ohio especially – are still focusing on stressing and promoting abstinence-only lessons. Even the guidelines for the Ohio health education states to stress abstinence and focus on this approach. There are many studies and programs that show how important Comprehensive sexual health is to teach to adolescence, but many schools systems lack the support and guidance needed to provide the information for their classroom. Second, I wanted to show that our teachers are some of the most effective people in an adolescent's life because they have close connections and interactions with one another on a regular basis. The fact that teachers build a rapport and relationships with students and are also educators sets a proper foundation for adolescents to learn about these topics in an educational environment. So, providing teacher immediacy – or using closeness and personal interaction through non-verbal and verbal communication techniques that build relational bonds between teacher and student – becomes vital in the classroom setting. I wanted to provide an opportunity that showcase teacher-student dynamics through games, debates, role playing, classroom discussion and other active learning techniques that can make this topic educational, promote communication, and be fun for adolescents to engage and participate in while learning about sexual health. Finally, the most important thing I wanted to do was to create a performance to showcase this course as a topic that needs to be discussed and not shy away or push aside from conversation. It seems as though sexual health is something that many parents, teachers and students do not know how to address because it is considered a taboo topic with adolescents. So, I wanted to create a performance that encourages social change and give more insight about how we need to look at this class differently from a teacher's perspective.

How is this project a feminist one?

I like to think of this project as a promotional tool for equality learning opportunities for students in high school. In this case, we do not just provide students with stressing abstinence before marriage but show all students healthy practices and considerations of sexual health through establishing communication and life skills. So, in a way, this performance shows the importance to all students the importance of understanding and valuing their bodies and choices for healthy sexual activity and relationships.

One of my favorite examples I used in the project is talking about the importance of consent in a relationship. Many schools do not consider teaching this topic in high school, yet it's one of those topics that has blurred lines and a variety of interpretations for different individuals in a relationship. Ms. Gwendolyn Taylor receives a letter in the suggestion box from one of her students that they (the student) is in a relationship and is pressured into having sexual relations with the partner even though the student is not ready have sex with their partner. But, because the student is in a relationship, the thought is they are to engage in sexual activity because that's what it means to be in a relationship. So, Ms. Taylor realizes the importance of how consent plays a role in relationships and ends up discussing this topic in her class.

By breaking away from abstinence-only approaches and into more comprehensive approaches in education, this method can lead to opening up more acceptance and understanding healthy relationships just by bringing up discussion on topics regarding sexual health. The role of the performance and feminism is about equality and acceptance of something greater that can be provided by our teachers in the school system just by addressing sexual health in an educational environment.

We know that you faced challenges bringing this production to fruition. Could you talk about the challenges and how you dealt with them? Absolutely! One of the biggest challenges I had to face was completely changing the layout of my performance. The original plan was to perform this work as a live performance, or a one-woman show, in Olscamp Hall. After COVID-19 caused major shifts for the University and impacted the performance, I had to think fast on what I would do for my project. I have heard from several of my friends that they always imagined me having a YouTube channel and then it hit me...I could turn this into a mini web-series! The shift to a YouTube performance meant reconfiguring the script for the online audience, finding the equipment.

to record the piece, and even redesigning my apartment to set the stage for the performance. In less than a month, I had developed a completely new creation for my project. Although it was a lot of work and was very stressful to do, it became a piece of work that I was truly proud to accomplish in such a short time frame.

Another challenge was trying to promote closeness and interaction between teacher and students through an online platform. Don't get me wrong, it was going to be a challenge as a one-woman show, but with that type of performance there is more connection between a live audience that can encourage interaction and even participation to make the audience feel like they are learning with a teacher in a classroom. Online performances, they lose that touch of intimacy. So, reworking the script to make it flow appropriately as a story that would still show the importance in a non-participatory by describing those connections, becoming a storyteller, and providing advice with how to work with intimate connections for sexual health education became the important component to the performance.

Even though I faced several challenges because of the changes that had to be made for the performance, I had also created a piece of work that will reach a wide audience who may hear the concerns and issues teachers are concerned with when teaching sexual health education. The challenges were well worth it because the ending result was better than I even expected!

All 5 videos now available on Youtube at:
https://youtu.be/lktb_oUmlaM

A Black Woman Speaks: Performance and Dialogue

by Dr. Alison Upshaw

March 11, 2020

Dr. Upshaw is an opera singer, actress, teaching ARTist, playwright, researcher and academician.

The evening included Dr. Upshaw performing a speech written by Beah Richards for the 1951 Chicago Peace Congress. This opened a dialogue between Dr. Upshaw and the group around the narrative of the U.S. suffragettes and passing of the 19th amendment. The evening also included group expressions of art and music by Dr. Upshaw.



Dr. Upshaw wove these elements together to create an interactive, thought provoking, and memorable event.

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