

Women's & Gender Studies

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES • UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Spring 2009

"The Politics of Knowledge" is the theme for 2009 Conference



The 2009 annual conference of the Women's & Gender Studies program will be held March 19-21 on USC campus. This year's conference, "The Politics of Knowledge," will be held in conjunction with the Association of Feminist Epistemologies, Methodologies, Metaphysics, and Science Studies (FEMMSS).

This year's conference promises to be an exciting one! FEMMSS is an interdisciplinary group of feminist scholars who pursue knowledge questions that intersect with epistemology, methodology, metaphysics, ontology, and science and technology studies. The research presented at this conference seeks to deepen our understanding of the politics of knowledge in light of the increasing pressures of globalization, neoliberal restructuring, and militarization.

The politics of knowledge can be seen in the allocation and the appropriation of intellectual and natural resources, the allocation of research funding, the control and commodification of the health

sciences and health care by multinational corporations, and the dominance of Western knowledge over that of the Two-Thirds world. Furthermore, the politics of knowledge can be seen in the way groups and communities actively resist troubling affects of knowledge production through grass-roots organizations such as the Third World Network, community action groups, the citizens' science movement, environmental justice groups, and the various women's health movements.

The Thursday evening opening plenary will include Dr. Sue Rosser, from Georgia Tech. This is particularly exciting for us because Dr. Rosser was the first director of Women's Studies here at Carolina. It will be a pleasure to welcome her back! Other plenary speakers include: Marie-Hélène Bacqué, Eudine Barribeau, Wenda Bauchspies, Carole Biewener, Suzanne Bergeron, Nancy D. Campbell, Elizabeth Ettorre, Carla Fehr, Sandra Harding, Sarah Lucia Hoagland, Carole McCann, Kate McCoy, Patricia Miller, Laura Parisi, Banu Subramaniam, and Nicole Vitellone. The lineup of presenters in the concurrent sessions is likewise impressive!

The Women's and Gender Studies Awards Luncheon will feature Jeane Garane, from the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. For the full conference program or to register, go to the conference website: <http://www.cas.sc.edu/wost/conference.html>

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New Lectureship to Focus on Global Issues



Dr. Mary Baskin Waters

We are pleased to announce an important new initiative, the Dr. Mary Baskin Waters Lectureship Fund for Women's Human Rights, Global Issues and Grant Writing. The Fund

will support a lectureship that partners the Women's & Gender Studies Program with the Walker Institute of International and Area Studies. It will provide an ongoing and multifaceted approach to training for a broad spectrum of grant writers seeking funds for critical work that will pave the way for transformative results in the global community.

As Dr. Waters puts it, "The Lectureship will address a myriad of problems that face women around the globe, whether in wealthy or poverty stricken countries, including human trafficking, violence against women, and reproductive health care."

The fund will support the following initiatives:

- o A lecture or series of lectures from professionals working with foundations and institutes. Lectures will address a variety of global and gender issues and propose potentially fundable policy strategies.
- o A course at the 500 level offered through WGST that would enable both graduates and undergraduates to learn NGO-style grants writing. The grants should exhibit an awareness of social justice issues and/or public policy strategies.
- o A workshop in grant writing that would appeal to members of the local community who are moving from for-profit to non-profit careers. Such a workshop would appeal as well to students and professors.

We are especially excited about the prospect of further collaborations between the Walker Institute and the Women's and Gender Studies Program. It will, we believe, strengthen both our units. Thank you so much Dr. Waters for making this possible!



Notes from the Director:

Drucilla K. Barker

There is no doubt that our economy is in dire straits these days. Cutbacks, layoffs, foreclosures, and furloughs dominate the news. The statistics do not even begin to tell the real stories of anxiety and pain felt by many of us. We at the University of South Carolina have not been immune! I am happy to say, however, that the Women's and Gender Studies program remains healthy, strong, and resilient. This is no small measure due to the overwhelming support of its faculty,

affiliate faculty, staff, students, and perhaps most of all, its community partners.

I want to take this space to thank all of you. Many of you over the years have given generously to the Women's Studies Endowment Fund. Thank you! Many of you have also given your time to serving on the Women's and Gender Studies Partnership Council. Thank you! The Council and Fund are an indispensable part of what keeps us a strong and vibrant program in spite of the dire budgetary conditions at the University.

I hope that many of you will find time to attend the upcoming conference, The Politics of Knowledge. The opening plenary on Friday night will find all three directors of Women's Studies at Carolina together:

Sue Rosser, Lynn Weber, and me. I am also pleased to welcome two of my early mentors in feminist studies, Sandra Harding and Nancy Tuana. In addition, we are expecting nearly 100 attendees from all over the United States and abroad.

In 2010 the conference will be held in conjunction with the annual conference of The Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA). We are working on a theme for that conference that ties into the arts, women, and resistance.

So although I can't say that these are the best of times for us, they are not the worst either. We have intelligence, heart, and commitment. Those are the things that will carry us forward.



Graduate Director Reflections: DeAnne K. Hilfinger Messias

These are chaotic, but hopeful times. Looking at the global, national, state, or USC economy, the chaos is painfully evident. Yet there is a mood of hopefulness, of renewed commitment to community and the motivation to "dust ourselves off" and get to work for positive change. My personal degree of hopefulness has definitely been strengthened through the contacts I have had with the Women's and Gender Studies graduate certificate students over the past four years. As Graduate Director, as I have recruited, admitted, advised, and signed off on graduation applications for our students, I have been continually encouraged and reaffirmed by the ways in which they embody the mission of Women's and Gender Studies. Our Graduate Certificate students are a very diverse and talented group. Many are concurrently enrolled in other graduate programs - from art history, anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, geography, political science, English, and

comparative literature to education, nursing, public health, social work, and journalism. Others enroll in the certificate as a stand-alone degree program, either before, or after, pursuing graduate education in other fields. Although most of our students are women, our classrooms reflect the diversity and intersections of gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, national origin, geographical location, and age.

We are especially proud of our recent graduates and awardees. Christina Griffin was awarded the Fall 2008 Harriott Hampton Faucette Award for Women's and Gender Studies Graduate Student Research. She will apply the monetary award of \$500 to travel related to her research on gender and social capital in the recovery stages of natural disasters. The 2008 Emily Thompson Awardee was Imelda Cuison, who submitted the winning paper on women's health, entitled "Power, Powerlessness, and Cardiovascular Disease: African American Women's Experiences." In December, Melissa Anne Clamp and Imelda Cuison received their degrees, bringing the total WOST Certificate graduates in 2008 to seven. Our current enrollment is 30 students, of which 8 are currently taking WOST 797 Seminar, the capstone course for the Certificate Program, an indication that 2009 is posed to be another record year in the Graduate Certificate Program.

I am especially pleased that one of our own graduates, Dr. Sheri Hardee, became

the Director of the Women's Well-Being Initiative (WWBI) in January 2009. As a WOST Graduate Assistant a few years ago, Sheri was instrumental in developing innovative, arts-based outreach for youth through the WWBI. She brings to the position her experiences in liberatory pedagogies designed to challenge, inform, and open up new possibilities with marginalized groups, as well as her on-the-ground knowledge of the local community.

Witnessing the scholarship, creativity, energy, and commitment to social justice among our students is a confirmation of the relevance of the mission of the USC Women's and Gender Studies Program.

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Faculty Kudos

Drucilla K. Barker, Director of Women's & Gender Studies (WGST), and her coauthor, **Darla Schumm**, from Hollins University, published "Feminism" in the *Handbook of Economics and Ethics*. **Darcy Freedman**, Social Work and WGST affiliate, with her coauthors, D. Jones and S.E. VanHooser has published: "Experiences in a trans-disciplinary social science doctoral program" in *Transpedagogies: a roundtable dialogue in Women's Studies Quarterly*. **Lisa Lindley**, HPEB and WGST affiliate, **Corrie Barnett**, PhD Candidate in HPEB, **Heather Brandt**, HPEB, with coauthors, **Dr. James Hardin**, EPID/BIOS, and **Dr. Michelle Burcin**, director of Healthy Carolina published "STDs among Sexually Active Female College Students: Does Sexual Orientation Make a Difference in *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. **Kathryn Luchok** has been named Director of the South Carolina Reproductive Access Project. **Ed Madden**, English and WGST, published *Tiresian Poetics: Modernism, Sexuality, and Voice 1885-2001*, and with his co-editor Marti Lee, *Irish Studies: Geographies and Genders*. **Agnes Mueller**, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and WGST affiliate, published "Beyond Totalitarianism? Gender, Jews, and East vs. West in Peter Schneider's *Eduards Heimkehr*." In: *Literatur im Jahrhundert des Totalitarismus. Festschrift für Dieter Sevin*. **Heather Brandt**, HPEB and WGST is PI and **Lucy Annang**, HPEB and WGST affiliate, **Swann Arp Adams**, EPID and Cancer Prevention & Control Program, and **Suzanne Swan**, Psychology and WGST, are co-principle investigators on a grant from the Duke Endowment, on the grant, "Community Navigator for Colorectal Cancer Prevention & Control." **Lynn Weber**, Psychology and WGST, will publish a second edition of *Understanding Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality: A Conceptual Framework*. in July 2009.

Kudos:

Florencia Cornet, 2000 Certificate graduate, was awarded an American Association of Women Educational Foundation International Doctoral Fellowship for the 2008-09 academic year. **Imelda Cuison** received the Emily Thompson Award in women's health. **Sheri Hardee**, 2007 Certificate graduate, was named as Program Coordinator of the Women's Well-Being Project. **Traci Hefner** is the first recipient of the Dr. Mary Baskin Waters Enhancement Award. **Amanda Lambert**, WGST certificate student, was honored at the 25th Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony for her work with the Juvenile Arbitration Program, a part of the Women's Well-Being project.

Notes from the Women's Well-Being Initiative: Resolutions for a New Year Sheri Hardee

Since its inception, the University of South Carolina's Women's and Gender Studies Program has viewed activism and community outreach as core components of the program's foundation, and in 2001, this mission was formalized with the creation of the Women's Well-Being Initiative (WWBI). As evidenced by the recent recognition by Carnegie of our University as a "community-engaged institution" and by the call from President Obama for service to our communities, it is more important than ever that the University strengthen partnerships and share resources with local communities. The WWBI and our plans for the new year remain in sync with these ideas.

For the past eight years, the WWBI has combined resources, served communities, involved students in activism, and our current and future initiatives continue this work. The WWBI has scheduled two additional workshop series in our continuing work with the young women participating in the Lexington County Community Juvenile Arbitration Program initiated by Donald V. Myers, Solicitor. To keep youth out of the court system, Juvenile Arbitration works as a mediation with youth who have committed a first-time, non-violent offense. The first of these new workshops began January 24.

For the last year and a half, Amanda Lambert has been the main facilitator of these workshops, and this past December Juvenile Arbitration presented her with a certificate for her work with and dedication to the young women in this program. As Kathryn Barton, the program's director noted, "Our office has been delighted with the outcome of working with the Women's and Gender Studies Program at USC."

One of the most important goals of the WWBI this year is to work with faculty to raise funding for new initiatives and research projects. As part of our mission to build strong University-community partnerships, the WWBI is also in the process of creating a mentoring program between University students and local high-school students. Although in its beginning stages, the mentoring program will promote the well-being of young women in the community by providing information on topics such as college processes, body image, peer pressure, identity development, and health and disease. University students from several classes, including Dr. Erica Gibson's "Women and Their Bodies in Health and Disease" courses and Dr. Mary Baskin Waters' service-learning course, and undergraduates majoring in Women's and Gender Studies have volunteered to help develop and implement this mentoring project.

Referring to Carnegie's recognition of the University as a community-engaged institution, President Pastides emphasized the need to continue building and strengthening the bonds between the University and the people in our state. Since its inception, these same goals have been integral to the mission of the WWBI, and we seek to address these issues with renewed vigor in 2009.



Cultures, Pregnancy and Birth: A New Course by Erica Gibson

We believe this course will be of interest not only to current students at USC, but also to members of the community - especially doulas and other women-centered birth advocates.

ANTH/WGST 391: Pregnancy and childbirth are human universals, but the way women experience this life-altering time is shaped in large part by their culture. This class will explore the similarities and differences in the way pregnancy and birth is experienced in the United States and cross-culturally using an anthropological perspective. Topics covered will include the history of birthing practices in the US, views on pregnant women, pregnancy wantedness, perinatal care standards, birth rituals and practices, black market birth, and health outcomes of women and their infants such as postpartum depression, failure to thrive diagnoses, fistulas, etc. This class is suited to students of anthropology, women's and gender studies, sociology, psychology, nursing, pre-med, public health, and anyone interested in learning more about one of the great liminal periods in women's lives. For more information please contact Dr. Erica Gibson at ericagibson@sc.edu.



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Mission Statement:

Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Carolina promotes an understanding of the experiences of women and other underrepresented groups through a complete program of teaching, research, and service to the University, the local community, the state, the nation, and the global community. Through its teaching mission, Women's and Gender Studies shares this knowledge with students so that they learn to think critically, to communicate effectively, to solve problems, and to interpret human experience. Through its research mission, Women's and Gender Studies reconceptualizes existing knowledge and creates new knowledge through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. Emerging from an activist tradition, Women's and Gender Studies serves University, local, state, national, and global communities by acting as a resource and guide for issues related to women and gender.

Our teaching, research, and service missions interweave as we create, share, and apply knowledge, skills, and values that promote the full participation of women and other underrepresented groups in society. At the core of the work of Women's and Gender Studies teaching and research at the University of South Carolina are broad but fundamental questions that drive examinations of the intersections of race, gender, ethnicity and other dimensions of inequality.

Support USC Women's and Gender Studies and the Women's Well-Being Initiative

The Women's and Gender Studies Program is growing. We invite you to join our efforts to promote the understanding essential to improving the lives of women and other underrepresented groups by becoming a Friend of Women's and Gender Studies.

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other \$ _____

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