



Institute for Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies

@OBERLIN COLLEGE

DIRECTOR'S REPORT, 2012 - 2013

I'm pleased and excited to follow Renee Romano as Director of GSFS. The 2012-13 academic year began with great energy and purpose. Our curriculum offerings are strong. Courses being offered this year that fulfill the GSFS major span 11 departments and programs across two divisions. Interdisciplinarity is in evidence not only in the GSFS curriculum but also in programming. Within weeks of the start of classes, the "Year of the Queer" was inaugurated, an impressive year-long series of lectures, films, performances, and other events. (See below for a report by the Year of the Queer organizers.) There is a long history at Oberlin for Feminist Brown Bag talks, where faculty members have an opportunity to present gender-oriented research-in-progress in a collegial setting. Our first FBB talk for the fall semester will take place on Friday, November 9. Kim Schreck will speak on "'Gross Crimes': Anti-Miscegenation Law and the Reconstruction of Gender." Kim is visiting assistant professor in History and serves on the GSFS advisory council. For more information, go to http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/gender/news_listing.dot.

The Institute is very pleased to announce that its theme for International Women's Day—March 8, 2013—will be reproductive rights and access to reproductive care and safe abortion worldwide. Focusing on the issue of abortion and reproductive rights seems especially pertinent in this historical moment because 2013 marks the 40th anniversary of the momentous *Roe v. Wade* decision by the Supreme Court legalizing abortion in the United States. Historian Linda Kerber calls this anniversary a "teachable moment" ["The 40th Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*: A Teachable Moment," *Perspectives on History* 50/7 (2012)]. In this vein, we are pleased to announce that the keynote speaker for International Women's Day 2013 will be Loretta Ross, the co-founder of SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective (<http://www.sistersong.net/>). SisterSong is a network founded in 1997 comprised of 80 local, regional and national organizations that focus on reproductive justice for women of color. Ms. Ross has served as National Coordinator of SisterSong since 2004. She was the Co-Director of the April 25, 2004 National March for Women's Lives in Washington D.C., the largest protest march in U.S. history, with more than a million participants. She is the co-author of

Undivided Right: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice (South End Press, 2004). Ms. Ross is part of a growing progressive group of women of color working in public education, grassroots organizing, and lobbying, who are calling attention to the need for a broad analysis of racial, economic, cultural, and structural constraints on reproductive care for women of color. As the SisterSong website states: "The reproductive justice framework—the right to have children, not have children, and to parent the children we have in safe and healthy environments—is based on the human right to make personal decisions about one's life"

(<http://www.sistersong.net/>). Ms. Ross' lecture title for the GSFS International Women's Day event will be: "Reproductive Justice, Religion and Human Rights." For more information about Loretta Ross and the GSFS International Women's Day 2013 events, go to:

<http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/gender/intl-wom-day/>

Margaret Kamitsuka

Associate Professor, Religion Department
Director, Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies, 2012-2015



DIRECTOR'S REPORT, 2011-2012

As I look back at my two years as director of the Institute, I am thrilled to see how GSFS has blossomed and assumed such an important place in Oberlin's intellectual life. We have expanded upon the wonderful work begun by the original advisory committee and our first director, Anu Needham, by reaching out to both new and established faculty to continue building our rich and diverse curriculum. Last year, the major offered nearly thirty courses, originating in nine different departments. The GSFS curriculum committee developed guidelines for the expectations of GSFS gateway, elective, and capstone courses, and the advising committee created clearer criteria for our advisors and affiliated faculty. Our committed advisors and advisory committee worked with an extraordinary group of students whose research demonstrated the vibrancy and creativity of the new major.



Dr. Estelle Freedman

In 2011-2012, the Institute organized a series of programs that generated wonderful discussions about important issues related to gender, sexuality and feminism across the campus. During the fall semester, Dr. Estelle Freedman, the Edgar E. Robinson Professor in U.S. History at Stanford University, joined us for a week on campus to share her current research on the history of rape. Dr. Freedman gave public lectures on the politics of rape in U.S. history and on the response to street harassment in the Progressive era. She also offered our students a very popular module course on the history of sexual violence in the United States. In the spring semester, we focused our programming on the topic of public health. Building on the enthusiasm generated by the presence of GSFS Mellon post-doctoral fellow Dr. Peris



Dr. Gary Barker

Kibera, who offered popular courses on Black Women's Maternal Health and HIV-AIDs in Africa in her two years at Oberlin, the Institute sponsored a three-week symposium on gender and public health. Each of three speakers offered a public lecture and met with students who enrolled in a GSFS-sponsored module course on the topic. Dr. Gary Barker, the International Director of Instituto Promundo, spoke



Dr. Rachel Snow

about his work engaging men and boys to work for gender equality and violence prevention in Brazil. Dr. Rachel Snow of the University of Michigan discussed her research on sex, gender, and vulnerability, and Dr. Mira Shiva, a public health activist in India, shared her insights on the impact of economic globalization on women's health in India. We were thrilled to have the support of Shansi, the Dean's Office, and a large number of academic departments and programs for our programming this year.



Dr. Mira Shiva

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to GSFS since the founding of the Institute. It is your continued intellectual and material support that will enable us to offer the exciting and innovative programming that has become a hallmark of GSFS.

*Renee Romano
Associate Professor of History
Director, Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies, 2010-2012*

LEAH FREED MEMORIAL PRIZE

The Leah Freed Memorial prize is awarded to support student research, creative work, performance, or other academic projects. Awards are granted to help defray costs of deserving student projects. Competitions for the award are held every fall semester for work to be completed during that academic year. The Fall 2011 recipients were as follows:

Cora Allen-Coleman, Psychology Major

Project Title: Sex and Trauma Differences in PTSD Treatment

Project Description: Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one of the most prevalent anxiety disorders, affecting about 8% of Americans during their lives. A serious and chronic disorder, PTSD can disrupt relationships, impede employment, prevent the accomplishment of life goals, and lead to other mental disorders such as depression or substance abuse. The dozens of available therapies and psychoactive drug treatments makes practitioner and patient decisions about treatment options difficult and complicated. Though previous research has indicated that women and men experience PTSD in different ways, there is a noticeable lack of information on how gender affects a treatment's success rate. Research in the fields of sociology, neuroscience, and psychology suggests that gender influences the way people process anxiety and traumatic events, as well as the type of trauma to which they are exposed. This differentiation leads to gender differences in PTSD experience. In this project, I investigate differences in treatment efficacy based on gender and trauma-type using meta-analysis techniques. This research could help practitioners choose the best treatments for their patients and will contribute to the scientific discourse on gendered differences in cognitive processing and mental health.

Leila Goldstein, Undeclared Major

Project Title: Social Change and Indian Street Theater

Project Description: For my project, I will be interning with Nalamdana, a non-profit organization in Chennai, India, for two weeks in August of 2012. Nalamdana uses theater as a tool for social change, addressing issues such as women's health, youth education, and tsunami rehabilitation, in plays as well as theater workshops, films, and radio entertainment. My main goal is to study Indian street theater techniques and how they work to create positive change for women in Indian communities. During my time in India, I plan to teach theater and dance to young girls, work on theater activities and materials used by women living with HIV/AIDS, and possibly perform in one of Nalamdana's plays. Upon returning to Oberlin, I will teach a workshop involving the techniques I learn about in Chennai. I also plan to incorporate these skills into the work I do with the dance mentorship program Girls in Motion at Langston Middle School.



PHYLLIS JONES MEMORIAL AWARD

The Phyllis Jones Memorial Award was established through gifts from students, colleagues, and friends of Phyllis Jones (1945-1982). This annual award recognizes and honors student work in areas related to Phyllis Jones's interests: women writers, minority women, women in the community, and the integration of personal and professional goals for women. The Spring 2012 recipient was as follows:

Ben Tobin, Cinema Studies Major

Project Title: Anna Rising

Project Description: My film, Anna Rising, started out with the single image of this mysterious woman with a basket of bread attached to her bicycle riding through a small New England town, a reminder of the self sufficiency of the past. At the time I was thinking of ideas for a film and was intending to do a fictional comedy, but seeing Anna Fessenden acting as this source of life and sustenance for her community inspired

*(Phyllis Jones Award cont.)****Ben Tobin, Cinema Studies Major cont.***

me to find out more. I quickly learned she grew up in Oberlin for a short time and then all over Europe. I'm not a religious person by any stretch of the imagination, but I do recognize the interconnectedness of the universe and that this was no accident. I spent the summer of 2011 interviewing Anna, her friends, customers, and family. What I found was a story of loss (Anna's husband Jack passed away unexpectedly), growth both personal and artistic, a legendary anchor of a community, and much more. I've always wanted to make big budget blockbusters, that's why I decided to major in cinema studies. I wanted to build worlds and create magic, what I discovered in Ashfield was that magic does exist and it's right in my backyard. Human stories about real people have a power all their own. I felt inspired by Anna's story of becoming self-sufficient, putting others before herself, and making this fantastic European bread and I fell others will be inspired by her story as well. I expected this project to end after I sent the DVD off to the senior screening, but I still find myself following up with other artists, other community fixtures whose stories are equally fascinating and poignant and inspirational. While I still aspire to make feature films in fantasy worlds I also want to tell real stories about real people like Anna.



WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!



Programming and student fellowships in the new Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies significantly rely on the contributions of alumni and friends. Such contributions of whatever amount facilitate the growth and vitality of gender, sexuality, and feminist studies at Oberlin College for majors and students throughout the college. We hope you can make such a contribution. The following URL allows you to do so directly and online: <http://www.oberlin.edu/giving>. When you reach this page, click the "Give Online" link on the left. Donations will be directed to the new GSFS Institute if Option "c. Other" is chosen and "GSFS Institute" is typed in the empty box to the right. Thank you.

**2011-2012 Donors:**

Sara J. Green
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 Philippa Yin



The Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies Institute is extremely grateful for the generous contributions made by the following individuals over the last year.

Thank you for your support. Your generous contributions enable us to schedule and sponsor events both on and off campus, benefiting the Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies majors as well as the entire student body at Oberlin College.

FACULTY UPDATES

ANN COOPER ALBRIGHT

A performer, choreographer and feminist scholar, Ann Cooper Albright is Professor of Dance and Theater at Oberlin College. Combining her interests in dancing and cultural theory, she is involved in teaching a variety of dance, performance studies and gender studies courses that seek to engage students in both practices and theories of the body. She is the author of *Modern Gestures: Abraham Walkowitz Draws Isadora Duncan Dancing* (2010); *Traces of Light: Absence and Presence in the Work of Loie Fuller* (2007); *Choreographing Difference: the Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance* (1997) and co-editor of *Moving History/Dancing Cultures* (2001) and *Taken By Surprise: Improvisation in Dance and Mind* (2003), all from Wesleyan University Press. Another book, *Encounters with Contact Improvisation* (2010) is one of her latest adventures in writing and dancing and dancing and writing – with others!

Ann is currently working on an interdisciplinary project entitled *Gravity Matters*, which looks at contemporary embodiment after 9/11. Her work has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Camargo Foundation, the Furthermore Foundation, and the Ohio Council for the Arts, from which she has received five Excellence in the Arts Awards, the most recent in 2009. Ann is the founding director of *Girls in Motion* an after school program for middle school girls at Langston Middle School in Oberlin, Ohio, and co-director (with Ann Dils) of a web-based teaching initiative entitled: *Accelerated Motion: Towards a New Dance Literacy in America*, which is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and NITLE.

HSIU-CHUANG DEPPMAN

Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, Associate Professor of East Asian Studies, joined the GSFS advisory council in 2010. Her research interests include the representations of women in Chinese film and fiction, history of Chinese cinema, film adaptations, and documentaries. She teaches a GSFS elective: EAST--206 "Sex and the Country in Modern Chinese Literature." She is the author of *Adapted for the Screen: the Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Fiction and Film* (University of Hawai'i, 2010) and has recently published three essays: "The Politics and Aesthetic of Seeing in Jump! Boys," in *Documenting Taiwan on Film*, ed. Sylvia Lin and Tze-lan Sang.

London (Routledge, 2012); "The Filmic Romance of Eileen Chang and Ang Lee," in *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*, ed. Kam Louie (Hong Kong University Press, 2012); and "Lust, Caution: the Literary and Cinematic Complex of Eileen Chang and Ang Lee," in *Stir/Still: Approaching the Field of Vision*, ed. Tseng Shao-Chien and Hsu Chi-Lin (Taipei: Shu Lin Press, 2012).

HARRY HIRSCH

Harry Hirsch, Professor of Politics, has prepared and is teaching a new seminar on "Justice," and has been busy planning "The Year of the Queer" on campus, which so far has attracted over 200 people to the lecture series. For information, see <https://sites.google.com/a/oberlin.edu/year-of-the-queer/>. He has also been appointed to the editorial board of the *American Political Science Review*.



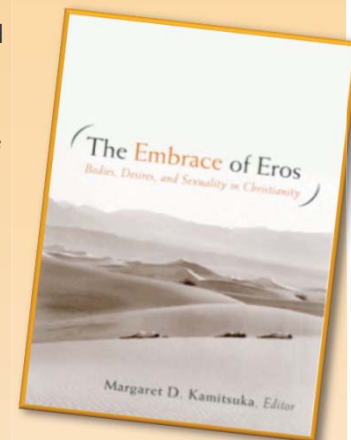
(Faculty updates cont.)

MARGARET KAMITSUKA

Margaret Kamitsuka, *Director of GSFS and Associate Professor in the Religion Department*, has served on the Advisory Council of the GSFS from its inception. She teaches courses at all levels on gender and religion and upper-level courses on methodologies in gender studies and religious studies. Her monograph, *Feminist Theology and the Challenge of Difference*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2007. Abstracts of the book's chapters are available at Oxford Scholarship Online:

<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/search/results/1>. She was the editor of and contributor to *The Embrace of Eros: Bodies, Desires, and Sexuality in Christianity* (Fortress Press, 2010). Her current research focuses on the anti-abortion rhetoric in conservative Roman Catholic and evangelical religious circles.

She published, "Feminist Scholarship and Its Relevance for Political Engagement: The Test Case of Abortion in the U.S.," *Critical Issues in the Study of Religion and Gender* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2011), <http://www.religionandgender.org/index.php/rg/article/view/2>. This essay appeared in the inaugural issue of *Religion and Gender*, the first refereed online international journal dedicated to the systematic study of gender and religion in an interdisciplinary perspective.



For Spring semester 2013, she will offer a new course, RELG 367--Theologies of Abortion, which explores a spectrum of theological approaches on abortion from *Roe v. Wade* to the present day.

PATRICK O'CONNOR

Patrick O'Connor is Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies and Comparative Literature, and chair of Hispanic Studies. His field is contemporary narrative, especially Latin American fiction and film, including queer theory perspectives. In 2004 he published *Latin American Literature and the Narratives of the Perverse: Paper Dolls and Spider Women* (Palgrave Macmillan Press), which looked at Freud and other sexologists' stories about perversions, and how they were taken up and reworked by Latin American novelists including Gabriel

García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, and Manuel Puig. He has just coedited an anthology of essays entitled *Latin American Icons*, forthcoming from Vanderbilt University Press, an outgrowth of his GSFS course *Che, Frida, Pancho Villa, Evita: Latin American Icons*. He is part of the Year of the Queer faculty organizing committee, and in Spring 2013 he will be offering another course for the major, GSFS 205--Queer Beginnings, where the class will read closely the early texts of queer theory from around 1990, and read novels and watch movies of that moment (the birth of the New Queer Cinema) which also look backwards to find (or invent) stories of origins.

ANNEMARIE SAMMARTINO

Annemarie Sammartino is Associate Professor of History. Her book, *The Impossible Border: Germany and the East, 1914-1922*, was published by Cornell University Press in 2010. She is currently working on two new projects, one of which is a history of spatial planning in East Germany and the second of which is a study of mass housing and urban crisis in New York City from the 1960s to the present. She teaches a wide variety of courses, including a first year seminar on Freud's Vienna and a lecture course on Gender in Modern Europe.

*(Faculty updates cont.)***KIM SCHRECK**

Kim Schreck is a Visiting Assistant Professor of History and is teaching her GSFS gateway course, FYSP 82--Sex, Gender, and Power, for the second time this fall. Before moving to Oberlin in 2011 she taught courses in U.S. social history and women, gender, and sexuality studies at Washington University. During her many years of residing in Missouri, Kim's research focused on the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and the law in this border state. She has published articles that analyze will contestation suits in mixed-racial households that were formed during slavery but persisted after its demise. In 2009 she won the Mary C. Neth prize for "Outstanding Contribution to the Understanding of Women's or Gender Issues," awarded by the State Historical Society of Missouri, for an article she is currently expanding into a book, tentatively titled, *"Gross Crimes": Anti-Miscegenation Law and the Reconstruction of Gender*. As a member of the GSFS advisory council, Kim is excited to help plan the speakers for OC's Women's History Month, 2013.

**MEET THE GSFS MAJOR REPS!****My Feminism, My Activism***Sarah Bernstein, GSFS Major Rep*

I haven't always identified as a feminist. Though my mother preached gender equality at McDonalds' drive thru windows ("You ought to ask if my children want a car or a doll, not a girl toy or a boy toy!"), feminism scared me. I remember discussing the word feminism with a new friend during my first semester at

Oberlin. After several hours, we concluded that many people find the word

"feminist" inaccessible and alienating. It's become a synonym for stubborn, politically correct, overly sensitive, and bitchy. Yet my feminism is intrinsically tied to my position as an educator and an activist. Being a feminist means fighting for my right, and the rights of historically and systemically oppressed peoples, to be heard, to be listened to, and to be taken seriously.



This summer I worked as a waitress at a divey Bar/Grill. Like most food servers, I made \$4.00 an hour and the majority of my earnings came from tips. I quickly came to resent my position as a food-serving, voiceless, smiling puppet. At night, most of my clients were older men. They'd ask me to smile, ask me about my life, and tip me well.

Truthfully, it didn't matter what my answer was. They'd laugh and tell me "you know, you're cute."

Current systems of oppression privilege some voices over others and encourage men to see women (particularly working class women) as idealized, sub-human forms rather than people. To me, being a feminist means actively questioning and challenging cultural structures which stereotype and silence underrepresented voices. It means fighting for greater dialogue, particularly with those who have been told they don't count.

(GSFS Major Reps cont.)

Community as Activism

Asher Butnik, GSFS Major Rep

We Obies pride ourselves on how accepting we are. But sometimes, we get so carried away with this assumption that we fail to examine our shortcomings. So, at the risk of sounding bitter, I will examine one here.

Let me start off with an anecdote. Last year, I tried to make a queer contra dance happen. Soon after a friend and I started organizing this, concerns were raised that labeling the dance as queer would make straight-identified people uncomfortable. Ultimately, it was decided that we would *not* have a queer contra dance, and it turned into a “gender-bender contra dance,” seen as having more universal appeal.

Of course, the supporting argument was that there are queer students who come to contra all the time, and they love it. Many people feel perfectly comfortable asking anyone to dance, and Oberlin is very accepting of that. But for those who need the comfort of a space declared as queer in order to ask certain people to dance, Oberlin has no empathy.

Oberlin is a very accepting place of queer people who are comfortable with their identity. Some people develop a strong identity before coming here, and only ask for acceptance when they arrive. But when I stepped onto campus, I was looking for a queer community to join, to learn from, and most importantly, to feel a part of. What I found was an unimaginably disparate community, and I didn’t know what to do. I joined Lambda Union (though it took me a while to learn of its existence), but as less and less people showed up to the meetings each week, it began to fall short of my expectations. After all, can three people count as a community?

So I took over the reins. But I learned something about Oberlin. Despite the frequently-heard cries bemoaning how frequently we talk about privilege, we’re lacking. We’re lacking an understanding that the concerns of some students will always be considered more important than the concerns of others. And because of that, we’re lacking in queer spaces. This is why I fight for Lambda, despite the epidemic of waning interest. Some people believe that if there’s a need for something, those that need it will create it. They’re wrong. Sometimes, those that need it *can’t* create it. That’s our responsibility.



Why I’m a Feminist

Naomi Pomerantz, GSFS Major Rep

For me, being a feminist does not just mean that I support the rights and equality of women. It means to fight oppression wherever it occurs, and that does not necessarily have to entail fighting for rights or equality. Rights and equality often fit under the rhetoric of legal and governmental issues, and while these are important aspects to fight for, I recognize that there are other venues in which to fight injustice. This may not

be a common definition of what a feminist is, but I do not see how one can fight for the rights of women without thinking about the intersection between gender and other identities. A woman is not just a woman. Women can have multiple intersecting identities. For example, women who are transgender, people of color, disabled, and/or on public assistance are not oppressed just because of their gender but also due to the violence of racism, trans-misogyny, ableism, and economic injustice. If we want to end the oppression of disabled trans women of color on welfare, we must dismantle the many systems of oppression they face.

*(continued on next page)*

Additionally, by centering the experiences of the most vulnerable people, we can help the larger community as a whole, which is Dean Spade's idea of trickle up social justice. I see feminism as fighting all oppression because otherwise, we are asking people to divide themselves up into separate identities when they are whole people. Furthermore, I believe the fight against oppression is not just limited to experiences of women but should include all genders. This may be a broad view of feminism, but when I became a feminist, I could no longer ignore the experiences of all people. This year, I am working on an honors project about domestic violence in Chicago. Domestic violence is usually seen as a feminist issue, but through expanding the definition of feminism, I see how domestic violence is not just about the abuse that happens but about other aspects of violent structures, such as lack of housing, that do not allow women to move forward. The way in which I see feminism, and examine feminist politics in my honors project, opens up new avenues of thinking about interrelated issues many people must navigate in their daily lives.



YEAR OF THE QUEER

Year of the Queer is an interdisciplinary series of academic courses, distinguished speakers, amazing performances, and engaging social events organized to inspire and support a campus- and community-wide conversation about queer life today.

Students, faculty, staff and community members participate in a variety of ways, through academic study, engaging with leading scholars, discussing lectures and performances, dancing and performing, and reflecting on the meaning of *queer*, both locally and globally.

Thus far, Oberlin has hosted Judith Jack Halberstam, Dean Spade, Andrea Ritchie, Joey Mogul, and David Halperin. Stephen Motika and Esther Newton will also deliver lectures this fall. In Spring 2013, the following will visit campus, meet with students, faculty and staff, and deliver lectures: Sarah Schulman, Holly Hughes, Larry LaFountian, Urvashi Vaid, and Mari Matsuda.

Year of the Queer is a collaborative effort. The faculty committee (Ann Cooper Albright, Harry Hirsch, Greggor Mattson, Meredith Raimondo and Patrick O'Connor) works with the student liaisons/assistants/YoQ Grrrrls, A.D. Hogan '13 and Lexie Sharabianlou '13, to organize and publicize the series. YoQ also includes student activism. Hogan, along with Becca Kahn Bloch '13 also organized the Queering the Law series, an ongoing lecture, discussion, and film series about the role of the state, the law, disciplinarity and queer embodiment.

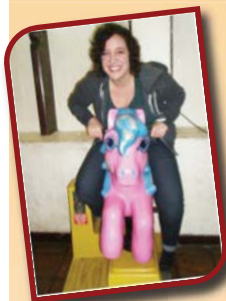
Further, the YoQ has collaborated with a number of departments and institutes, including GSFS, Comparative American Studies, Politics, Sociology, Dance, Hispanic Studies, Anthropology, English, as well as Offices and Centers on campus, including Shansi Oberlin, the Multicultural Resource Center, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Office for Religious and Spiritual Life, among many others, to make the series truly interdisciplinary.

Attendance at all events has been remarkable, with hundreds of students, faculty, and staff, and members of the community coming to each lecture, and hundreds of students doing "queer"/Year of the Queer-related coursework. Please check out the website: <https://sites.google.com/a/oberlin.edu/year-of-the-queer/home>

Email contact: yoqueer@oberlin.edu

ALUMNI UPDATES

Sarah Axelrath



In May of 2011 I graduated from Oberlin with a major in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies and a minor in Chemistry. In the two years since my graduation I've been involved with two separate AmeriCorps programs. From July 2011 through July 2012 I served as a Community HealthCorps (CHC) member in a community-based clinic in West Denver. As a CHC member I worked as a case manager for homeless patients. Since July 2012 I have been working as an AmeriCorps VISTA member at a certified syringe exchange program in Denver, CO. In August of 2013 I plan to start medical school at the University of Colorado, hopefully with a focus in community-based primary care for medically underserved populations.

My somewhat unusual course of undergraduate study (gender studies and chemistry—they relate more than people think!) has set me up for successful and meaningful work following graduation. I have found it incredibly gratifying to work in a field where every day I get to improve my understanding of the ways in which systems of gender-, class-, and race-based oppression intersect with and shape human health.

So, to any current students struggling to fit dual passions for the humanities and natural sciences into a semester course-load, I offer my encouragement: you can do it! The “real world” needs more progressive thinkers willing to search for productive common ground between gender/feminist studies and biology. Nature vs. nurture, biological determinism vs. social constructionism—this stuff continues to excite and bewilder and frustrate me (even though I don't have to write papers about it anymore.) That's how I know that it's important.

Happy studies, everyone.

Rachel Benson

Rachel Benson is in her third and final year achieving a Master's in Clinical Psychology at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA, focusing on Feminist and Multicultural Psychotherapy. She also enjoys a career in fitness as a Certified Personal Trainer and lives with her Obie boyfriend, 2 cats, and new puppy in the Boston area.



Gabrielle Lyse Brown

Gabrielle Lyse Brown is the Director of Diversity Pipeline Initiatives for the New York City Bar Association, where she leads the Association's efforts to enhance diversity in the legal profession through developmental support for high school, college and law students of color who want to pursue a legal career. In this role, she creates, develops, and administers comprehensive programming that provides inner-city students with academic support and enrichment, professional and substantive skill development, networking/mentoring opportunities and exposure to the legal profession. She is a member of Board of Directors of Practicing Attorneys for Law Students, Inc. (PALS), and will join their Executive Board in January 2013, and is also an active member of the Bronx School of Law and Finance Advisory Board. She has spoken on numerous panels about professional readiness, mentoring, and developing diversity pipeline initiatives. Gabrielle is a 2005 graduate of Oberlin College, where she majored in English, Gender Studies, and Law and Society.

Sari (Gardner) Fein

After graduating from Oberlin College in 2009 with a double major in Religion and Jewish Studies and a minor in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies, I plunged immediately into a field in which I had not expected to find myself: teaching. Committing to work with the education reform organization Teach for America meant at least two years teaching in a low-income school. For me, this translated to a small public high school in New York City, working with special education students. This was a challenging, but ultimately incredibly fulfilling, endeavor.

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*(Alumni updates cont.)***Sari (Gardner) Fein cont.**

While my education at Oberlin did not directly connect with teaching math, science, and the humanities to reluctant teenagers, the skills that I developed at college were instrumental to my success as a teacher. Knowing how power is constructed and wielded at the levels of gender, race, and class made me aware of the opportunity and risk involved with being a white, middle class woman educating low-income, minority students. I am incredibly grateful to the GSFS program for preparing me for that experience.

After teaching for three years, I decided to return to graduate school to pursue my dual passions of Bible and gender studies. I am now a student at Harvard Divinity School, working towards a Master's in Hebrew Bible. I hope to focus here, and in a future doctoral program, on women's role in the Bible. I am thankful every day for Oberlin and GSFS for giving me the opportunity to discover what I love and preparing me to be successful doing it!

**Michaela Ferrari**

After graduating from Oberlin in 2007, I moved to San Francisco and began working for a reproductive health research program, Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH), at the University of California, San Francisco. For two years, I worked on the Turnaway Study, a longitudinal study comparing the mental health, physical health, and socioeconomic outcomes of women who receive an abortion with those who are denied access because they present for care after the clinic's gestational limit. During this time I also volunteered at a local abortion clinic and observed firsthand the hoops that many women are forced to jump through in order to receive an abortion – often with the express purpose of deterring them – and the incredibly dedicated clinicians and staff that help them navigate the experience of unintended pregnancy.

Curious to know more about such issues in an international context, I moved to the republic of Georgia in 2010 as a Fulbright Fellow, where I conducted an interview-based study with women and reproductive health clinicians about attitudes toward contraception and abortion in a country with one of the highest rates of legal abortion in the world. Both challenging and rewarding, this research only confirmed my belief that issues of family planning are complex and deeply intertwined with individual values and perceptions of social norms. Following my fellowship, I returned to San Francisco with a renewed sense of purpose in my work toward de-stigmatizing and increasing access to safe abortion and just recently began a Master of Public Health program in Maternal and Child Health at the University of California, Berkeley. I look forward to taking advantage of all the amazing resources and opportunities that graduate school has to offer. And once all women everywhere are granted control over their own reproductive decisions, I plan to finally open a bakery.

Annie Gebhardt

After graduating from Oberlin, Annie Gebhardt (class of '03) worked for several years as a victim/survivor advocate and community educator in the movement to end sexual and domestic violence. In 2008, she returned to school to pursue a Master's in Public Health with a focus on Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan. While completing her degree, Annie served as a Graduate Student Instructor in the Women's Studies Department, teaching "Perspectives in Women's Health." She was also a Research Assistant through the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, working on a pilot study of a childbirth preparation course for pregnant survivors of child abuse and sexual violence. Annie now works at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, where she develops online and in-person trainings related to the primary prevention of sexual violence. She and her partner, Erik Talvitie (OC class of '04), are delighted to be starting out on their next great adventure: parenthood. Their baby, Maxwell Talhardt, was born in September 2012. The family lives near Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

*(continued on next page)*

(Alumni updates cont.)

Maggie Keenan-Bolger

Maggie Keenan-Bolger (06') was recently one of 150 individuals from around the country invited to The White House by Vice President Joe Biden as an LGBT Leader of the Next Generation. While there, she participated in LGBT Policy Discussions, shared her experience as a theater practitioner working with LGBT homeless youth, and attended a BBQ in Joe Biden's back yard with Biden himself, his wife Dr. Biden and his dog, Champ.



Maggie (2nd from right) with Jill Biden and fellow Point Foundation Scholars

Marne Litfin

Marne Litfin ('07) tried to become a shepherdess but gave up and moved to Germany. She is now pursuing a Master's in Gender Studies at the Humboldt University of Berlin.

Cordelia Loots-Gollin

I graduated with a double major in GSFS and Comparative American Studies in May 2011. In September, I started my second year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant at the University of Szczecin in Szczecin, Poland where I teach writing to master's students and conversation classes for first-year bachelor's students. I'm having a great adventure learning Polish and traveling in my free time.



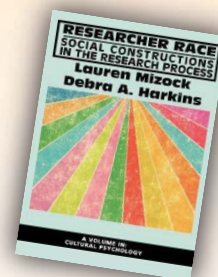
Larisa Mann

Larisa Mann, class of 1995. I just received my PhD in Jurisprudence and Social Policy from UC Berkeley Law School, for my dissertation "Decolonizing copyright law: Learning from the Jamaican street dance." I'm living in New York and currently on the academic job market in Media Studies while teaching at NYU and Brooklyn College. I'm also maintaining a career as a DJ and a public speaker on technology, culture and copyright law. In addition, I occasionally write about those issues, as well as on music and politics. I recently had an article in the online Viewpoint Magazine: <http://viewpointmag.com/to-the-party-members/> I have a blog at <http://djripley.blogspot.com> and my twitter handle is @laripley

Lauren Mizock



I had an eventful year, starting a tenure track position as Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at Worcester State University this fall. I published a book, "Researcher Race: Social Constructions in the Research Process" with Debra Harkins in January 2012. I got married to a medical resident in otolaryngology (ENT), Daniel Flis, in October 2011. The wedding was at the DeCordova Sculpture Museum in Lincoln, MA and I even wore black! I feel grateful for the mentoring and dynamic teaching I received from faculty like Wendy Kozol, Diana Kahn, and Anuradha Needham and think of them often while preparing my classes.



Laura Paley

Laura Paley (2001) - I am a lawyer for the Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Practice in New York ; I represent children in family court in abuse & neglect cases.

Linda Santiman

Linda Santiman ('92) just earned her Masters in Psychology with an LGBT Specialization from Antioch Los Angeles. She also just got hired as a Master's Level Psychosocial HIV Client Care Manager at the LA Gay and Lesbian Center. She is currently in a cabaret show she cowrote and is starring in that is an homage to 1970's variety shows. She lives with her partner, Michelle Johnson, a poodle, and two cats in Silverlake, CA.



Maytal Schmidt

My name is Maytal Schmidt. I graduated from Oberlin in 2010 with a triple major: Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies; African American Studies and Religion. I am currently volunteering at Agahozo Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda as a yearlong Jewish Service Corp Fellow. Agahozo Shalom is a holistic community serving 500 vulnerable, orphaned youth, ages 15 to 22, some of whom are survivors of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.

Following the completion of my service I will travel to South Africa to work as a counselor at Habonim Dror Southern Africa. My adventures will then take me to Israel where I will volunteer with African Refugee Development Center (ARDC) working to empower and support African refugees and asylum seekers. In Fall 2013 I will attend graduate school for social work. Thanks to the GSFS department for teaching me about identities, identity formation, various oppressions, intersectionality and empowerment. My professors encouraged me to refuse to be complacent and to strive to give all people a voice.

Corinne Streicher

Corinne Streicher ('11) graduated this summer with a Master of Arts in Educational Studies from the University of Michigan. Post-Oberlin life has been a whirlwind of coursework, student teaching, job hunting, and setting up a classroom. Luckily, her seventeen fantastic second graders in Detroit make it all worthwhile. Corinne spends her days tying shoes, planning lessons, making numbers interesting, resolving conflicts, picking up insects on the playground, receiving hugs, deciphering made-up spelling, and doing her best to cultivate an environment of organized, productive chaos. She is proud of her GSFS major and appreciates the critical social justice lens of the field as she strives to be an antiracist white feminist teacher. Outside of work, Corinne keeps herself busy living in a cooperative, contra dancing, and cooking. She can be reached at corinne.streicher@gmail.com and would welcome the opportunity to talk with current GSFS students with an interest in education.

Leah Whitesel

I am currently working with United Leaders Charter Academy, a charter school in development that plans to open in Chicago's Austin community. ULCA plans to have a Women's Studies curriculum as a core course from 6th-12th grade. I am currently designing ULCA's Women's Studies curriculum, and I'm seeking connections with others interested in teaching Gender/Women's Studies on a secondary level. Currently, I teach at Power House High, also on Chicago's West side, where I coordinate the school's experiential education program.



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