

# Women's & Gender Studies

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## Letter from the Department Chair



**Laurie Finke**

We hope that this message finds you doing well. The Women's and Gender Studies department is thriving and we would like to update you about our good fortune. For those of you who have not visited the College recently, the WGS program now has its own space. We are located, along with American Studies, Asian Studies, International Studies, and the newly formed Center for the Study of American Democracy, between Seitz House and Horowitz House in a brand new (well 4 years old now) building called O'Connor House. Together these programs have a classroom, lounge, and plush offices. If you are on

campus please stop by and check us out.

We became a major in 2006 and have doubled the number of majors and concentrators over the past few years. We are confident that being a Women's and Gender Studies major or concentrator prepares Kenyon students for a variety of experiences and career opportunities. We would like to help our current students understand this by establishing more systematic ties with our alums as a means of encouraging students to think creatively about career development. I would like to begin to create some networking opportunities for current students by allowing them to get to know our past students.

To this end, we would like to identify alumnae(i) with continuing interest in the program. We would send you an electronic newsletter each semester, updat-

ing you on what is happening on the Hill. Each year we would bring in (or perhaps "skype" in) three alums to talk to students about their career paths. We want to find inventive ways to connect current students to alums who may be working in fields they are interested in. If you would like to be part of this project, we ask that you follow this link: [Alumni Information Form](#)

Sincerely, Laurie A. Finke  
Director,  
Women's & Gender Studies



**O'Connor House**

## 2012 Graduate: Meghan Henshall

Serves in Cambodia as a Community Health Education volunteer for the Peace Corps. She works in the local health center in the mornings and spends the afternoons going door to door or fruit stand to fruit stand talking with people. She enjoys learning the Khmer language and reaching out to as many people

as possible and being part of another community. She applied to the Peace Corps the summer before her senior year with her sights set on public health, maternal and child health in particular. When she received her nomination and placement, there was no way she was going to pass up the opportunity to work

on the grassroots level with people to improve their health and well-being.



**Meghan Henshall**

## Transnational Collective



The Transnational Collective is an interdisciplinary group of Kenyon faculty and staff pursuing curricular initiatives that explore the intersections of race, class, and gender through transnational and feminist theories and pedagogies.

The mission of the Transnational Collaborative is to: Build an academic community and long-term collaborative relationships across Kenyon College departments and programs by fostering an exchange of ideas centered on new themes and approaches to the

topics of critical race theory, intersection theory, and transnational feminisms; Create collaborative research and teaching opportunities that highlight the connections between the production of knowledge and social practice; Engage scholars from various constituencies and areas of the globe in a dialogue about the interplay of multiple markers of oppression including gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age, and ability; Challenge the exclusion of feminism from transnational

debates and of transnational debates from feminism; Challenge students' common preconceptions about First/Third world dichotomies; industrial, underdeveloped, or developing countries, Western/Non-Western women; globalization and modernization processes; pragmatic and strategic feminist interests; and the historical bases of privilege and power; Promote a culture of conscientious engagement in social issues dealing with social justice on the Kenyon College campus.

### Kathryn (Ryn) Edwards: New Course in 2014-15, Is the End of AIDS Possible?



Ryn Edwards

**“While HIV and AIDS is well under control in the US population, it remains largely out of control and growing globally.”**

Secretary Hilary Clinton spoke at the 2012 International Conference on AIDS in DC this July indicating that women now make up more than half of the world AIDS epidemic. While the world has made incredible progress—more than 6.6 million people are now on life-saving treatment, up from just 100,000 in 2002—we are a long way from ending AIDS. There are still roughly 8 million people in need of treatment, and new HIV infections outpace those placed on treatment by nearly 2:1. The specific goal for 2015 set by the conference is to stop the pandemic from increasing by ending mother-to-child transmission of HIV, getting treatment to 15 million people, and drastically reducing new HIV infections through education and more prevalent use of condoms. A little understood fact that Former President Clinton pointed out at the conference was that low and middle-income countries are now paying for more than half of the AIDS response themselves. What should our own commitment be? While I followed the conference online

this summer because of the interest of former students and Kenyon alums, I realized that I needed to change the focus of my own HIV and AIDS course that I recently (2011-2012) brought back into the curriculum, a course that I offered by student demand in the 1990s. This course considered HIV and AIDS in the United States and gave little attention to the breadth of the global pandemic. Thus my third project, exploring the status of global HIV and HIV prevention so that I can bring this huge global problem and its challenges to the Kenyon classroom backed with real experience. I will be visiting 3 Kenyon alums working around the world in the fight against global HIV: Susan Chong '89 in Australia/Malaysia, Joe Caperna '81 in South Africa, and Shelby Van Voris '99 in Germany. Susan and Joe have specialized in HIV/AIDS care and prevention. Susan has a PhD in Development and has worked with prevention agencies extensively in Malaysia and Australia. Joe is an MD who has specialized in AIDS patient care and has re-

ceived Kenyon's Alumni Humanitarian Award for his work in South Africa. Shelby Van Voris has a Masters in Public Health and has worked with pregnant women with AIDS. I will spend a month in Australia and Malaysia. The German and South African visits are in planning stages at this time, though I have explored options with both Joe and Shelby. While HIV and AIDS is well under control in the US population, it remains largely out of control and growing globally. I want to redirect the focus of my course on HIV to the realities of the global problem that first hand experience can make vivid. I will direct students in the course to the internship opportunity to witness US programs fighting AIDS in Africa and Asia (<http://www.one.org/blog/2012/08/07/witnessing-us-programs-to-fight-aids-in-real-life/> internships). I intend to offer the course, **Is the End of AIDS Possible? Global HIV and AIDS**, in the academic year 2014-15.

## Faculty Profiles



Marta Sierra works on feminist geographies and feminisms of color in Latin America. She has

published a book, *Gendered Spaces in Argentine Women's Literature* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2012) on the topic of gendered representations of space in Latin America. Her most recent publication, *Postales Femeninas del fin del mundo: El Sur y las políticas de la memoria* (Buenos Aires: Godot, 2012) has just ap-

peared in Argentina. This book published in collaboration with Argentinean feminist sociologist, Karina Bidasca, explores issues of feminist epistemologies and their relation to politics of memory. She has also published a volume on transnational feminisms with Prof. Clara Román-Odio, *Transnational Borderlands in Women's Networks: The Making of Cultural Resistance*.

**Janet McAdams:** She is writing a book-length poem about the painter Artemisia Gentileschi and working on her second novel, *Tinder*, an ecofeminist mystery set in the indigenous Southeast.



Carolin Hahnemann: Is working on the use of a special grammatical form, the "dual" (in addition to

the familiar "singular" and "plural") that Sophocles uses in some of his plays to draw attention to the special bond connecting two people, trying to understand what social relationships fifth-century Athenians viewed as fundamental. (Spoiler alert: sibling bonds are very important while husband-wife couples hardly figure at all.)

**Melissa Debakis:** Her book, *The American Corines: Women Sculptors and the Eternal City, 1850-1876* (working title) will be published by Penn State Press. It has been awarded a Wyeth Foundation Grant for publishing in American Art History.

**Ivonne M. García,** is working on a book manuscript that examines the intersections of gender, race, and colonial discourses in the works of nineteenth-century women authors, including Sophia Peabody Hawthorne and Louisa May Alcott.

## Senior Colloquium 2013: Politics of the Bathroom

Bathrooms are spaces where the public and private collide in a most intimate manner that can reinforce or challenge our preconceived notions of gender, race, class, ability, and nationality. The public toilet is a microcosm for identity politics as they play out across the world. We will examine how bathrooms reflect and perhaps help to construct the gender binary, and how trans and other non-normatively identi-

fied people negotiate those spaces, revealing the slippages and ambiguities in these 'natural' binary systems. Bathrooms are places for competition and stereotyping, for consumption and waste. Since, as college students, the majority of bathrooms we use are public, the topic provides a unique opportunity to start discussions about the gendered spaces we all share. This course should engage the campus

community to think differently about bathrooms and how they impact our lives. The course will use an often overlooked aspect of everyone's lives -- bathrooms -- as a launching point to explore issues of public and private spaces, representation, and activism.

## Student Profile: Rebecca Chowdhury

After taking Transnational Feminisms my first year at Kenyon, I realized that it would become my key academic interest at Kenyon. As a Spanish Area studies major and Women and Gender Studies concentrator, transnational feminism has enabled me to better understand Latin America and its feminist movements. Courses in WGS have also impacted my extracurricular life at Kenyon, providing me with the foundation to better understand grassroots movements.

In the Spring of 2012, I was part of a group of students that began the Project for Open Voices, a student-based coalition that seeks to address issues of diversity, identity and difference at Kenyon and promote dialogue about such issues. We collected student narratives and released a publication, which we had the opportunity to share and discuss with the Diversity Committee of the Board of Trustees.

We are currently soliciting more submissions and I would encourage everyone to submit something! Visit <http://www.scribd.com/doc/113022357/POVculturalexpoLettertoCommunity> to find out more information and email us at: [openvoicesubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:openvoicesubmissions@gmail.com) to get on our distribution list.



## Visiting Faculty Profiles



Katherine Mason  
Visiting Assistant  
Professor of  
Sociology:  
Katherine specializes in gender, health, social stratification and inequality,

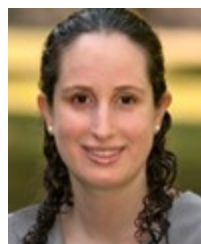
and the body in society. Her research focuses on how individuals' approaches to caring for their physical bodies - in particular, the body-cultivating projects of new and expectant mothers - act as moral and cultural status signifiers. As such, she shows how these practices both reflect and reproduce social inequalities across generations. In both research and teaching, Professor Mason emphasizes the ties between large-scale social institutions and everyday

life. Recent courses include: Embodied Inequalities (on social inequality from the perspective of human bodily difference) Gender, Family, and the State (on gendered nationalisms and the ways that the U.S. and other countries adopt policies to promote particular gender and family arrangements) Queer Theory and Society and Methods of Social Research.



Andrew Ross Visiting Assistant Professor of History: Andrew entered the history department in 2011 after completing his graduate work at the University of Michigan. At Michigan, Ross specialized in French history and the history of sexuality. His dissertation explores the

between public sexuality and modern urbanism by discussing the ways in which female prostitutes and male homosexuals impacted the everyday life of nineteenth-century Paris. His teaching interests include European history, the history of gender and sexuality, and urban history.



Gilda Rodriguez-Cervantes, Marilyn Yarbrough Dissertation Fellow and Visiting Instructor: Is working on her dissertation which looks at the transnational political practices of indigenous Mexican migrants, with a particular emphasis on how they have reshaped women's citizenship in those communities.



## Molly R. Hatcher Prize Call for Submissions

This prize, established in 1989, and renamed in 2000 to honor the memory of Molly Hatcher, is awarded annually for the best work done during the previous calendar year (2012) by a current Kenyon student in which gender is a central theme. The work may take any form including, but not limited to, essay, composition, artwork, performance, or scientific study. Submissions, which need not have been created for a Women's and Gender Studies class, should be accompanied by a letter explaining the work's origins and intent. In the case of the creative and performing arts, an interrelated body of work may count as a single submission. Electronic submissions are preferred. The prize carries a

is engraved on a plaque displayed in O'Connor House.

Submissions may be emailed to Mary Ellen O'Meara [omearam@kenyon.edu](mailto:omearam@kenyon.edu) (paper submissions are also possible). **Deadline: Friday, February 22, 2013 by midnight.** Contact Laurie Finke pbx 5820 or [finkel@kenyon.edu](mailto:finkel@kenyon.edu) with any further questions.

**Nina Castelli '12** received the Hatcher Prize for her Rosey the Riveter project, entitled "She is a Thing of Beauty" created in Contemporary Painting.

