

Annual Review 2009





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GENERATING, SUPPORTING, AND DISSEMINATING RESEARCH ON WOMEN AND GENDER

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE

- Our ever-changing illustrated blog, with field reports, news releases, highlights, announcements, and the most up-to-date reports on life at the center
- A calendar of noon talks, videos, research interest group presentations and other special events
- Book covers and abstracts from our faculty affiliates
- PDFs of *Research Matters*, our newsletter, and special publications
- Information on how to apply for grants and awards
- A history of CSWS

A group of visionary scholars founded the Center for the Sociological Study of Women at the University of Oregon in 1973, on the heels of Title IX of the Education Amendments. In 1983, CSSW became the Center for the Study of Women in Society, beneficiaries of a generous bequest in honor of feminist editor and writer Jane Grant.

csws.uoregon.edu

Center for the Study of Women in Society

1201 University of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403-1201

(541) 346-5015 (fax) 5096

FROM THE CENTER

For the past year, CSWS staff and executive committee members have been thinking about how best to communicate with our faculty affiliates, community supporters, and grant recipients, past, present, and future. From the beginning, we wanted to create a publication that captured some of the enthusiasm and energy of the research of our faculty affiliates. Early on, we made the decision to move away from generating more paper, in order to make our work more sustainable, as well as to adjust to economic circumstances.

Our resulting website will serve as the hub of communication activity—featuring blog posts by researchers in the field, as well as updates about CSWS-sponsored events, information about CSWS, and an historical archive about the work of CSWS that will be available to feminist scholars around the world. A limited-run print version of this *Annual Review* will be published each October (it will also appear as a PDF document on our website), but we will no longer publish a print newsletter.

We are conceptualizing our website as a dynamic work-in-progress, one that can grow and evolve as our work here at CSWS does. Please visit us at csws.uoregon.edu and let us know if you have any suggestions or comments.

—Carol Stabile, Director

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Photo by Stephanie Wood—
Silent March, Oaxaca, Mexico



Joan Acker continues to work for radical change—page 6.

CSWS

1201 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1201
(541) 346-5015
csws@uoregon.edu
csws.uoregon.edu

OUR MISSION

Generating, Supporting, and Disseminating Research
on Women and Gender

Faculty members and graduate students affiliated with the Center for the Study of Women in Society study women and gender from perspectives that emphasize the complexity of women's lives and the intersecting nature of gender identity. Committed to sharing this research with other scholars and educators, the public, policymakers, and activists, CSWS researchers come from a broad range of fields, including anthropology, arts and architecture, business, education, history, journalism and communication, languages, literature, music, psychology, sociology, and women's and gender studies.

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**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
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DISSEMINATION SPECIALIST Alice Evans

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EDITORS Alice Evans, Carol Stabile

LAYOUT & DESIGN Alice Evans

COPYEDITING & PROOFING CSWS staff

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Old Media . . . New Media

Looking beyond “smoke and mirrors,” feminist scholar Carol Stabile researches the work of women writers blacklisted in television’s early years. She also finds a way to stay current with new media technologies—she Twitters and plays MMOs.

by Carol A. Stabile, Director, CSWS

I suspect that I sound like a dinosaur when I talk to my students about typing my undergraduate honors thesis on a Smith-Corona electric typewriter—a model that boasted a cartridge with built-in correcto-tape. I was reminded of the gap between my students’ experiences of media and mine last year, when I showed my students an episode of the sitcom *The Goldbergs* from 1951, and Gertrude Berg made a sales pitch for RCA televisions based on the product’s ability to eliminate “snow.” Certainly, one of my students piped up (keep in mind that this was Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where real snow is frequently on people’s minds), even back in 1951, a pitchwoman couldn’t claim that televisions were capable of eliminating snow.

I have to admit that this is an exciting time to be a feminist media scholar. My students live and breathe in wireless worlds with never a hint of snow on their screens—worlds in which the word “digital” is fast becoming redundant, where cell phones and handhelds and social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are transforming their work and social lives. Interactive media technologies are allowing girls and women to imagine themselves as active producers of media content, and not just consumers of content produced elsewhere. YouTube is allowing amateur producers to distribute content not just within fan communities, or communities defined by how far a signal can reach, but around the world. These new media appear to be novel, unprecedented, and revolutionary; the motors that seemingly drive the many changes we experience across the course of our lifetimes.

Perhaps because my research has required bringing a gender lens to the study of media and culture in order to understand how gender, race, and class have affected media industries, access to media production, the content of the media products we consume, and political agendas around the world, my own enthusiasm for this new

media world of ours has been tempered by what I know about the history of media institutions in the United States in particular. The book I’m finishing this year, for example, grew out of research on the dominance of the nuclear family model (and the sexist and racist stereotypes that accompanied it) on television across the second half of the twentieth century. I began to think about who was writing the content for these very conservative representations of gender and family—a question that led me very quickly to the role of the blacklist in broadcasting that began in June 1950. Because of the blacklist, writers, producers, and even actors whose creative work and political views diverged from conservative understandings of gender and family were either eliminated from the industry or silenced. The first two instances of blacklisting involved women who were politically active in the Civil Rights Movement (Hazel Scott and Jean Muir) and whose views on gender, as women balancing careers and family, were quite different from those that eventually dominated television screens. The ranks of the blacklisted also included a significant number of feminist writers whose viewpoints and creative work would never see the light of day, like composer and author Shirley Graham DuBois, screenwriter and novelist Vera Caspary, screenwriter and actor Ruth Gordon, and television writer Joan LaCour Scott.

This archival project, which seeks to recover the creative work of women whose careers and contributions were erased from the history of television by the Red Scare, constantly reminds me how difficult it has been for feminists and progressives in general to influence media institutions and production in this country. Reading through the letters, papers, and unpublished scripts and manuscripts of this cohort of writers, I saw parallels in their optimism and enthusiasm about the possibilities for television in the late 1940s. They believed that television

Photo, opposite page: Carol Stabile grew up in a Wild West theme park owned by her parents. She is about seven in this photo. Right: The character Nerdvana rides a bat in the game *World of Warcraft*.

could serve a positive role in fighting racism, sexism, antiimmigrant sentiment, and promoting economic equality. They wrote novels and scripts about the role that people of color and women had played in U.S. history, they wrote warm representations about immigrant life, they wrote about the division of labor in the household and environmental degradation and animal rights. And they fatally underestimated the power of the forces arrayed against these ideas.

As I've been researching new media technologies, I've been reminded of these writers' now forgotten hopes and dreams for what was then the new medium of television. Several years ago, I decided to begin playing massively multiplayer online games (MMOs). MMOs are games played against the backdrop of a persistent virtual world, full of maps, quests, and other characters, many of whom are other players. The most popular MMO, *World of Warcraft*, includes over 6 million players from around the world, who encounter each other against the background of the game world and who play with each other over the course of hours, days, months, and in some cases years. Sometimes, grandparents play with grandchildren as a way of staying connected over distances; families create guilds in order to play the game with each other; still other individuals meet each other in the game and form friendships and sometimes romantic relationships. "Sappersbride" told me that she began playing in order to spend time with her husband, who is stationed in Iraq, as the game allows them to talk (using one of the voice communication software packages now available or using the game's text-based chat function), and to maintain a sense of connectedness that would otherwise be difficult to achieve. "Shammycow," a twenty-two-year-old college student, web designer, and self-identified "girl geek," plays the same game with her father, an emergency room doctor, who lives thousands of miles away.

The virtual environments of MMOs offer repeatable experiences for females and males alike that differ in significant ways from most commercial media content in the United States. Where television (both cable and network) and film content still emphasize women's vulnerability and continue to stress women's need for male protection, MMOs are beginning to allow female players to act, travel, and play in a world that does not represent them as potential victims. When compared to so-called "pink" games like *Webkinz*, Barbie games, and dress-up games that are organized around shopping and relationships, or film and television content that features women primarily as passive victims of violence rather than active protec-



tors or defenders, MMOs can offer novel and in some ways radical experiences of gender for players. Not only do MMOs allow female players to imagine themselves as powerful agents, game-playing also encourages facility and ease with the new media technologies that are becoming ever greater parts of women's everyday lives in the United States. Freed to a large degree from a form of spectatorship that was based on the intrinsic passivity of readers, consumers, and listeners whose only power over content was the ability to interpret, MMOs allow players to experiment with identity, challenging the negative self-objectification that philosopher

Iris Young (1990) understood to result in "throwing" or "playing like a girl."

Part of what has been motivating research on this specific game is my growing sense that the future of media lies in the forms of interactivity, world-building, and immersion that are key characteristics of MMOs. Scholars, teachers, and institutions like NASA and the U.S. military are already considering the potential of games to educate and to indoctrinate. The U.S. Army created an online game called *America's Army* to teach the values of militarization and to identify potential recruits. The Minnesota Zoo and Eduweb have partnered to create *WolfQuest*, an immersive game that teaches wolf behavior and conservation. School of Journalism and Communication graduate student Sonia de la Cruz is researching a game called *Against All Odds*, created by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to teach players about the plight of refugees. *America's Army* enables forms of identification that encourage gamers to see themselves as white, gun-wielding heroes, fighting against villains who are clearly designed to fit the war on terror's profile of terrorists. In contrast, *WolfQuest* and *Against All Odds* encourage players to consider life from standpoints not represented in mainstream media and political discourse.

Like earlier moments of media change and development, ours is rife with peril and with possibilities. Even those games created for commercial rather than educational purposes are turning out to have wildly unintended uses: gamers are playing on servers that use languages other than English in order to acquire new languages or practice language skills; educators are thinking about how the more playful and pleasurable aspects of gaming might be incorporated into classrooms; and gamers themselves are developing communities that defy previous media limitations of geography, age, ability, race, and gender. If these new media are in any way to be real alternatives to the old—if the kinds of creative practices that players are bringing to these games are to be encouraged rather than eliminated—feminists and their allies need to be part of the conversations that are taking place about interactive media and their futures. ■

Promoting and Diversifying Leadership

The Women of Color Junior Faculty Project aims to diversify leadership at CSWS.

by Lynn Fujiwara, Associate Professor, Women's and Gender Studies

In March 2008, CSWS was awarded a Ford Foundation grant from the National Council for Research on Women (NCRW). The aim of the grant, "Diversifying the Leadership of Women's Research Centers," was to promote the leadership of women of color from historically underrepresented groups in the United States within NCRW and within its women's research, policy, and advocacy member centers. The project specifically designed for CSWS was to address the current and historical absence of women of color in leadership positions at the center. While women of color have played essential roles on the executive committee, research interest groups, and other committees and projects, they have yet to occupy central roles within the leadership structure of the center. Much of this can be due to the sheer lack of associate or full professor women of color faculty members at the University of Oregon.

With this in mind, the NCRW Ford Foundation project was designed to establish a space within CSWS that prioritizes the mentorship and leadership development of junior faculty women of color. "Women of Color, Borders, and Power: Mentoring and Leadership Development" received the maximum award from NCRW and funds were immediately matched by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, the Office of the Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity, and CSWS. Associate Professor Lynn Fujiwara, newly promoted, took on the role of coordinator, and ten junior women of color faculty members signed on to participate in the yearlong project. Minigrants were offered to all participants to assist with research-related costs during the course of the year.

The project began with an all-day retreat to establish the yearlong set of activities and goals. Through immediate conversations, most noted is the dearth of senior women of color faculty members at the UO, and the impact that has for junior women of color professors newly negotiating their departments and the institution. Furthermore, the UO has been plagued with a revolving door of junior women of color faculty members, who often find their experiences alienating, isolating, and often unsupported. Thus, the group decided that at the heart of leadership development for women of color junior faculty members is academic success—a solid research record and ulti-

mately tenure. However the path to these ends is often plagued with an overburden of service that falls on them as some of the very few in their areas who can speak to issues of race and diversity. Additional challenges include teaching at a predominantly white university, concern over the value of their work, which is often interdisciplinary or seen as alternative or experimental, and the need for more mentorship from the time they arrive through their promotion and tenure evaluation processes.

To address these issues we established a multitiered set of workshops and events. Seeking direct mentorship, we developed numerous workshops under the rubric "Academic Success/Academic Survival," with invited senior women of color scholars to talk with us about their



"For a junior faculty member of color working in the legal academy, it was an invaluable experience to rely on the NCRW workshops, roundtables, and strategy sessions about balancing institutional commitments with individual career objectives. I benefitted from all the sessions that I sat in on, especially because we are all at different points in our career (pretenure, post-third year review, and some coming up this year). The institutional support through matching grants also gave our initiative heightened visibility. And the professional development grants were welcome additions for acquiring scholarly resources."

—Michelle McKinley, Assistant Professor, School of Law

own challenges and strategies. The group had a lunch workshop with Rosaura Sánchez, professor of literature from University of California at San Diego (UCSD). Her experience was critical as she began her position as an all-but-dissertation visiting assistant professor, went on to get tenure as one of the few faculty members of color, and later became head of the Department of Literature at UCSD. She has also been a leader in national and international associations. Sánchez shared great wisdom in how to deal with tokenism; institutional marginalization based on race, gender, and class lines; the overburden of service; and general feelings of marginalization and alienation. We were also fortunate to meet with groundbreaking feminist of color scholar-activist Cherríe Moraga, Chicana feminist filmmaker Lourdes Portillo, and professor of English Paula Moya from Stanford University. All our conversations dealt intensely with institutional barriers that need to be challenged in terms of how our work is valued, evaluated, and positioned within our respective departments.

"The Women of Color Junior Faculty: Borders and Empowerment Project has been one of the most rewarding professionalization experiences I have had at the University of Oregon. This cohort of women (primarily composed of junior, tenure-track faculty members) hails from a diverse range of disciplines and/or departmental homes; as a result, we have been able to share and compare strategies for progression towards tenure. Our recently tenured leader, Lynn Fujiwara, has expertly helped prepare us for this process. The workshops that she has organized on our behalf—such as a book proposal workshop and a promotion and tenure workshop with Senior Vice Provost Russ Tomlin—have greatly contributed to our cohort's development and professionalization. In one academic year, we have generated an incredibly rich learning community, and I am better prepared for the coming years as a result."

—Priscilla Peña Ovalle, Assistant Professor, English



Given that academic success is inherently tied to an active publication record, we established several workshops that focused solely on research, writing, and publishing. We held a book proposal workshop, where one of our participants, Professor Tania Triana, presented her book proposal to three well-published senior scholars from the UO: Lynn Stephen, Michael Hames-García, and Amalia Gladhart. These senior scholars reviewed her proposal with the participation of the entire group. This workshop proved very helpful to Professor Triana as well as the group participants, who are all currently working on book projects. We followed up our publication workshop with a writing conversation with a professional editor and writing coach, Susan Quash-Mah. It was a much-needed space to talk openly about common dilemmas that we face in the writing process.

Focusing more on the institutional level of academic success, we held an extremely helpful promotion and ten-

ure workshop with Russ Tomlin, senior vice provost for academic affairs. He not only provided a general framework and discussion of the tenure process, but also engaged in candid, informative, and supportive conversation addressing the participant's questions, concerns, and issues related to the tenure process.

Our final event, designed to engage our university's administrators in a conversation with invited faculty members, was held May 22. Titled "Institutional Change/Institutional Diversity," our conversation featured Chancellor Nancy Cantor and Associate Provost Kal Alston of Syracuse University. Working in close collaboration with Russ Tomlin, we organized this event to begin a much needed and important conversation about institutional diversity and institutional change at the UO. Chancellor Cantor has written numerous articles about diversity and higher education. She has also been on the front lines of such contested terrains as Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan and the termination of the Chief Illiniwek Native American Mascot of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Approximately fifty people from across campus participated in this conversation, including faculty members, faculty members of color, department heads, associate deans, deans, center directors, and the senior vice provost for academic affairs. Dialogue was meaningful and substantive around real issues faculty members face on this campus. Not only did the participants benefit from such a candid and honest conversation with administrative leaders, all present were calling for an additional conversation, to include all administrators (all deans, associate deans, and department heads).

CSWS has institutionalized this project within its programming for the coming year. We received \$10,000 from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies to continue projects that center the group, allow us to expand participation, and support research. The opportunity to focus on such important efforts in the past year proved to be more rewarding than any of us could have anticipated. We are very much looking forward to continuing the work of mentorship, research support, and community building in CSWS. ■

"In the winter 2009 term I was given the opportunity to participate in a book proposal workshop through the CSWS/NCRW Women of Color group. The workshop was organized to give the members of the WOC group knowledge about expectations for book publishing and the tenure-review process. The workshop was immensely useful to the development of my own book proposal, as I received feedback from senior faculty members on campus (Lynn Stephen, Amalia Gladhart, and Michael Hames-García) and other members of the WOC group. Lynn Fujiwara and Michael Hames-García also followed up with me to develop a timeline to submit the book proposals to publishing companies and complete writing the manuscript."

—Tania Triana, Assistant Professor, Romance Languages



Being a Part of Radical Change...

a conversation with Joan Acker

Photo by Chris Mihulka



A leader of the original group that established a center to study women at the UO, Joan Acker continues to serve as a member of the executive committee of CSWS.

Q: You grew up in Indiana—where?

Indianapolis. I went to Shortridge High School, then to DePauw University in Greencastle for one year and couldn't stand it so I dropped out. The war started and it was much more interesting to work. I worked in a radio station; I was the person who chose the music for the disc jockeys. I had several hundred dollars to spend. What I did was go to the record stores and buy records. That was the end of my career in that regard. Then I moved to New York. I really did not like Indiana; I found it racist, although I did not know much about racism yet. It was kind of uninteresting. I was involved in many school things but wanted more adventure in my life. Fortunately my mother moved to New York City. I

went along a year later and joined her and went to Hunter College.

My parents were divorced when I was ten years old. My mother was an unusual woman for those days. I loved my parents, and they were both good parents. My tendency is to scoff a bit about how hard divorce is on kids. It might have been harder on my sister than it was on me. It seemed to me that life went on; I was pretty much involved in my own life by the time that I was ten.

Q: What were your predilections at that age?

My father had no sons, and so he treated [my sister and me] as though we were sons and taught us to do all kinds of things. We did shooting of guns and shooting of bows and arrows and sailing boats. I had my

own boat when I was ten or eleven and used to race with my father. We mostly sailed up at Lake Tippecanoe in northern Indiana; we went up there every summer. And I was a very good student; but that was not my whole life, being a student. I was active in high school affairs, one of the editors of the newspaper, and things like that. I didn't have a clue about what I wanted to do except probably be a journalist.

Q: Did you follow up on that?

No, not really. At Hunter I was an editor of the literary magazine. I was also practical, and I realized that it would be very hard to be a foreign correspondent, which was what I wanted to do, and also get married and have children, which was also what I wanted to do, so I became a social worker instead.

Q: And did you get married and have children?

Yes, I had three children. One's in Port Angeles, Washington, one's in Sonoma, California, and one is in Brooklyn, New York. My youngest son has a Ph.D. in biology. Now he works for the National Park Service and is the plant biology person at Olympic Peninsula Park. My other two kids are artists.

Q: You didn't become a journalist, but you did find a reason to write?

I didn't really start to write until long after I had that ambition, but I went back to school, got a master's at the University of Chicago; and then I worked as a social worker for something like thirteen years before I went back. I worked in Chicago initially, and then I worked in New York City, and then we moved to San Francisco and I worked there. I guess my dissertation was the first substantial thing I ever wrote, which I wrote in 1966–67.

Q: What did your husband do?

He was a psychologist at Stanford Medical School, and then he worked here at the UO in the College of Education in counseling.

Q: You got your Ph.D. at the UO?

Yes. I came here partly to get my Ph.D. I had decided that I was going to leave social work and go into sociology when we were living down in California. Actually, we were living in Silicon Valley, and it was a wasteland of housing tracts at the time and I couldn't stand it. So I inquired at Stanford about applying to go into the sociology department as a graduate student. The head of the department told me there was no point in me even filling out an application because I was too old and I was a woman. This was in the 1950s.

Q: Too old and a woman... how old were you at that time?

I must have been about twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty—something like that. I was too old. Then very soon after that my husband got offered a job up here, and I applied to the department up here, and they were



Former CSWS directors include (left to right): the late Miriam Johnson, Cheris Kamarae, Sandra Morgen, and Joan Acker.

very different from Stanford, they were very welcoming. They were glad to have me come as a student. Not that I never experienced any prejudice against women, or categorizations of any kind, I did experience that. But they were perfectly willing to have me come in, and some of the professors were very helpful.

Q: Were many women graduate students in sociology at that time?

There was a fair cohort; I can't remember how many. I was the only one who finished, and I was only the second woman who ever got a Ph.D. in the department.

I finished my degree in 1967. I had already been teaching in the department. They offered me a job because I could teach things that nobody else could, and I grabbed it because I was married and had children. However, in 1968–69 I spent the year in England, and then I came back. I had decided to leave sociology, and I took a job in a big community agency in Dallas, Texas, for a year, so I was in and out of Eugene. I took a leave from Oregon so I could come back. One year of working with psychiatrists and psychologists sent me up the wall and I came back. It was a mental health agency and I was kind of an administrator.

Q: Did your husband go to Texas with you?

No, I was already divorced; after I got my degree I got a divorce. I felt very alienated in the soc department. When I first came there were some faculty members—they were all men, of course—who were very supportive, and some who weren't. One professor said in class one day that he didn't think the department should take any women as graduate students because they would just get married and have children. It was outrageous. And there were a lot of political fights in the department. The reigning men were pretty conservative, but that changed over the sixties. A lot of the reigning men left and we got a lot of younger, more progressive men, and they were very good, and some of them remain my friends now.

I felt alienated because of the discipline of sociology. I was not totally involved. I began to understand why when the women's movement started. We started to analyze the situation of women in academia, and the situation in sociology as in most other disciplines was that women were invisible, absent. So the analyses and the theories of sociology were written as though women didn't exist. So the whole thing was not relevant to me in some ways. I couldn't see spending the rest of my life doing something I wasn't committed to.

But the eruption of the women's movement and this tremendously

Photo by Jack Liu, circa 1993

being a part of radical change

exciting intellectual ferment that was going on gave me the opportunity to do things that I could not have done before. I started developing classes, and I had a very free hand. This was around 1970–71. Finally, I was calling the shots for what I was going to teach. I would make up my own ideas about it, and I had a lot of students who wanted to take classes. So I became very interested in the whole thing.

Q: What were some of the classes you were teaching then?

I taught Women and Work; Women in Society, which I think was an introductory course; I did Feminist Theory; Women in the Welfare State. I always taught welfare state courses, but I modified courses over the years as we began to understand more about welfare programs and gender. Those are the central courses that I developed.

Q: I see an activist thread running through your life—scholar, teacher, writer, activist.

Yeah, I started my activism in college—Hunter College in the 1940s. I was definitely on the left. I think we mostly did stuff in relationship to workers. I remember going to group meetings and going to dances held by these organizations. This was in the era of friendship with the Russians. I remember a big party where we invited a whole bunch of Russians who were students at Columbia, and it was very great fun.

Then I was involved in civil rights activities in New York—that was after college, after I was married—and other kinds of activities supporting unions and things like that. Oh, in graduate school, in the '40s, too, we had a big campaign to organize the students in the school of social service administration into a union, and I was the president of that chapter of the union . . . united office and professional workers in Chicago in the '40s—must have been around 1947–48—we had a big campaign against the Taft-Hartley Act, which took back a lot of the labor rights won by the Wagner Act. So we did that. And it must have been the early '50s when the Korean War came along,

New Book on Welfare Reform

Stretched Thin: Poor Families, Welfare Workers, and Welfare Reform by Sandra Morgen, Joan Acker, and Jill Weigt will be published in December 2009 by Cornell University Press. The book, based on a three-year, multi-method study of welfare restructuring in Oregon, gives an “on the ground” account of doing welfare reform from the perspectives of clients, agency workers, and administrators. The authors assess the outcomes and suggest new policies to deal with poverty and economic crisis. The study was partially funded by CSWS and housed at CSWS.

I was in the antiwar movement. I went to demonstrations. I remember one that was terrifying, where the police on their horses came galloping into the group forcing us back, things like that. I remember when the Rosenbergs were killed, and a big demonstration that evening while they were being executed. So I was somewhat active all along in different kinds of things. I remember standing on the streets in New York with a petition, the Stockholm Peace Petition, which must have been in '49 or '50—an international petition for peace. It was a total flop, nobody would sign the petition. I remember campaigning for Henry Wallace for president; it was pretty much the same thing. I was involved in lots of stuff.

Q: Were you a socialist?

Definitely.

Q: Socialist and sociology professor and social worker.

(Laughing) Everything social, right.

Q: As you began teaching women's studies courses on campus, were you part of what became the Women's Studies Certificate Program?

Probably . . . and then we started CSWS, which was then called the Center for the Sociological Study of Women, and that was because

there was no other department than sociology on the whole campus that would have anything to do with it. We wanted to establish a cross-disciplinary campuswide center, and all department heads were queried and everyone turned it down except for Dick Hill in sociology.

It was 1972–73...right in there. We had already started the center in a rudimentary form, we had a room on the sixth floor of PLC, which we appropriated with the help of the administrative assistant in political science, who was wonderful and we had about three or four thousand dollars a year for a part-time graduate assistant to work in the center.

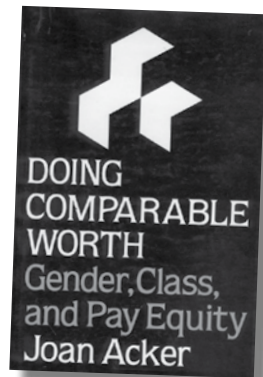
Q: Were you the director?

Yes, it was really a cooperative thing—mostly me and Joyce Mitchell, who was in political science. And a couple of people from education: Jean Leppaluoto and maybe some other people. And not long after that it was Marilyn Farwell, who was in English. We got a little more status in the soc department as the Center for the Sociological Study of Women, and a little more money from the graduate school.

I'm up to 1975, a propitious year when women's studies was founded, and that was the year that Ed Kemp in the library identified Jane Grant as somebody whose papers would be interesting. By that time I had started to publish some on feminist theoretical questions in sociology journals, so I would say my writing emerged with my dissertation, and then my first article was in the *American Journal of Sociology*.

Q: What was the topic of your dissertation?

My dissertation was the study of the welfare department here in Eugene, and the connections between the department itself and the business community. It wasn't a bad study,



actually. I never published anything out of it, but there was one finding—that people in the business community have little awareness of people who are getting public assistance except single mothers. Single mothers were already being seen as deadbeats by people in the community; that was partly because they had more contact with the community than others. Back in those days the welfare department gave assistance to disabled workers, impoverished elderly, etc. The AFDC existed, but it was only one small program of the whole thing. But the single mothers already stood out.

Q: You kept on writing about the welfare state?

Well, I kept on teaching about it. But the welfare state did not remain my main interest somehow. I had been interested in the welfare state since I was a graduate student at the University of Chicago way back in the early '40s, or the mid-'40s, really, so I was concentrating more on other things. I'm still writing about it, but I didn't have the same "ah-ha" experience as I had about questions about women and work and organizations and so forth.

Q: So your "ah-ha" experience has been women's rights, essentially?

Well, women's rights, and I think the theme question I still have is: "Why is it that there are still so many problems?" We have made great advances, but if you look at the very big picture, the wage gap between women and men is still substantial; in spite of working class men's wages falling; there is still a very high level of sex segregation of jobs; the organization of work has never changed to accommodate the realities of being a human being in our society, and that means work organizations have not fundamentally changed. All this stuff about being family-friendly is crap, I mean not all of it, it's better to have some rights than none at all; but the fundamental organization of capitalism makes it extremely dif-



ficult to develop a gender-equal and family-friendly structure of daily life, at least the organization of our kind of capitalism in the United States. It's to some degree different in countries like Sweden and Norway, the Scandinavian countries in particular.

Every European country has a paid parental leave. It's amazing how nineteenth century the U.S. still is. So I've been very interested in why it has taken so long in the U.S., and other places, too, for fundamental change to occur, and a lot of my research on organizations had some relevance to that kind of a question.

Q: What kinds of organizations?

Work organizations, like the UO, Intel. I did a study of banks in Sweden; I was on the Pay Equity Commission in Oregon and was involved in that effort to change the wage structure of Oregon public employment.

Q: Which had quite an effect.

It had an effect on certain low-wage workers; it doesn't mean that there are no pay inequities in the system. Yes, pay-equity projects did have an effect, and I think that's one of the reasons that they got killed. To

achieve real pay equity in this country, including in the private sector, would cost huge amounts of money to employers. So that was our vision at the beginning. We were not just thinking of changing the state of Oregon, but the whole employment sector, private and public, in the U.S.

Q: So there was federal legislation and it didn't see the light of day?

The pay-equity activities in the '80s were kind of a last gasp of a real ambitious effort to change. There were a lot of court cases that essentially destroyed it. There's a very interesting book by two sociologists, Bridges and Nelson, that recounts all the court cases that undermined the pay-equity efforts.

Q: And then there is your book . . .

There's my book, and there are quite a few other books on it.

Q: But you were really one of the movers and shakers?

Well, it was a big social movement in the '80s, and I was part of that. I had a good role, a role that I appreciated. I wasn't the leader or anything in it, seems to me. I guess by that time I had sort of given up trying to be a leader of that kind. I was more of a doer of things. And then a chronicler of it.

That's part of doing social movement. A lot of us were involved in it. Margaret Hallock was absolutely essential in the state of Oregon, getting things done here.

Q: Was she on the UO faculty?

At that time she was the economist for the SEIU, and she was the chairperson of the Pay Equity Commission, really the inside operator. That was before she was in the labor department of the state.

Q: What is your vision of where CSWS could go?

A great deal depends on what the

being a part of radical change

general context turns out to be. Does the society now turn toward some very creative kind of rethinking on how to restructure things? What would be a good way forward? And perhaps this is something that the center could find a way to contribute to, in terms of encouraging research, holding conversations about it.

The economic problems for women are so overwhelming now, particularly single mothers, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, which is what replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children, has just disappeared from the public agenda. There's no safety net anymore for women who want to leave an abusive husband, for example, and who have

have more money than many places.

What's happening here at the UO and undoubtedly in other places, too: although women have made tremendous gains, if I compare what the University of Oregon looked like in 1970 with now—in 1970 we had 5 percent of the full professors who were women—we've made extraordinary gains. Research on gender and women is legitimate now, it's even establishment almost, which undermines it in a way, but okay. At the same time, there is a lot of subtle sexism going on, and that has made it more difficult to deal with than the very overt kinds of discriminations against women; it's hard to study; it's hard to get hold of, and yet a lot

this campus by rank, I had a hell of a time finding that out, to say nothing of getting a list of departments in terms of distribution and anything about wage differences.

It's all been sort of relegated to an office, I think it's still called affirmative action, which was over in the personnel department someplace when I was looking at it. And when I talked to the person in charge of data over there, she had to go and compute things to answer any of my questions. Now those data ought to be up on the webpage of the university rather than hidden over in the files of the department someplace. Same problem we had way back in the early '70s when we were studying the status of women at the University of Oregon; we had to create the data ourselves out of the printer output of faculty data, which was in the library at that time—all of it data that was in the system but not available. There was

much more data available on race and ethnicity than on gender. That's pretty important. I was actually shocked. And I hope you put that in. I have not checked the webpage at the university in the last year, at least, but I doubt that it's changed.

Q: What are some of the biggest issues facing women?

One issue is the extreme objectification of female bodies that afflicts young women and young men alike. That's another thing we could look at, actually, among students. What kind of an impact is that having?

As far as my discipline goes, one of the main things that has not been achieved is that we have not made the kind of breakthrough within sociology that we envisioned back then. A tremendous amount of sociology is still being written that could be considering questions about gender and doesn't. So gender has kind of become a new subdiscipline. ■

—Alice Evans interviewed Joan Acker in April.

"I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT TEN YEARS IN THE HOPE THAT CSWS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO SOLUTIONS TO THE STILL TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN, AND THAT THE CENTER WILL BE A PART OF RADICAL CHANGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, NOT JUST A RESPECTABLE MEMBER OF THE ESTABLISHMENT."—JOAN ACKER (*CSWS TEN YEARS, 1983–1993*).

no work experience, or no experience that's recent enough. In this job market it's desperate. And, of course, often when women get jobs, the jobs they get are such low pay they can't live on them anyway.

We could think about stimulating research on how women are actually coping with the economic downturn. We know it's hard. But are there any groups out there attempting to take action or to support each other? Maybe there are new forms of organization happening. I'd like to see us brainstorming on what issues are affecting women in the Northwest now, other than issues we're already dealing with, which are primarily the immigration issues, and what kind of research would help to understand the processes better and perhaps understand better what can be done to solve some of these problems.

Obviously, I'm much more interested in the practical side than culture, and I certainly understand that culture and consciousness are integral parts of what's happening in the material world, but I don't want us to get out of balance in our concerns. There have been all kinds of problems with the budget cuts, but we

of women know that it is happening. And that might be another area that we could think seriously about. The RIG study [Social Sciences Feminist Network, a CSWS research interest group] of faculty members and how they use their time will get at that to some degree, but there's also the question of the fleeting interactions in which put-downs are implicit, or other things. If you talk to people from out around the country, you'll see great variation between departments and how much this goes on, but it's still going on.

Disturbing things indicate that the underlying sets of male assumptions about the superiority of masculinity are probably still there among great numbers of men, and that means that other kinds of inequalities could grow again very easily depending on the circumstances. And so that's a very hard thing to study, but I think it would be well worth our while.

There's a very strange thing that gender equity has become almost invisible at the University of Oregon. Now, I have not investigated it in the last two years, but when I tried to find out what was the proportion of men and women faculty members on



A Wonderful Journey

An interview with Scott Coltrane, sociologist and dean of the UO College of Arts and Sciences

Scott Coltrane as a young father, teaching son Colin "patty cake."

Q: How would you characterize your research?

I studied with feminists in an era in the '80s when feminist scholarship was coming of age and being accepted in the academy. I was lucky to be a man interested in gender issues when it was a relatively new thing to do. The theoretical and methodological tools were there. So it was not a hard transition, to be able to apply that lens and these informed theories and methods to the examination of men's lives. That was a fruitful coincidence of timing. I had worked as a city planner and a community organizer doing work with women's groups and historical preservation of houses. I was familiar with applied sociology. But what happened in between doing those professional jobs and coming back to graduate school was I had kids. And I was frustrated by the fact that popular books on how to father were quite limited. They were either poking fun at men for being incompetent or were very scholarly and not that accessible or practical for how to do it.

When I had a part-time planning job I went back to community college and got certified to be a child development specialist in a daycare center. I already had a B.A. in community studies. I took a few courses in child development at night and realized I knew very little about it. When I went back to graduate school I was able to put together that experience of some training in child development and family studies with a sociologist's view of the world in terms of power, inequality, and access.

As a sociologist I began to ask questions: Why would men be involved in raising children? Or why would they not be involved? I've used different lenses to address these questions. Sometimes it has to do with politics or warfare, or the control and distribution of resources, or the organization of family, kinship. Those different lenses for looking at the world introduced me to scholarship across different disciplines. Certainly history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and, fairly centrally, women's studies and family studies have informed that scholarship. You can't understand with reference to one lens what's going on in the world. Cross-cultural research played very heavily because cultures organize the raising of infants differently, and cultures change depending on their circumstances.

My personal interest in having children, and feeling that there was not a cultural template and not a personal model for me to emulate on how to be a father, all led me on a wonderful journey.

Q: Part of what I hear you saying is that you wanted to father your children more than the culture had taught you, or showed you, or maybe even rewarded you?

Yes, absolutely. For whatever reason, I was motivated to have a personal relationship with my kids that was more nurturing than I'd experienced from my own father, and than most people my age experienced with their fathers.

a wonderful journey

And the funny thing is, once I embarked on that, I realized that I got more credit for doing a small amount, certainly than my wife, who was expected to do it all [laughing] and who was taken for granted. That alerted me to the ways in which our cultural understandings and our expectations for men's involvements in families have been so low. That's probably a product of the 1950s and 1960s environment in which I was raised, where mothers were expected to do virtually all of the child care and housework and men were expected to be breadwinners and have a life and identity outside of the home.

Q: What are you working on now? Are you still doing research?

I am, just not as much. The dean job has expanded to fill the available space. But some of the papers that I've been working on in the last decade have been related somewhat to policy. So, what would policy that promotes father involvement look like? I have colleagues at various places who are doing research on parental leave, some of the programs for child care and flex time—many are workplace centered, but some are more social-welfare policies. Things like equal pay for equal wages, and universal health care, have a huge impact on how children develop, so looking at what governments and societies can do for the benefit of children, and how that relates to gender equity. You have different models. Some societies are very much committed to doing child-supported policies, but they have a breadwinner model where women stay at home and take care of the kids.

And then you have other societies like Norwegian, Swedish, and Scandinavian models, with more of an embrace of gender equality. They have daddy days, where there's a certain amount of parental leave, which is quite generous by our standards. You can take multiple weeks off at the time of a birth or adoption of a child. And if you want to use that, you have to use that for the father—it's an extra. I've been looking at some policies like that to see what difference it makes, and whether we should be doing those kinds of things. Workplaces are not particularly friendly to parents in general, whether they be men or women. One prospect of elevating the issues of men as parents, in the public sphere, is it has the potential to increase the value of child development and parenting and mothering at the same time by making more visible some of those dilemmas. We have assumed as social scientists, certainly during the '60s and '70s and most of the '80s and '90s, that children need mothers and mothers are good at parenting, and men need jobs and industry needs men. And somehow we haven't put those two things together. Both are needed for both.

Q: How did you work it out in your own home?

[Laughing] Well, my wife was employed, and so we had lots of meetings and lots of negotiation and lists.

I find in my research that most people don't like to make explicit who does what, particularly about the housework. So one of the techniques I adopted in my studies was not to make it too explicit, but to have ques-



Scott with son Colin, 5; daughter Shannon, 4, and niece Lauren, 1 (1985).

tions that did an internal counting, interviewing people separately, sometimes simultaneously.

There's a way in which my attention to the details of running houses kind of pushed me into a much more thoroughly feminist investigation of the inequality of housework. And why our assumptions about housework were [that] only women can do it, when in fact the skills required are not gendered in the least.

Q: What do the data show?

I spent a good long time learning about the kind of research. Many of these researchers came out of a home economic tradition. They were really good at collecting data about the efficiency with which you run a home, and how you do this and that. [Researchers] started tracking this in the '60s, and from then until now men have more than doubled their contribution to housework—on average, and regardless of their family situation. So even if you have a so-called traditional looking family where the man has a job and the woman doesn't, and she's a stay-at-home mom, they're doing twice as much housework. The child care varies more than that; there's also been a doubling there.

Much of my early career was spent documenting that and trying to learn what are the conditions under which men would do more . . . and it mostly has to do with money and power. Did they have more time because they were working less, and did their wives make more money? Did their wives have less time? And so it was a pressed-into-service, kind of practical solution that broke down the barriers of attitudes such as, "Well, I can't do that because that's not a man's job." In past decades there were a lot of assumptions that maybe there are biologically hard-wired dispositions that we can't go against. In fact, my work has found that our assumptions about the dispositions flow from how we organize our daily lives, and how we organize our daily lives is largely determined by the material circumstances that we find ourselves in. In looking at how couples have adjusted to doing family

work, we find that they do it out of necessity, and they have to adjust their attitudes to make it okay. They can have attitudes that are wildly different from their practices and are able to somehow justify that. I think the bar is being raised. We're expecting men to be more active parents and do more housework, but we don't expect them to do half of it. So what's interesting to me is that things we didn't used to expect men and women to share are now at least open for negotiation—cooking, shopping, meal preparation and meal clean up, washing the dishes and that sort of thing. That's now pretty much up for grabs. Transportation of kids is frequently done by men these days, and shared. Certain things like laundry and

THERE'S A WAY IN WHICH PARENTING OPENS MEN UP TO THE FULL EXPERIENCE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN.

some of the planning, especially emotional planning, are still primarily done by women. But even with those, there are a subset of men who are doing more of it. We have an economic environment in which men's jobs are being cut much more quickly than women's jobs, and that's been true now for over a decade. And so, I think we'll have more and more pressure for people to share more. The kids who are raised in those families where at least some sharing is going on expect to share in their own relationships. We're in kind of a self-perpetuating cycle. We'll have more of a convergence of gender roles.

Q: Could you touch a little on some of your other papers and research?

In the last decade I've done quite a bit of research with working-class families. In southern California a large proportion of those families are Latino. I thought it was important to understand the interplay of economic and cultural factors, particularly because we have images of men as being masculine, a masculinity defined by culture—so, looking at machismo. But in doing research with those families we found that men are very involved in an emotional way, and more expressive on average than Anglo families. That tended to dispel the stereotypes of Mexican American men as being uninvolved, unemotional, and distancing themselves. They do on average a little bit less on the housework side. Certainly in the emotional involvement with children they're quite high. But some real tensions emerge, as they do in all families, when girls reach puberty and the father changes. So then, how to be an effective father in a culture that tends to stereotype women and women's sexuality in certain ways?

It's important to see how generalizable these different patterns are; so I've gone to different cultures, different historical eras, different ethnic groups, different social classes, or different professions in order to ask the question: What would make men involved? When does it help children's development, or their own personal development, or their relationship? I've done some research on marital-satisfaction or child-development outcomes and asked that question over and over in different contexts:

When does it matter if fathers are involved? By and large it matters considerably. Particularly because mothering is usually good enough, and the bedrock upon which children have healthy development. So, when fathers are also involved—you could say the same thing about another parent; it could be another lesbian mom, could be another gay dad. Some of my colleagues studying fathers think it's all about male role models. I think it's just about having two loving, involved people who care about you—the net worth to the child is better social development, better academic performance. And it's always net on what would have happened otherwise, because we're all defined by our own limitations. But given what someone can accomplish, if you have two active people loving you and setting limits and being consistent, it's better for the kid.

One thing I've been studying for the last five years is different family forms—looking at stepfather families, and comparing them to birth-father families. And the birth-father families generally look better, because this is a couple that got married, had children, stayed together, and was on that kind of successful trajectory. Whereas about half, more than half of children don't follow that simple one-family-for-their-whole-upbringing. Then, looking at the subset where oftentimes the mother has kids, the father is out of the picture, and another man comes in and there is a stepfather or boyfriend. Those families don't look the same as each other. There are more challenges in blended families, and it's harder to assume the blended role.

But when you ask the question—"Is the kid better off having a better relationship with his biological father who doesn't live there anymore or with the stepfather who does live there?"—the answer by and large is, either one. If the child has a positive relationship with either father figure, statistically it does not matter which one for predicting risky behaviors (not to say it doesn't matter—certainly it matters to the individual child). But for delinquency type stuff—getting in trouble with the law, being dishonest, doing drugs, or having early sexuality, things like that that are big risk factors—having a man to relate to and feel loved by is really important.

And so, thirty years later after studying this stuff, I can answer the question and say, yes. Fathers do matter. They matter to the kids, and the type of fathering matters to them. And certainly, now as I'm getting older, I'm looking at the literature on aging and men who retire or become less defined by their jobs, and they usually lament the fact that they didn't have stronger personal relationships with their children.

There's a way in which parenting opens men up to the full experience of what it means to be human, in the way that women have experienced this traditionally. And I think that's good for men, good for society, and good for gender equality, because it balances things. ■

—Alice Evans interviewed Scott Coltrane in June.



Professor Lynn Stephen at Jardin Etnobotanico in Oaxaca, Mexico.

When members of the CSWS Americas research interest group (RIG) traveled to Oaxaca, Mexico, in 2006, they knew they would be witnessing social protest. But they did not know it would erupt into violence—or flower into a media takeover by women. As scholars of various academic disciplines—including anthropology, history and journalism—they experienced the social uprising through different professional filters. But for each of them, the Oaxaca social movement of 2006 inspired their research and motivated a response.

Their experiences in Oaxaca led to the making of a documentary film, a digital ethnography website, and other scholarly publications.

Lynn Stephen, distinguished professor of anthropology and director of the new Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies, focused her response on producing the digital ethnography website *Making Rights a Reality*. The website documents the 2006 social movement of Oaxaca and its relationship to the global discourse on human, women's, and indigenous rights. It contains more than thirty-five video testimonials supplemented with text, photographs, and the reproduction of documents, offering the public direct access to the story and history of this social movement as told by those who took part in it and those who observed it first hand.

Gabriela Martínez, assistant professor of journalism and communication, served as a technical adviser to the website. This year, she completed a thirty-seven minute documentary film, *Women, Media, and Rebellion in Oaxaca*, which also tells the story of this media takeover by Oaxacan women. The takeover, she said, dramatically changed the way women are perceived in Mexico as well as the dynamics of political power and the role and use of media in times of social struggle. The documentary was premiered in Eugene at the Downtown Initiative for the

Making Scholarship a Productive Adventure

A digital ethnography website, film documentaries, and other scholarship emerge from Oaxaca research.

Visual Arts and at CSWS in an open research presentation for faculty and students. The documentary is downloadable through the CSWS website (csws.uoregon.edu).

In March 2009, RIG leaders Stephanie Wood and Gabriela Martínez were again in Oaxaca, in the initial stages of research and production of a documentary focusing on historic Mesoamerican manuscripts. They are working to capture the dramatic and multidimensional rescue of the history of indigenous women. The film will be partly an observation of the activities of others and partly an exploration of their own research activities. It will highlight obstacles and methodologies for overcoming challenges as they strive to recuperate the experiences and perspectives of women from various cultural groups within Mesoamerica, including Nahuas, Zapotecas, Mixtecas, and others. [See Fieldwork sidebar].

Casa de la Mujer

Members of the RIG also continue to work with the Casa de la Mujer, a sister research center in Oaxaca. In March, Stephanie Wood led a workshop in Spanish for indigenous young women, holders of scholarships at the Casa, on the theme of "Power and Women in Indigenous Communities of Mesoamerica, 1500–1800." Stephanie also met with the leadership at the Casa this year to check on the success of RIG-sponsored interns Elke Richers and Katie Hulse, to brainstorm potential summer workshops, and to participate in the annual fundraising campaign for the scholarship program that helps indigenous girls complete high school. The interns were received very well as a result of their serious commitment and their strong Spanish-language skills. The fundraising campaign was successful in meeting its goals thanks in part to contributions from colleagues at the UO and friends in Portland. Oregon donations amounted to nearly \$2,000.

Stephanie Wood's research on Mesoamerican women, particularly the importance of women as members of town-founding couples, was published as an essay in the book *Simbolos de poder en Mesoamérica*, coordinated by Guilhem Olivier (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2008). She also gave several lectures on this topic and on significant female figures in Mexican history at the NEH Summer Institute she and Judith Musick hosted in July and August 2008 at the University of Oregon, which had as its focus Mesoamerican cultures and their histories. ■

Making Rights a Reality

www.mraroaxaca.uoregon.edu

This website explores the 2006 Oaxaca social movement and its links to global discourses of human, women's, and indigenous rights. Through the use of more than thirty-five video testimonials supplemented with text, photographs, and documents, this site offers students, teachers, researchers, and activists interested in media activism, human rights, indigenous rights, women's rights, participatory democracy, and Latin American social movements direct access to the story of this movement as told by those who participated directly in it and observed it up close. The website features video testimonials in Spanish with English subtitles that are urgent oral accounts of bearing witness to wrongs committed against the speakers as well as descriptions and analysis of events. These are supplemented with background information about the histories of different social movements in Oaxaca during the past three decades as well as a video timeline of key events of the Oaxaca social movement from June through October 2006.

The testimonials include statements by teachers and others who were illegally detained, tortured, and imprisoned for their political activities as well as testimonials from their family members. Women who participated in the takeover and reprogramming of the state's public television and radio station, COR-TV, recorded testimonials as well. Mixtec and Zapotec participants in the Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca movement in Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca City, and Los Angeles also provided testimonials. Finally, the site includes testimonials from the "unorganized"—a young entrepreneur, a craft producer and merchant, and a student—whose experiences of the social movement changed their understandings of local political culture, citizenship, and forms of participatory democracy.

Conceived of as a digital ethnography, the site lets viewers hear the voices of those who participated in and observed the movement. Ethnography is a form of documentation that strives to produce understanding through richness, texture, and detail focused through the perspectives of locals who directly experienced and witnessed events. The embedding of video testimonials allows students and other interested viewers to interact directly with people in the Oaxaca social movement and to reflect on their perspectives in relation to wider questions of 1) contemporary processes of ethnic, racial, and gendered identity formation and rights claiming; 2) definitions of participatory democracy, political society, and citizenship; and 3) models for achieving cultural dialogue among different groups.

The flexibility of digital media permits viewers to experience the interconnectedness of the different dimensions of the Oaxaca movement, facilitates the juxtaposition of different oral testimonies, and highlights the links between individual experiences in the claiming of rights through testimony with the larger political, economic, and cultural context within which such claiming operates.

Production of this website was funded by CSWS.



Gabriela Martínez interviews Juana Vásquez Vásquez.

Photo by Stephanie Wood

Fieldwork in Oaxaca, Mexico

March 21, 2009—We began work on a pilot film for a larger documentary on the "triple rescue" of colonial Mexican manuscripts. They are sixteenth-through eighteenth-century indigenous-authored manuscripts that have been decaying on dirt floors in municipal and provincial archives. Besides being subjected to worrisome conditions of humidity, insects, rodents, and grime, these documents have also been ignored and neglected over the centuries in favor of a Eurocentric history. The information they contain about the history of Mesoamerican women has suffered even further disparagement. These are manuscripts primarily authored by elite indigenous men about their own activities over the centuries. But sometimes, almost in spite of their own self-interest, such male authors did mention or paint women into these manuscripts. To extract the women's stories and patch them together is a labor of determination, as well as a huge collaborative, interdisciplinary enterprise that unites ethnohistorians, archaeologists, linguists, restoration scientists, digital humanities experts, and now a filmmaker.

Our first interview was with Juana Vásquez Vásquez, a Zapotec woman from the community of Yalálag, Oaxaca, Mexico. Juana periodically makes the trek from her indigenous community to Oaxaca to collaborate with various ethnohistorians. She is very involved in the deciphering and translation of manuscripts written in Zapotec, as well as their analysis. **See more field entries from Oaxaca on the CSWS website (csws.uoregon.edu/?cat=10).**

—Gabriela Martínez, Assistant Professor, School of Journalism and Communication, and Stephanie Wood, Director, Wired Humanities Projects



Feminism in Bangladesh

Lamia Karim, recently tenured associate professor of anthropology, received CSWS support for her work on feminist legal reform in Bangladesh. The National Science Foundation also funds her research.

on Women in New York. This paper examines two emergent trends within middle-class Bangladeshi women's movements—a secular feminist movement informed by the nineteenth-century Hindu Brahmo Samaj movement, and a late twentieth-century women's movement that operates within a pietist tradition.

While feminists advocate women's education and public roles within a secular paradigm, women leaders belonging to the pietist movement limit public roles of women within an Islamic framework and the subordination of women's desires to their culturally important roles as "good" Muslim mothers. This paper explores some of the contestations between these two polarities of middle-classness that animate women's roles in contemporary Bangladesh, and explores the conditions that trouble the feminist movement in Bangladesh.

Q: Who are the feminists in Islamic countries?

Feminists working within the model of human rights in the majority of Islamic countries are largely drawn from elite families with political connections. While their elite status and Western education give them access to transnational networks and global forums, their status also circumscribes their roles as social reformers within their own countries, where they are often labeled as "Western" and out of touch with local norms. Moreover, in the aftermath of the U.S. war on terror, feminists in Islamic countries face the added risk of being labeled as "traitors within" for bringing international attention to gendered violence against Muslim women. Thus, feminists in Islamic

societies have to straddle a dangerous political terrain when negotiating for women's rights and liberties.

Q: What does feminism mean in Bangladesh?

It is important to scale the global feminist discourse to the situation on the ground, that is, Bangladeshi Muslim women and their encounter with democracy and human rights. The government of Bangladesh has emphasized women's equal citizenship as a goal within an Islamic national framework. And although Bangladesh has legislated equality, it is far from ensuring equality for female citizens. Bangladesh has signed the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women with reservations. Bangladeshi Islamic political parties have unsuccessfully attempted to pass a blasphemy bill in parliament since 1998. In Bangladesh, family courts dispense Muslim personal laws in accordance with national laws. Yet in rural areas, the clergy run their own informal sharia adjudications that lie outside the control of the courts.

These decisions are extra-judicial and were declared illegal in 2001 by the highest court in the country. However, the clergy commands social power and its judgments remain morally binding on rural communities.

Q: Feminism and religion are a dangerous mix?

The task of feminists is to ensure that religion does not constrain women's legal rights. Since most societies, whether in the United States or Bangladesh, are informed by their religious beliefs, feminists face a formidable challenge. But I remain hopeful. ■

Q: What is the focus of your research?

My project examines the role of feminists as reformers in the encounter between democratic and Islamic laws. Bangladeshi feminists have approached the question of human security through laws that protect women's rights and legal clinics that assist women to access the judicial system.

I examine to what extent feminists have been able to empower women at the grass roots to gain the rights that are guaranteed to them under the constitution. I anticipate that the results from this project will provide new information related to bottlenecks that women face in accessing democracy and human rights in Bangladesh, and will assist feminist scholars, activists, and policymakers to develop more culturally specific policies to increase the human security of Muslim women.

Q: Have you published some of the results?

I wrote a paper, "Democracy, Legal Reform, and Religion in Bangladesh," that I presented at the American Ethnological Society meetings in Vancouver, Canada, in May 2009. The paper will be published in an edited volume on gender and class. In June, I was a plenary speaker on global human rights at the annual meeting of the National Council for Research



Hormone Therapy

Research in the Department of Human Physiology is designed to help improve women's cardiovascular health.

by Christopher Minson, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Department Head, Human Physiology

Millions of women use hormone therapy for treatment of menopausal symptoms and gynecological syndromes, contraception, assisted reproductive techniques, and combating osteoporosis. Early reports on the use of estrogen replacement therapy were very promising in terms of improving cardiovascular and bone health, but the results of two major clinical trials were disappointing and alarming, resulting in millions of women stopping hormone therapy.

The findings suggested that estrogen replacement did not provide a cardiovascular-protective benefit and were associated with increased risk of cancer. A specific synthetic progesterone called a progestin was actually associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease, even when prescribed with estrogen.

Regardless, the overall recommendation for women following the most recent of these clinical trials, the Women's Health Initiative trial, suggested that women only take estrogen replacement therapy for treatment of menopausal symptoms, and at the lowest dose for the shortest possible time.

One concern, however, was that hormone replacement therapy was not started early enough following menopause. The goal of a new clinical trial on hormone replacement therapy, the Kronos Early Estrogen Prevention Study (KEEPS), is to start estrogen replacement therapy within thirty-six months of the subject's final menstrual period. Women will receive progesterone (synthetic, but identical to natural progesterone) rather than a progestin (synthetic, but structurally different from progesterone) for twelve days per month with estrogen as part of the hormone replacement program.

Synthetic Hormone Use by Young Women

Although this is an exciting "next step," other important issues are not being addressed. Many young women are now suppressing natural fluctuations in their hormones that drive the menstrual cycle, known to provide cardiovascular protection, by using the exact same synthetic hormones found to be associated with increased cardiovascular risk in older women. Even more troubling, these young women are often taking synthetic hormones for longer periods of time than the older women were, and often at higher doses.

The injectable contraceptive Depo-Provera, for example, contains the same synthetic progesterone given to

postmenopausal women in the Women's Health Initiative trials, and is prescribed without estrogen. Originally designed to be used as a contraceptive in women over age thirty-five or smokers (those most at risk of developing a blood clot), Depo-Provera is currently being used by many young women who want the ease of an intramuscular injection given every twelve weeks rather than a daily pill. Many women are staying on contraceptives for decades, only stopping when they wish to become pregnant.

Clearly, the recommendation of "the lowest dose for the shortest amount of time" is not being followed by younger women. Long-term use of certain types of these hormones may not allow women to reach the menopausal transition with a healthy vascular profile, greatly increasing the risk of early cardiovascular disease.

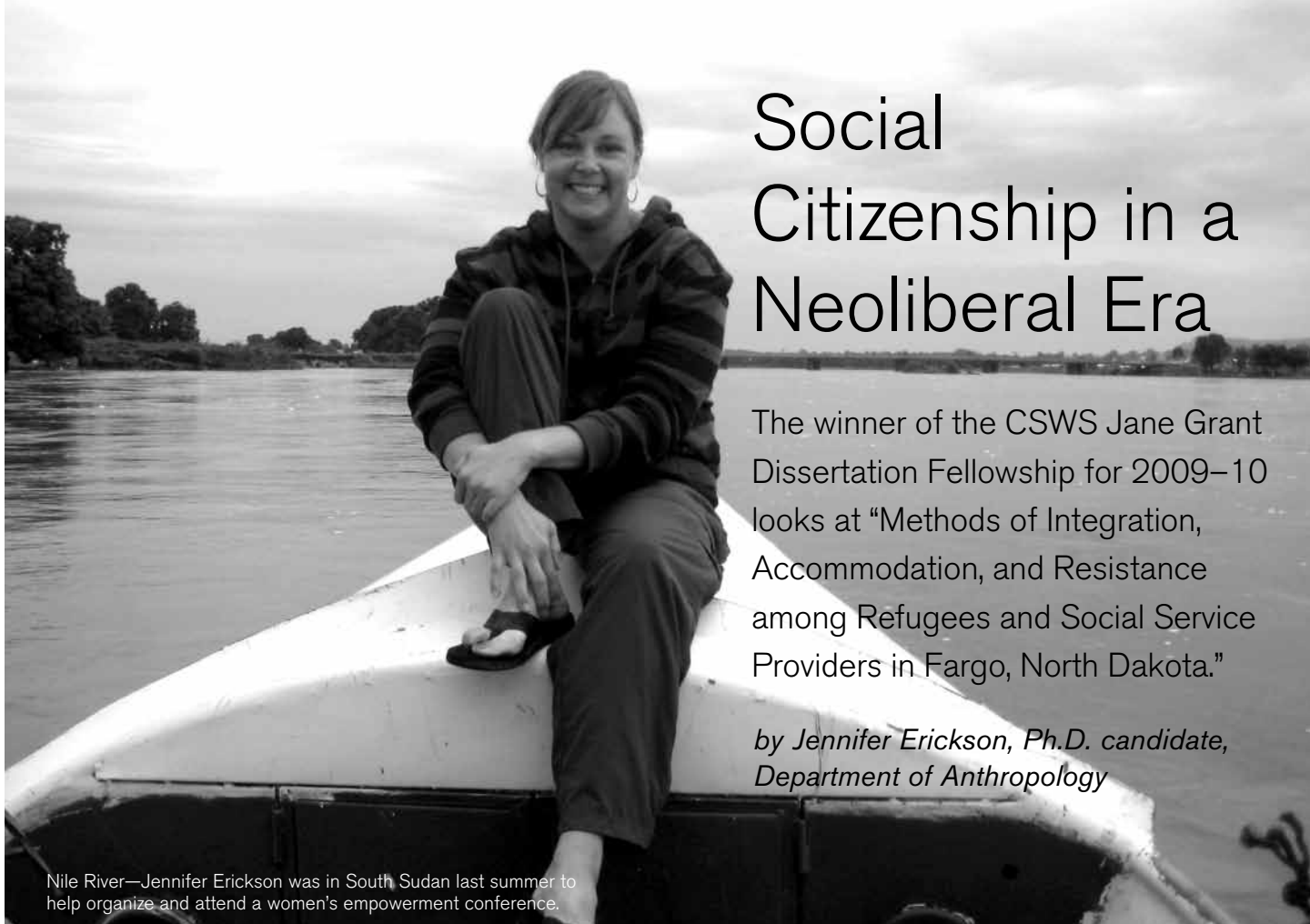
Providing Unbiased Information

Reproductive-aged women have many options for hormone therapy. Some alternatives may be safe and confer benefits for both cardiovascular and bone health while also providing contraception. But the predominance of studies on the safety aspects of hormone use in reproductive-aged women have been funded by pharmaceutical companies with a clear financial stake in the outcome.

We also do not know whether studies in older women can be reliably translated to provide suggestions for tens of millions of younger women using hormone treatments. We see a profound lack of studies by which to guide younger women and their health-care providers to make the most informed choices.

Funded by the National Institutes of Health, our current studies in the Department of Human Physiology are designed to address some of these issues. Our long-term goal is to provide unbiased information about the risks and benefits to specific hormone treatment options.

Although too early for recommendations, it is becoming clear that many factors can have an impact on how synthetic hormones affect the health of the cardiovascular system, including the specific dose of estrogen, the route of hormone administration, and the specific type of synthetic progesterone. In the long term, we believe the findings from these studies will help lead to the development of strategies for contraceptive use and hormone replacement therapy that do not compromise, and may even improve, cardiovascular health in women of all ages. ■



Nile River—Jennifer Erickson was in South Sudan last summer to help organize and attend a women's empowerment conference.

Social Citizenship in a Neoliberal Era

The winner of the CSWS Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship for 2009–10 looks at “Methods of Integration, Accommodation, and Resistance among Refugees and Social Service Providers in Fargo, North Dakota.”

*by Jennifer Erickson, Ph.D. candidate,
Department of Anthropology*

Scholars show that welfare policies affect women and men differently due to gender-based relationships with the state, which involve, for example, expectations about child rearing and shifting expectations regarding paid labor. Welfare policies negatively affect many refugee and immigrant groups in the United States by pushing them into the lowest paid sector of the economy. As a cultural project, neoliberal agendas have broadly succeeded in shaping public opinion toward an increased reliance on individual merit, consumerism, volunteerism, and distrust of government. I've focused my research on refugee populations in Fargo, North Dakota. In Fargo, mainstream culture highly values church attendance and spirituality, volunteering, and hard work. Although refugee clients differ widely in terms of educational and skill level, gender, religion, race, ethnicity, war-related experiences, and history with social services and the state, they are often viewed as similar in the culturally and racially homogenous Fargo.

What happens when white, ethnically Muslim refugees from a once-strong paternalist, socialist state like Bosnia-Herzegovina come to the United States, where economic self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal? How do Black, Christian Southern Sudanese—many of whom had little experience with running water, electricity, cold weather, or bureaucratic government—fare in Fargo? In Bosnia-Herzegovina and Sudan, extended kin networks play a key role in the distribution of resources and child care. In the United States, families are often forced to work different employment shifts, and to rely on nuclear

families, friends, the state, and/or private agencies to compensate for the loss or changing roles of extended family. All adult refugees, regardless of gender, are encouraged to obtain jobs, but what happens when men are traditionally viewed as the breadwinner?

My project answers these questions and explains why some groups of refugees are more culturally equipped to succeed in some arenas than others, and hence have more social capital and better relationships with service providers. Bosnian Roma (Gypsies), for example, are categorized as some of the least-worthy citizens in Fargo as compared with other refugees. Roma comprised about 10 percent of the population in prewar Bosnia, but in Fargo are at least half of some 3,000 Bosnians. My research shows that Roma are overrepresented in the welfare sector in Fargo, and generally speaking, they have poor relationships with social services, educational systems, and the wider community. I examine historical, economic, and cultural reasons why Roma are deemed unworthy citizens and compare these with factors affecting non-Romani Bosnian Muslims and Southern Sudanese.

Ultimately, my dissertation aims to show that a comparative methodology combined with an understanding of political economy, culture, and identity can help us better understand citizenship, belonging, and the kinds of racialized, gendered, and class hierarchies that form and become solidified in everyday practices in institutions. I will also provide recommendations on how to decrease the negative impacts of these hierarchies and better serve refugee clients. ■

From War to Hurricane Katrina

Supported by a CSWS Laurel Grant, this research compares two generations of Vietnamese women.

Graduate student Gennie Thi Nguyen's old neighborhood was flooded by as much as nine feet of water after Hurricane Katrina pounded the Gulf Coast in August 2005. For Nguyen, like other Vietnamese Americans of her generation who grew up in New Orleans, the destruction of vast areas of her city became a trauma shared with parents and their generation, and opened up new areas of communication, she said.

Nguyen was an undergraduate at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, when Katrina struck. She remembers trying to call her parents, "but all the cell towers were down so I couldn't get through." So she tried calling her four older sisters to see if they knew anything through their social networks—like her, they were all living outside the New Orleans area. Her mom had gone to a wedding in California, she learned. Her father, who works on oil rigs on the Gulf Coast, had evacuated to Houston with his friends.

The hurricane and subsequent flooding constituted the worst natural disaster ever to hit the United States. It came almost exactly four years after the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, but federal response could not have been more different.

While most media and scholars focused on the anti-Black racism evident in the official response, Nguyen did her fieldwork among Vietnamese Americans, conducting interviews and doing intergenerational comparisons as a participant-observer. She looked at how two generations of Vietnamese women responded to social traumas, and how gendered identities are historically produced.

A master's student in anthropology, Nguyen grew up in the Versailles area of New Orleans East, a neighborhood that includes the densest

population of ethnically Vietnamese people outside of Vietnam. Versailles is not so much a place as a state of mind, she explained. Eighty percent Catholic, the area is "like a snapshot of Vietnam put in America," she said, adding: "Katrina forced the younger members of the community to think about their identities and who they are. They live in an 'in-between space' that really constitutes home."

Her parents and their generation were no strangers to disaster and its aftermath, having fled from North to South Vietnam, survived their "civil war," and evacuated Vietnam after the fall of Saigon in 1975. In October, barely a month after the hurricane, they began returning to their New Orleans neighborhood.

"The older generation equated it with being back in the refugee camps, waiting in line for food. Being there after Katrina to experience it with them has some kind of connection 'emotionally' as to what it means to be a refugee," Nguyen said. She sees previous refugee experience as a factor in the rapidity and extent of return. The return rate of Vietnamese Americans a year and a half after the storm was 85 percent, she said, compared to other groups whose return rate is less than 50 percent.

"We rebuilt our community centers faster than anyone else, opened our centers to other groups, brought diverse groups together. But while the media always paints the Vietnamese people coming back as a success story, a model minority myth, in reality the community is still struggling to rebuild basic infrastructure such as health care, education, public safety, and language access. Materially, they still lost everything; they came back to the same state of a lack of electricity; many things still have to be gutted. Almost four years after the storm, they haven't rebuilt roadways and streets," Nguyen reported.



A Vietnamese woman works in her garden near her FEMA trailer.

After graduating from Ball State, Nguyen returned to New Orleans during the summer of 2007 and worked for the nonprofit organization Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation, whose mission is "to rebuild the Vietnamese American community in New Orleans East and to contribute to the rebuilding of a more equitable New Orleans."

"This nonprofit organizing work is mostly a second generational action, which has to do with cultural competency about the American bureaucracy and having a higher educational status than our parents," Nguyen said. "After the storm we found out the mayor had reopened a landfill less than a mile from the community; it was unlined and wasn't protecting the local community against toxins from hurricane debris. We worked with the Sierra Club, did testing and showed that leaching was affecting the same groundwater that flowed into the canal that the older generation was using to water their gardens. We organized the community going to town hall. It was a way of being able to provide social service to the community. For the first time, my father actually understood what I want to do with my life—being involved in community organizing and cultural studies." ■

—Alice Evans interviewed Gennie Thi Nguyen in May.



WGS faculty members (left to right) Ellen Scott, director; Judith Raiskin; Lynn Fujiwara; Ernesto Martinez; and Elizabeth Reis.

A Long Time Coming

First approved as a certificate program in 1973, then as an academic major in 1997, Women's and Gender Studies is now a department.

Women's and Gender Studies is happy to announce that it has finally become a department. Benefiting from the political work of ethnic studies and its struggle to become a department as well as the unconditional support of our new dean, Scott Coltrane, in winter 2009 Women's and Gender Studies was finally recognized as a fully legitimate, autonomous, interdisciplinary intellectual space.

The first course in women's studies was offered in 1970 by Joan Acker, founder of CSWS and now an emeritus faculty member who continues to be an active member of the UO faculty.

Approved as a certificate program in 1973, it was not until 1997 that the State Board of Education approved the major in women's studies. Barbara

Pope, founder and former director of women's studies, noted that even then WGS benefited from the activism of ethnic studies: "The door-openers [to the major] were environmental and ethnic studies, two other heirs of the sixties [student activism] that had been given the go-ahead [to establish majors]."

And now, twelve years after establishing a major, we have been granted departmental status. What does this mean? We now have the right to hire and tenure faculty members within the department rather than locate the tenure homes of our faculty in other departments (such as English, history, or sociology).

We can encourage our faculty members to conduct the kind of cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research that is at the center of our discipline

without worrying about whether they will adequately meet the potentially different standards of the disciplines in which they were to be tenured under the old model.

Our majors will benefit from the perception of greater legitimacy conferred upon an academic department, compared to a program.

We hope that the number of our already abundant major, minor, and graduate certificate students will increase with this transition from a program to a department. Thanks to the students, faculty members, and administrators who supported this transition and helped make it happen. ■

—Ellen Scott, Department Head, WGS

Editor's Note: Linda Fuller will serve as department head for 2009-10.

Barbara Corrado Pope

Historian Barbara Pope was the founding director of what was then called women's studies. Now a professor emerita, retired from the double duties of teaching in WGS and the Robert D. Clark Honors College, she has turned to writing novels. Her first is a murder mystery, *Cézanne's Quarry*, published simultaneously in English and German in 2008.

Pope is at work on a second novel, also a murder mystery, tentatively titled *The Blood of Lorraine*. "I think this is where my commitments to the issue of race come into play. The theme of this new book is the new antisemitism at the end of the nineteenth century in France," Pope commented (CSWS *Annual Review*, Spring 2008).

Pope was the driving force behind the 1987 UO curriculum shift that required students to take a course focused on race and gender. Because of her determined efforts to win innovative curriculum reform, she was the first woman to win the Charles E. Johnson Memorial Award for "exceptional service to the university and the community" in 1991. Pope also received a Ford Foundation grant that helped her and colleagues develop a two-year seminar that contributed to women of color and multicultural curriculum throughout the country. A scholarship established in her name recognizes her contribution to the Clark Honors College.



Photo by Jack Liu, 1998

Two Seniors Comment on Their Experiences with WGS

Rebecca Sprinson

Q: What is the topic of your thesis?

My thesis is titled "This Land Is Our Land: The Ideological Construction of a Lesbian Feminist Utopia in Southern Oregon, 1970–1990." I'm examining the magazines and newsletters produced by women who lived on women-only farms, collectives, and communes in southern Oregon, which was a nexus of the lesbian-feminist back-to-the-land movement.

Q: Please share a bit of your background. What drew you to WGS, and what do you plan to do with your degree?

I came to the UO from California, where I attended a very liberal private school in San Francisco. I have always been drawn to feminist-gender issues, both academically and informally, but I toyed around with other programs for a while before finally settling on WGS.

Ultimately I found that, of all the departments I have taken classes in at the UO, the WGS classes consistently challenge my thinking, introduce me to some of



Rebecca Sprinson

the most cutting-edge work being done in many fields, and provide me with personal and intellectual inspiration. My B.A. is in women's and gender studies, and I have an English minor.

I plan to take one year off after graduating, then apply to graduate programs in women's studies or through other departments such as American studies, at universities that offer a graduate certificate in women's studies or a focus in women's studies. There aren't very many grad programs in women's studies! It's a shame.

Departmental status means a great deal to a program. I've been involved with and supported students and faculty members who have been struggling to make ethnic studies an official department, so I have seen that progression, although not for WGS. Departmental status not only feels like an acknowledgement or vindication of all the rigorous work faculty members

continued on next page

have done in the field, but I think it also contributes immensely to the political and intellectual climate of the university. It draws talented and original thinkers as professors, staff members, students, and guest lecturers. I'm not surprised it took such a long time to achieve departmental status, and I know the UO is even somewhat ahead of the curve.

Q: Would it have made a difference in your own studies if WGS had been a department sooner?

I think it would have meant that the department could have been even bigger and more diverse by the time I arrived here, which would have been great!

Q: Any comments about favorite teachers, courses, the quality of classes offered by WGS, what you've learned, how you'll use it?

It is hard to pick favorite professors and classes, because each term has been a novel and wonderful experience. Lizzie Reis is my thesis adviser, and I am so thankful to her. Her classes are truly inspiring, especially because her work on intersex issues is pushing so many academic and social envelopes. I really admire her for that. I loved Julie Raiskin's Lesbian Cultures course, because it balanced literature, film, pop culture, and critical theory. Lynn Fujiwara's Gender, Race, and Ethnicity and Women in the Global Labor Force courses were amazing. Professor Fujiwara is amazing and challenging!

WGS was the best thing about my college career, and I'd love to help out or give back in any way possible.

Robyn Singleton

Q: What role did WGS play in your studies, and what do you plan to do with your degree?

I'm a senior, graduating with a degree in international studies, with focuses in Latin America and international gender



Robyn Singleton in Ecuador, in front of the active volcano Tungurahua.

issues, and a minor in women's and gender studies. I also am graduating from the honors college. I studied abroad in Ecuador last year for a semester, and have done internships at Planned Parenthood, Sexual Assault Support Services, and CEMOPLAF (a reproductive health NGO in Ecuador).

I'm interested in public health, specifically sexual and reproductive health issues, and will probably be going to graduate school for that eventually. After graduating, I'm going into the Peace Corps and will be working in the field of public health.

I was drawn to WGS because it basically covers all that I'm passionate about, and it's given me a lens with which to view our world and the systems that govern it. I think this will be a very valuable asset and perspective to take with me into the field of public health, particularly in the intersections among gender,

sexuality, and health.

Q: Is departmental status important?

Having WGS as a department will be very significant. The more students who take WGS courses the better, as far as I'm concerned. More people need to learn to analytically recognize hierarchical systems in our culture and around the world; even if they do nothing with this knowledge, at least they have the tools to see them and recognize how these systems may be harmful.

Q: Any comment you'd like to make about favorite teachers, courses, the quality of classes offered by WGS, what you've learned, how you'll use it?

WGS classes have been my favorite. I love classes that help you not only learn to analyze the world around you, but also the way your environment has shaped you. Education can

(and I think, should) be about learning both about the world and yourself. It's a developmental process, and I love the way WGS courses promote personal development. Of the WGS courses I've taken, I would say I've most enjoyed those that have delved into feminist thought historically, so we can see how feminism has evolved and can further evolve. Also, I've loved every class I've taken from Elizabeth Reis. The way she organizes her courses is awesome: she facilitates discussion, promotes developing opinions, and doesn't let you off the hook regarding difficult issues. I'm in her Sex and Medical Ethics course right now, and it rocks! ■

—Alice Evans interviewed Rebecca Sprinson and Robyn Singleton in May 2009.



Gender Continuum

Coming to Peace with the Image in the Mirror

This is the winning essay of the first-ever CSWS Diversity Initiative research interest group's undergraduate essay contest on the topic of gender. The question: "How has gender in combination with issues related to diversity and/or mental health featured in your own pathway toward academic or other personal achievement?"

by *Jake Clausen*

June 26 1989. The time was 12:16 p.m., and into this world came a screaming child, adjusting to new surroundings. The doctor examined the child, confirmed good health and announced it to be a healthy baby girl. The parents, so excited to enter a daughter into the family and a sister for their son, relished the moment. And within that moment, with hopes of little pink clothing, painted nails, and beautiful hair, that family would soon get a surprise they were not expecting. Fast forward to the summer of 1994: the little five-year-old daughter was already disagreeing with what everyone told her. On a hot summer day the daughter witnessed her father remove his shirt while working outside. The daughter followed suit, only to be stopped halfway by her mother. When the confused daughter asked why her mother stopped her, the mother replied, "Because you are a girl; girls cannot do that." To which the daughter answered, "No, I am not a girl; I am like dad."

The daughter continued to grow up, and learned quickly not to speak out loud of the confusion as to why everyone called her "she" and not "he." And only in the privacy of her bedroom could she wear her older brother's clothes and feel at peace with the outer appearance, and what was felt on the inside. Finally in July 2006, the girl listened intently to a presentation from the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center explaining the phrase "LGBTQ." As the presenter explained each of the letters and what it meant, she heard "transgender," the term used to describe people whose gender identity is not adequately described by the sex they were assigned at birth. Relief, joy, frustration, and acceptance were just a few of the emotions that swarmed through her. Finally, a definition that described what had been felt since the beginning.

This was only the beginning of my story. Born into a mildly conservative family, I knew I was the oddball out. Given that I was very athletic and involved heavily in sports, I was seen as a tomboy. But I disagreed. I was not a tomboy, I was a boy, just like my best friend was a boy, and just like my brother and father are boys. I see that an individual's gender is actually which gender's characteristics they match up with. When I look into a mir-

ror, or imagine myself, I see the male characteristic that society so heavily normalizes through media and rewards through acceptable social interactions.

I grew up with immense confusion, and I routinely faced rejection from my family when I tried to come out to them. Depression and suicidal thoughts were common throughout the initial transition—giving up my attempts to be the daughter my parents wanted me to be, to become the man I feel I am. Since entering college and embracing myself fully, I have found a state of mental peace with the image in the mirror.

I have learned a great deal from my experience being outside the norm of society. Contrary to popular belief, gender is not a binary, fixed, one-way-or-the-other concept. Gender is a continuum that allows for interpretation for what it means to be male and what it means to be female. That is why when one walks down the street, no two males look the same. Some males are large and burly with longer hair and beards, and some are clean-shaven and smaller in stature, along with everything in between. Diversity is said to be an acceptance of all that is different.

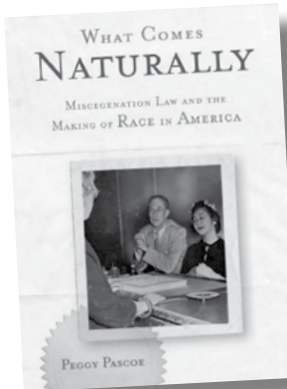
I have experienced female gender expectations and am now experiencing the pressures of male gender expectations. But no matter what gender I am, I know that I have become myself. A resident assistant, I am pursuing a Ph.D. in counseling psychology and am a member of the dance community on campus. My story and my experiences are what motivate my goals and ambitions. Just as diversity is expanding and being rewritten to include all new forms, so is my story. I am changing and growing with the new experiences that I encounter. ■



As a child in the Redwoods.

Looking at Books

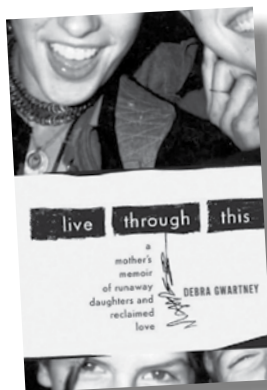
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What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America (Oxford, 2009); Peggy Pascoe, 404 pages.

UO history professor and CSWS affiliate Peggy Pascoe won the Lawrence W. Levine Prize and the Ellis W. Hawley Prize from the Organization of American Historians for this book, which shows how the invention of the word “miscegenation” and the claim that interracial marriage was “unnatural” were used to justify the pas-

sage, spread, and enforcement of laws banning interracial marriage. Miscegenation laws laid the groundwork for America’s post-Civil War systems of white supremacy and racial segregation. When they were at their height, between 1890 and 1948, they covered thirty American states and banned marriage between Whites and Blacks, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and American Indians. America’s obsession with preventing interracial marriage was intimately linked to another, even more revealing story, for the label “unnatural” held the extraordinary power that it did because ideas about the nature of race were interwoven with ideas about the nature of gender and sexuality. This book shows that miscegenation law was a national—and multiracial—project; that it was a legal factory for the production of race in everything from public opinion to criminal prosecutions to the structuring of families, and that it was inextricably tied to gender and sexuality. Finally, *What Comes Naturally* raises questions about what is and isn’t really natural or unnatural in order to expose the powerfully pernicious effects these labels have had in America’s past—and in America’s present.



Live Through This (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009); Debra Gwartney, 224 pages.

Now on the nonfiction writing faculty at Portland State University, Gwartney worked as dissemination specialist for CSWS from 2005–6. Her memoir of broken marriage, runaway daughters, and how she and they survived a nightmare time is honest and beautifully written, albeit painful to read at times. The strength and gutsiness with which she and they go on with their lives—all fight-

ing to do so on their own terms—is instructive. Gwartney never absolves herself of responsibility or accountability, but shows us that the culture of runaway youth is both personal and universal. What can we do about it? The answers from this mother may surprise you.



Indigeneity in the Mexican Cultural Imagination (University of Arizona Press, 2009); Analisa Taylor, 234 pages.

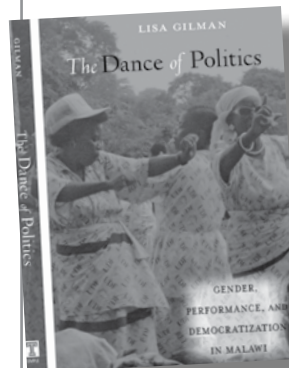
Taylor received a 2004 CSWS Research Support Grant for some of the research used in her book. A UO associate professor of Spanish and a member of CSWS’s Americas research interest group, she has been conducting research in Mexico City and the southern Mexican states of Chiapas and Oaxaca since 1998. Her book “focuses on representations of indigenous peoples in postrevolutionary literary and intellectual history by examining key cultural texts.” She also takes a gendered look at indigenous women “ranging from the villainized Malinche to the highly romanticized and sexualized Zapotec women of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.”



Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Elizabeth Reis 224 pages.

Bodies in Doubt traces the changing definitions, perceptions, and medical management of intersex (atypical sex development) in America from the colonial period to the present day. From the beginning, intersex bodies have been marked as “other,” as monstrous, sinister, threatening, inferior, and unfortunate. Some nineteenth-century doctors viewed their intersex patients with

disrespect and suspicion. Later, doctors showed more empathy for their patients’ plights and tried to make correct decisions regarding their care. Yet definitions of “correct” in matters of intersex were entangled with shifting ideas and tensions about what was natural and normal, indeed about what constituted personhood or humanity. Elizabeth Reis is an associate professor of women’s and gender studies.



The Dance of Politics: Gender, Performance, and Democratization in Malawi (Temple University Press, 2009); Lisa Gilman, 264 pages.

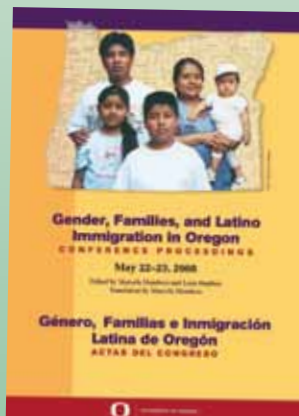
In Malawi, groups of women usually dance and perform praise songs for politicians and political parties, animated performances that attract and energize potential voters. These performances are among the only ways women can participate in Malawi’s male-dominated political system. Gilman looks at issues

of gender, economics, and politics and the surprising ways in which they collide. One reviewer described this as a “must-read for anyone interested in women, gender, and power in Africa.” Gilman is an associate professor in the UO Department of English and the UO Folklore Program, director of the Folklore Program, and a member of the CSWS Executive Committee. ■

CSWS | CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

GOALS

- Initiate research that addresses gender-related issues facing society
- Stimulate and increase knowledge about how gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual identity, age, ability and culture shape women's lives
- Improve the dissemination and use of new scholarship on women and gender
- Create alliances with other universities and outside organizations sharing interests in women and gender-related issues
- Create bridges between research, teaching, public understanding, and discussion about women's lives



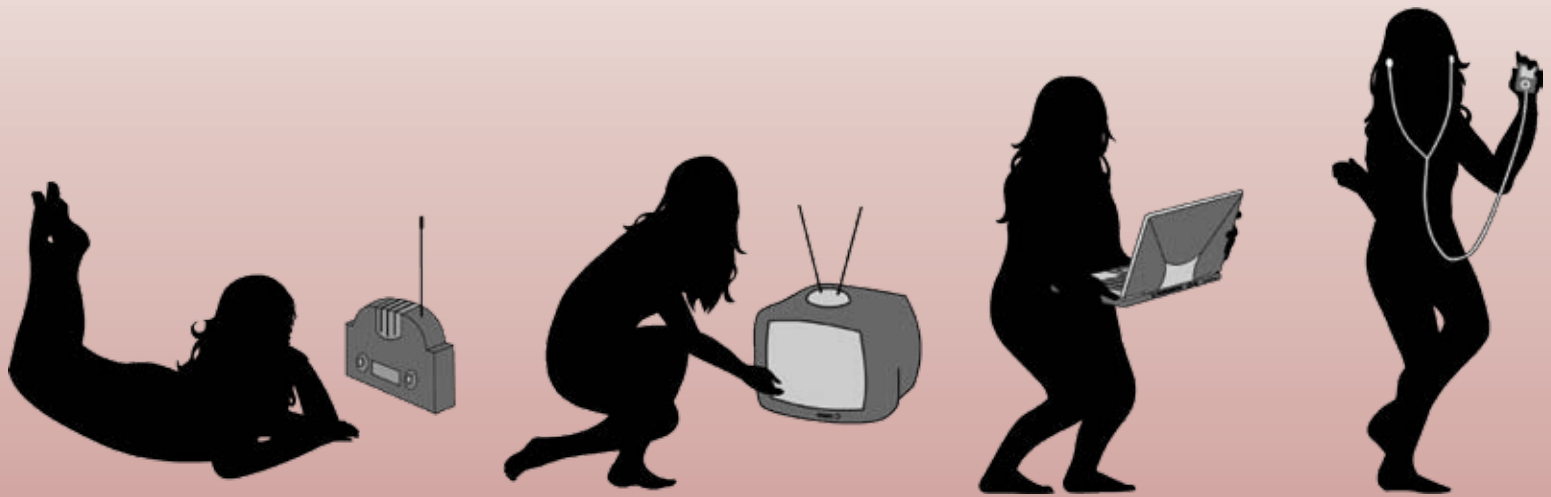
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Artwork by Nikki DelRosso

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