



WINTER 2014



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

Women's and Gender Studies
NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

DR. BETH CATLETT

Greetings!

It's that time of year again – winter in Chicago. Or should I say the polar vortex that just won't end! This deep winter freeze has presented challenges in terms of cancelled classes, student and faculty travel, and some general winter malaise, but that said, as usual, 5th floor SAC is busy with a great deal of activity. It delights me every day to see faculty and students coming together in so many productive and creative ways!

I am so excited to be able to share with our readers the great news about [Take Back the Halls: Ending Violence in Relationships and Schools](#). This program began in 2004, but over the last several years has been less active than in earlier years. For 2013-2014, we have re-invigorated the program and currently have 15 WGS students working with three area high schools. With a new curriculum grounded in an intersectional and social justice framework and a new partnership with Metropolitan Family Services, TBTH is as vibrant as ever this year. Our increased use of social media is just one way that this program is growing and changing. Believe me - the students have to tutor me every day on the potential uses of blogs, Tumblr and the like. Each TBTH group will be ending the year with a community-based activist project; so stay tuned for our spring publicity. It would be great to have you participate in these end-of-year community events!

Our [WGS Graduate Colloquium](#) has also been in full swing this winter. At the end of January, graduate students welcomed Mariame Kaba, Founder and Director of Project NIA, to DePaul for a talk entitled *Blinders and the Tyranny of Good Intentions: How Some Feminist Anti-Violence Interventions Strengthen the Carceral State*. This colloquium generated great energy among our graduate student community, and extended to many undergraduate students, faculty, and staff as well. Moving into February, the Colloquium series will welcome Dr. Maureen Sioh from DePaul's Department of Geography. Please consider participating in this colloquium discussion on Friday, February 28 from 1-3 pm.

I'm also delighted to report that the [Building Communities, Ending Violence](#) project has been uniquely busy this quarter, sponsoring many programs and co-curricular projects. Programs include everything from the Dialogues Project, a collaboration with DePaul's Center for Intercultural Programs that builds community to address everyday racism and white privilege, to film screenings, peace circles, and strategy sessions that enrich our students' lives throughout the year. And I can't forget the quarterly Dandelions in the Concrete event, a favorite of our WGS community. Mark your calendars now for Friday, March 7 from 5-8 pm. This quarter's Dandelions event is focusing in on Warmth and Resistance! Please take a moment to read about the cutting edge projects that our [WGS senior capstone students](#) are developing. I can't imagine a better reflection of the vibrancy of our student body. Mark your calendars for Friday, March 14 at 4 pm, for a celebration and presentation of these final projects. It is sure to be a great evening for our entire community.

The list of events, accomplishments, classes and programs goes on and on! It's always so challenging to write this letter, because I have so much from which to choose, and I can only discuss a fraction of the exciting work going on in WGS. So please read through this entire newsletter, and stay in touch with our department. We are always happy to have students hanging out on the 5th floor SAC, and to be honest - we often have snacks up here for everyone's enjoyment! Don't be strangers!

On a final note, we have wonderful course offerings for spring, so drop by our office or check out our website to see what courses might be of interest to you. Sending everyone warm wishes!

Dr. Beth Catlett

ALUMNI PROFILE

MISSY FURLETTE



I graduated from DePaul in 2009 and since then have been on my journey to becoming a midwife. While at DePaul I completed my capstone thesis project titled "Queering Motherhood: Creating Space in the Reproductive Health Care System" and I continue to have a vested interest in improving maternal and child health for LGBTQIA families. I became both a birth and postpartum doula during my studies at DePaul. I participated in the V-Day College Campaign to end violence against women and girls and served as an organizer and director for three seasons from 2007-2009.

Upon completion of my undergraduate studies, I began taking prerequisites for nursing school. I moved back to my hometown of Ann Arbor, Michigan and apprenticed with a home birth practice in close by Ypsilanti, Michigan. I was admitted into University of Illinois at Chicago's Graduate Entry Nursing Program in 2012 with a concentration in Nurse Midwifery after completion of my prerequisites. Chemistry, biology, and anatomy and physiology were definitely not intuitive and took several years to complete. I desperately missed feminist theories and critical analysis (and still do).

Despite my struggles with hard sciences, I began my studies at UIC in January 2013 and will complete the pre-licensure nursing portion of the program this spring. After I pass my licensing exam to become a Registered Nurse I will begin my graduate nurse midwifery studies this fall.

I was lucky enough to reconnect with former DePaul faculty member Dr. Natalie Bennett, now Assistant Director of Gender and Women's Studies at UIC in the fall of 2012. I have participated in Gender and Women's Studies roundtables and had the privilege of serving as a mentor for the Model World Conference in January 2014. I was able to work with young women at the South Shore International Leadership Academy and helped them represent Rwanda at the conference. I currently live in Oak Park with my fiancé, Sara Koski. Sara is Head Athletic Trainer at North Central College. We are planning to marry this summer at Columbus Park Refectory.

My advice to current Women's and Gender Studies students is to follow your passions. I had a hard time trying to apply feminist studies to the very hierarchical medical system. I was only able to do so after I remembered that my feminist consciousness has taken me this far and will guide the care I provide to the women and families I serve.

Editors' note: If you have any questions for Missy about her experiences or how to transition into the medical field with a background in WGS, you can contact her at missy.furlette@gmail.com

Want to connect with more DePaul WGS Alumni? Check out the Alumni Panel!

This panel will have 4-5 participants who will speak to their current roles and responsibilities and how they obtained their current position.

Wednesday, March 5 | 6:00pm
Arts and Letters 306

RSVP to Anna Assenmacher: anna@beckresearch.org

STUDENT HEALTH ADVOCATES

STI TESTING ZINE

By Brie Goldstein

Hello WGS community! Some of you may already be familiar with Student Health Advocates (SHA), DePaul's favorite sexual health resource on campus! For those of you who aren't, we are a group of students passionate about sexual health. In the past we have tried to work with the Dean of Students to improve campus resources and response protocols for people who have experienced sexual violence. We have also done countless workshops for classes, sororities, fraternities, dorms and other student organizations on topics ranging from consent, STI and pregnancy prevention, and rape culture.

This year we have done a handful of workshops and are always looking to do more, but our main focus has shifted a little. While all the previously mentioned issues are very important to us, this year we are really trying to focus on access to safer sex resources within the DePaul community. And thanks to a very generous grant from Advocates for Youth we've been able to buy loads of condoms, dental dams and lube. If you live on campus, or often interact with big groups of people, and are interested in being a "safe site" please contact SHA so we can give you some supplies to hand out!

The other big project we are working on this year is a zine on places in the Chicago area where you can go to get tested for STIs. Since DePaul's health services are arguably inadequate for sexual health issues we wanted to let students know where else they can go for STI testing. Our plan is to get a list of local clinics, health centers or testing sites and write a little blurb about what to expect at each facility in terms of pricing, wait times, and tests offered.

We are also hoping to include peoples' personal experiences at each place. So if anyone reading this wants to tell us about your experience at a specific testing site please contact us! If the staff was extra sweet or extra mean we want to know about it. If they had bowls of free condoms or the waiting rooms were cold and had long wait times we want to know about it too! As much as listing the details about a certain clinic is helpful, we think people would really appreciate hearing more about some personal experiences. We are always happy to hear from our friends in WGS!

For free condoms, zine contributions and everything in between, contact depaulsha@gmail.com.

Be proactive about your sexual health! Save the date for DePaul University's next opportunity to get tested for HIV free of charge. Spring quarter's dates are **Wednesday, May 28th** (Loop campus) and **Thursday, May 29th** (Lincoln Park campus).

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

ACT OUT By Matthew Von Nida

Educational workshops, community service, queer discussions, attending conferences, bringing in speakers, and having fun are just a few of the ways Act Out engages the DePaul University community. Act Out is an LGBTQA activist organization that focuses on peaceful community engagement through education. Whatever a person's story is, we focus our energy on creating a safe space of inclusivity of diverse identities and intersectionalities.

Our weekly meetings consist of active conversations on topics of queer identity, gays in the media, drag history, and much more. We also come together for community engagement through service. In fall, we volunteered at The Broadway Youth Lounge where we helped create a safe space for more than fifty LGBTQA homeless youth through food and fun. We look forward to many more service opportunities this quarter and welcome everyone in the community to get involved.



Each year, Act Out takes members to conferences to expand our outside knowledge on issues affecting the LGBTQA community and beyond. This quarter we attended the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC), the largest LGBTQA college conference in the nation, and over spring break we will be going to the White Privilege Conference, which is an opportunity for Act Out members to tackle the difficult conversations of racism and intersectionality as it applies to the queer community.

Something we look forward to every year is our big drag show! Drag is not only entertaining, but has historically been an important form of queer activism, and we love being able to bring this art form to the largest Catholic university in the country! In May, we will be hosting our annual drag show with the help of Residential Education along with a Drag 101 hosted by the queens and kings themselves. The show will undoubtedly be a blast and ignite conversations of queer activism to diverse DePaul populations, so we hope to see you there!

When we're not challenging patriarchy or debating the privileged fight for marriage equality, we recuperate with Act Outings, social excursions where members can hang out and relax. Anyone and everyone is welcome!

ACT OUT meets every Wednesday at 6:00pm - 7:00pm in the Student Center room 316.

For more information, contact them at act.out.depaul@gmail.com

ON THE CUTTING EDGE

WGS SENIOR PRESENTATIONS



Leeann Hepler

Combating Sexist Gender Norms and Body Image Issues in the Classroom: Yogic and Feminist Practices for Elementary School Girls



Lizzet Proa

Neoliberal Practices in the U.S.: Latina Education



Jacq Spitzack

The Transformative Powers of Feminism: An Argument for an Interdisciplinary Approach to Oral History



Nya Brooks

The Diversity Palace: A Memoir of a Black Woman Attending a Predominantly White Institution



Katie Heinekamp

Queering Phenomenology: Creating Inclusive Space in Academic Philosophy



Samantha Grund

Contemporary Negotiations of Intersectional Identities: Reconciling Feminist Values with Jewish Cultural Integrity in a Post-Holocaust World



Kelly Przytulski

No Friend Like a Sister: Making the Case for a Feminist Approach to the Literary Canon



M. Quinn Stifler

Investigating Queer Responses to Inter-Community Violence: Transforming Theoretical Politics into Practice



Lauren Mifsud

Shut Up & Look Pretty: Debunking Wedding Culture and the "Marriage Mystique in U.S. Popular Media"



Maura Kinney

Queering Sexual Assault Prevention: What Assemblage Theory and Utopic Imaginings Have to Offer the Movement to End Sexual Violence

MARCH 14TH AT 4PM IN STUDENT CENTER 120AB



Rachel Oyelola

A Critical Analysis of Tumblr, Storytelling, and Alternative Cyber Communities



Allison Preston

Invisible Women: An Analysis on the Lack of Leadership Roles for Women in the Catholic Church



Kellye Yates

Still Not a Woman: Black Women, "Safe" Spaces, and the Myth of Progress



Olivia Reading

Straight to the Back: Bringing LGBT Individuals Back Into Focus



Clare Stuber

Inventing Virtual Autonomy: Or, How to Friend Request the Discursive Hysteric



Kyle Baroni

Revisualizing Gender and Empire: A Look at American Remakes of East Asian Horror Films



Alexandra Corwin

Women of Color Negotiating Relationships with White Men: Healing and Resistance within White Supremacist Patriarchy



Samia Akhras

Muslim Women in Post 9/11 America: Marginalized between Prejudiced Americans and Trivial Expectations from Muslim American Communities



Katie Leden

Decoding Basic Reading: What Children Really Learn When Taught Literature



Emily Fightmaster

Sex, Satire and Subversion: The Cast of *Burlesque is More* and the Radical Potential of Women in Comedy

LET'S CHECK IN

HOW DO YOU PRACTICE SELF-CARE?



"Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation and it is an act of political warfare."

Audre Lorde

"My self-care strategy usually involves spending some time at home with my cat and roommates since I'm out and about in the city so much. I like to make a relaxed homemade dinner or garden on our balcony when it's nice out. I like these activities because they feel relaxing and productive at the same time."

Brittany Boulton

WGS Graduate Student

"I remember to breathe. It's so simple, but it's often overlooked. I also love to cook and spend time with my cats."

Dr. Laiba Farah

WGS Faculty

"I always have to have an outside reading book that I can retreat to after my school work is done. It's something I started junior year and it has been so rewarding. Other than that, I like to engage in some yoga or breathing exercises and listening to Beyoncé on my floor."

Livia Harkow

WGS Undergraduate

"I head to the gym and workout like crazy to sweat out the stress."

Jacq Spitzack

WGS Undergraduate

"Love is an action, never simply a feeling."

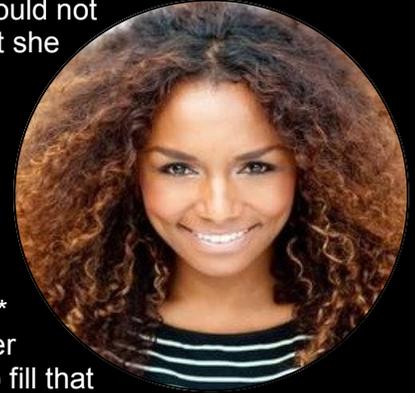
bell hooks



JANET MOCK & INCLUSIVE TRANS* COALITIONS

By Shannon Clair

A few weeks ago, trans* rights activist and author Janet Mock did two interviews with Piers Morgan. In the now infamous interviews, Morgan was extremely disrespectful, exemplifying the way that trans* women of color are constantly attacked, even from people who proclaim themselves 'allies'. Yet despite all this, Mock handled the situation with a powerful grace and eloquence, something I know I would not have been able to do. During Mock's recent talk at DePaul, a student asked what she thought of Morgan's "cisphobia" tweet. Mock responded that because a rich white cis male took a story about her, a trans* woman of color, and made it about himself, that she wants to move forward, shifting the conversation away from him and back to the issues that matter. And to respect her wishes, I will do the same.



I recently had the pleasure of meeting Janet Mock, not once, but twice! First at the Midwestern Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC) in Kansas City, MO, and a second time here at DePaul. As a trans* activist, meeting Janet Mock was like a dream come true. Growing up, Mock never heard stories about successful trans* women of color; she wants her story to help fill that void. Hearing Mock share part of her story, and seeing how incredibly successful she has become was so inspiring. Mock, along with other activists like Laverne Cox, are creating the visibility that the trans* community needs; role models, or in the words of Cox, "possibility models," for young women of color, cis and trans* alike.

After hearing her speak the first time, I waited in the ridiculously long line in the Kansas City Convention Center to meet Mock and get my copy of her book *Redefining Realness* signed. As I waited, I thought of all of the questions I had and the things I wanted to tell her. When I spoke to Mock, I introduced myself as a DePaul student that is trans* identified and involved on campus. I sought her advice on how to handle the problems facing DePaul's trans* community, such as the lack of bathroom access for trans* students. She gave me encouragement, advice, and a lot to keep me thinking until our next meeting.

A few days later, after her talk at DePaul, I lingered in the area where she was signing books, waiting for the line to die down so I could ask Mock a few more questions. I went up to her and the first thing she said to me was, "Didn't I just meet you this weekend?" I had clearly made some kind of impression. At this moment, I finally asked her the question that has been on my mind all quarter: Trans* spaces in Chicago are dominated by Female Assigned At Birth (FAAB), mostly masculine presenting/identified trans* people, and the majority of those folks are white. DePaul's trans* group, Trans*(formation) DePaul, is no exception to this standard. Of the 4 e-board members, 2 are cisgender females, 2 are FAAB trans* and identify with some sort of masculine identity, and all four of us are white. How do we change the face of a community that has already been established? How do we make trans* communities more inclusive? There are trans* women, MAAB (male assigned at birth) trans* folks, and trans* people of color here at DePaul, yet our group unintentionally lacks this diverse range of voices. As a Trans*(formation) e-board member, I want to make sure that our organization is inclusive and representative of a range of trans* experiences. Yet how do we balance wanting to be inclusive with tokenizing those we are trying to include?

Unfortunately there is no clear answer to this problem right now. But Mock left me with some words of wisdom: the key is to create conversation. Reach out to those groups. Find common struggle, but also listen to the specific needs of that community and see how you can help.

I'm not the only one asking this question, and Chicago is not the only trans* community facing this issue. I am encouraged to know that this conversation is happening, and that things *are* changing. Chicago's segregated communities and our own segregated DePaul community do not make creating inclusive trans* coalitions easy, but that's not stopping Chicago activists, myself included, from trying.

**BEFORE
BIRTH, I WAS
TAUGHT TO
HATE WOMEN**
amanda owens



amanda is a survivor, advocate, queer coffee-enthusiast, and writer that is navigating a myriad of realities in a society that hides behind a curtain of falsified perfection.

Discover more of her writing at
aoawaywego.wordpress.com

I carried a torch
Scratching my way from the womb
With fingernails yet grown
As they told me to smile
In gratitude
For a harsh world
Almost eating my newborn soul
Wiping my mother's blood
On tired lips
For an unrivaled fierceness
Since they warned her:
*She's a ticking time bomb;
You pay for your raising.*
And she smiled with joy
Because rewritten stories are sweeter
In the florescent lights
Of hospital halls
She's alive, she's alive
Cried with joy
To the beat of a tambourine
That haunts a curve toward
Faint fear
That we cannot live under
The same roof
Because that breath
Might force us to explode
With the curiosity of
what if I had left her there
With blue lips
Flanked by dimples
Unmarred by scars
That halve a heart
And still perfect body
Too young to die
Said no one
Said everyone
*You'll sully your dress
You'll sully our name
Be a girl
Sit still
Cross your legs
Be better at carrying your shame*

It's a competition,
Didn't you know?
The heavier the purse
The prettier the face
Aren't you glad you are alive?
I'll always love you
Though dirt has replaced
Where I bled you dry
Scraping my mother's blood
On tired wood
For a modeled coarseness
Since they warned her:
*Her heart will fail her;
Her heart will fail you, as well.*
And she curled
Her body around the ideal
Until sincere suffocation
was the only clear ending.
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Student Coalition Against Sexual Assault

In response to the recent surge of sexual assaults on campus, a new student coalition has formed to address sexual violence at DePaul.

The coalition is particularly interested in addressing sexual assault in campus housing, mandating a consent workshop for new students, and addressing how Public Safety and DePaul administration handle sexual assault.

For more information or to get involved, contact Sam Lowy at sjlowy@gmail.com

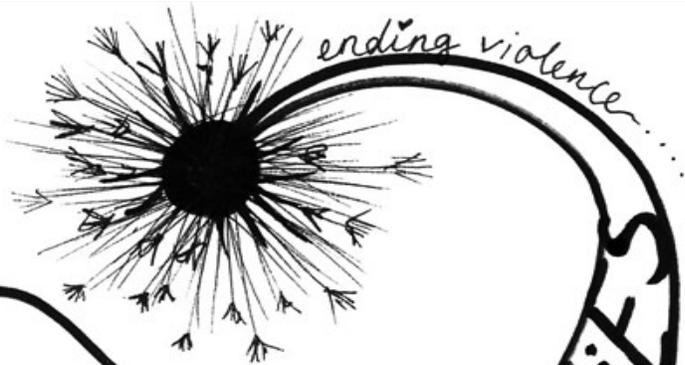
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UPCOMING EVENTS

More than a Month

“Should Black History Month be ended?” That’s the question put forth by African-American film maker Shukree Hassan Tilghman as he travels the country interviewing people from all walks of life.

Friday, February 28 | 3:00pm - 5:00pm
The Theatre School

Women’s History Month Lecture:

Alexis Pauline Gumbs

Black Feminist Breathing: June Jordan, Audre Lorde, and a Technology for Black Feminist Encounter Across Time, Difference and Death

Tuesday, March 4 | 6:30pm
Student Center Room 120

“La Nueva Chicana”:

Women in the Chicano Movement

A lecture from Dr. Vicki Ruiz, Professor of History and Chicano/Latino Studies at the University of California Irvine.

Wednesday, March 5 | 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Library 300 | Lunch Provided

Dandelions in the Concrete

Building Communities Ending Violence’s quarterly community building night. With arts and crafts, storytelling, self care practices, food, and performances, this is a great way to meet new people, and contribute to peace building and healing within our communities.

Friday, March 7 | 5:00pm
SAC “Pit”

Where and When I Enter:

Intersectionality, African-American Women and Higher Education

Venus Evans-Winters, Ph.D., professor and noted author, evaluates the education, relationships and mentorship of African-American women in the higher education arena.

Thursday, March 13 | 4:00pm - 5:30pm
Loop: DePaul Center, North Cafe

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