

studies

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Feminisms and Justice Highlight Annual Conference

"Feminisms and Justice" is the theme for the Women's Studies 2007 Conference.

The conference begins on Thursday, March 1, at the School of Law Auditorium with a community panel at 3 p.m., followed by a 5 p.m. keynote address presented by The Honorable Nancy Gertner, Judge, United States District Court, District of Massachusetts. The title of Judge Gertner's lecture is "The New Feminine Mystique: Work and Family Collisions."

Friday, March 2, day two of the conference, begins at 9:30 a.m. with concurrent paper sessions at the Daniel Management Center, Moore School of Business. The annual awards presentation luncheon will be held in the Campus Room of Capstone House and features the 2007 Abney Award Lecture by Dawn Hunter, assistant professor of art. She will present her project *Spectacle Spectacular*, a traveling exhibition. By reconceptualizing two decades of American *Vogue* magazines (1980–2000), Hunter has developed a visual investigation and critique of its influence within mass culture and the power of fashion photography to cultivate and promote a "pop culture" body image.

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Judge Nancy Gertner Presents Keynote Address



Judge Nancy Gertner

The Honorable Nancy Gertner, Judge, United States District Court, District of Massachusetts, will present the keynote address for the 20th Annual Women's Studies Conference on Thursday, March 1, at 5 p.m., in the School of Law Auditorium.

In 1975, when Judge Gertner ('67) began her career as a criminal defense lawyer, she was one of very few women in the field. Her first major case captured national headlines: she defended Susan Saxe, one of three radical antiwar activists who had robbed a bank five years before, resulting in the murder of a Boston police officer. The press skewered Saxe, who had been on the run. The sensational case resulted in a mistrial and a plea to lesser charges. Gertner would go on to build a reputation as an advocate in significant cases affecting women, minorities, and the poor.

Over the next two decades, Gertner continued to make headlines in controversial criminal and civil-rights cases. With her husband, John Reinstein, she litigated every abortion case in Massachusetts. Their efforts culminated in *Moe v. Secretary of Administration and Finance*, which situated the right to choose under the Massachusetts constitution. As a result, if *Roe v. Wade* is overruled, it will not affect Massachusetts' abortion law.

Gertner also challenged Medicaid limitations on funding for abortions, represented the Concerned Black Educators in the Boston school desegregation case, and took on one of the first sexual discrimination class actions to be brought against an academic institution. "Representing women who sued universities became a specialty of mine," Gertner says, having brought seven major universities to court in female faculty tenure cases and consulted on countless others.

During those years, Gertner never thought she would be picked for the federal bench, believing that her advocacy in civil rights and other controversial cases would eliminate her from consideration. "I was the reverse of those who keep their heads down for years in order to preserve their chances on the bench," she said.

Her work on behalf of women, minorities, and the poor caught the attention of her Yale Law School classmate Bill Clin-

Keynote Address continued on page 4

Director's Comments: Transitions and Community



Dr. Lynn Weber, WOST director

I have had the good fortune to spend the last 25 years leading interdisciplinary women- and gender-focused academic units—14 years as co-founder and director of the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis and 11 years as director of women's studies at USC. But I recently realized that this comment to the women's studies community will be the last of more than 50 such comments I have written during these years.

My career has been devoted to promoting understanding about the diversity of women's experiences across race, class, sexuality, and nation; about the fundamental gender relationships that shape our lives; and about promoting social action to challenge injustice. And in women's studies at USC, I have found a large community of dedicated scholars, teachers, students, and community members who have shared my commitments and with whom I have had the pleasure of working.

I've worked with people across the broadest spectrum of disciplinary boundaries and political perspectives. Few other administrative positions in a university provide access to the actual work that faculty and students are engaging in daily across the entire university community and to the realities of the contexts within which that work is done. But some of what I see in bold relief from this position is how constraining the theories, methods, ideologies, policies, and practices of the traditional disciplines and the departmental structure of universities can be to promoting innovative

and complex approaches to some of the most difficult challenges of our times.

Over the last few years, as I thought about my own future at USC, one of my great fears was that becoming a joint appointment faculty member—like the rest of my women's studies colleagues—would mean moving into a department, *any department*. I did not relish the thought of being constrained in my work by the intellectual and institutional boundaries that disciplines and departments typically impose and that women's studies actively seeks to transcend. But from my position, I have also had the opportunity to consider different sites to see where my interdisciplinary intersectional and social justice-oriented scholarship can flourish in the future—and next fall my 50/50 joint appointment will be with women's studies and the Department of Psychology.

I am very excited about the work that lies ahead for me. For all its many opportunities, administration—even in women's studies—affords a more distant form of engagement with the research projects and social action that have always driven me. Recently, Heidi Hartman—the economist who founded and has led the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington for many years—and I were reflecting on our decades of work to improve the status of women. We were each pleased with the progress that has been made, but we each concluded that it is time for new insights and understandings, new strategies for change. My own search will take me down several new paths: a research collaborative with Susan Cutter in the Department of Geography and several other colleagues on inequalities in the recovery process from Hurricane Katrina along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, a project on Columbia's residents who were displaced by the hurricane, and work with my WOST colleagues on the West Columbia research and action project on empowerment among women and girls.

One of my reasons for stepping down at this time is so that someone else can share this unique opportunity to lead such a dynamic program and to work with such wonderful colleagues on the Columbia campus and across the state. Our core faculty members are an amazing group of dedicated, brilliant, hard-

working scholar/teacher/activists who get things done and have a good time doing so. Our faculty affiliates and community partners support the program and the director in innumerable ways.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure I have had as director of WOST is being able *every day* to walk into a workplace that is uplifting and fun and as efficient and effective as any operation you could find. This work environment has been largely shaped by Rosa Thorn, our program coordinator, who is brilliant, savvy, humorous, and, quite simply, full of grace. Jackie McClary remains cheerful and pleasant even when the bureaucratic demands are at their most insane, and our colleagues across the hall in African American studies, Cleve Sellers, Carolyn Sutton, and their staffs and faculty, are the best of allies and friends.

I leave this position grateful for all the good relationships that have sustained me and the program for the past 11 years, excited about my new work and role, and optimistic that our next leader, enjoying the same support, will help us find new ideas and strategies that will significantly improve the status of women in South Carolina and beyond. ■

For a more detailed discussion, see Lynn Weber's essay "Advancing Women in Higher Education: What It Means, How We Do It," at www.cas.sc.edu/wost/people/wostfaculty/facbios/weber.html.

Feminisms and Justice

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The community panel and keynote lecture on Thursday, March 1, are free and open to the public. A registration fee is required for conference attendance on Friday, March 2 (\$40 general registration; \$20 student registration—including materials, luncheon, and receptions). Registration forms are available in the Women's Studies Program Office, 201 Flinn Hall and on the Women's Studies Web site www.cas.sc.edu/WOST. For more information, please call the Women's Studies Office at 803-777-4007. ■

WOST Welcomes New Staff Members

The Women's Well-Being Initiative welcomes two key leaders to our team: Carol Wyatt as project coordinator for the West Columbia Initiative and Cheryl Wilson Worrell, grants manager. Carol will plan, develop, and promote involvement in community-based participatory research in West Columbia. Cheryl will facilitate the development and management of the program's grant activities.

Carol comes to WOST after serving as executive director of Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands for the past seven years. As an undergraduate she concentrated her interdisciplinary studies degree in the Women's Studies Program, and she was a recipient of the Arney Robinson Childs undergraduate student award in 1993. She received a Master's in Education in Higher Education Administration in 1995 and a Master of Social Work in 1997 and is a licensed therapist. Carol grew up and lived in the Cayce/West Columbia area for more than 40 years and worked in The Graduate School at the University for several years before leaving to pursue graduate study full-time.

Cheryl is a graduate of Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Va. There she received her undergraduate degree in psychology with a concentration in mental health. In 2002, she received a Master of Public Administration degree from George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. She has many years of experience working at the local, state, and federal levels of government in various human-services positions. She most recently served as a management analyst for the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, focusing on issues related to the lives of people with physical and/or sensory disabilities. During Cheryl's career, she has worked as a regulator, advocate, and administrator and has written many community-targeted funding and grant proposals. ■



Welcome to WOST, Carol and Cheryl!

Kudos



Tawanda Greer

Dr. Tawanda M. Greer, Women's Studies Program and Department of Psychology, has conducted a study titled "Stress and Coping Processes Among African-American College Students." The study will be published in the *Journal of College Student Development* June/July 2007 issue.

Key findings of the study were that minority status stressors (e.g., racism, discrimination, few courses reflecting

black culture and heritage, few black faculty mentors) negatively impacted academic performance (i.e., GPA) for black students at predominantly white universities. Coping was also examined, and efforts that would generally be considered adaptive, such as using social support or attempting to problem solve, did little to reduce the negative impact of minority status stress on GPA. These findings attest to the strong influence of minority status stress and campus racial hostility on academic performance.



Ann Ramsdell

Dr. Ann Ramsdell, Women's Studies Program, School of Medicine, and Medical University of South Carolina, received a School of Medicine Research Advancement Award (November 2006) for recognition of "outstanding contributions to new scientific knowledge through research."

Congratulations to Dr. Greer and Dr. Ramsdell. ■



Nicole Parren

WOST Alumni News

Nicole Parren, 2003 women's studies graduate, is a third-year teacher at Kaiyuan International School in Jinan, Chandong Province, China. She plans to reside in China through the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Congratulations Nicole! ■

WOST Undergraduate Program



Dr. Laura R. Woliver

The women's studies undergraduate program continues to thrive and flourishes with many majors, minors, and high enrollments. Our internship program has become very popular and

is very well received. A diverse array of undergraduates completed their internships at agencies and nonprofit organizations focused on ameliorating the hardships for women and their families in domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness, and lack of access to needed health care.

Fall 2006:

Peel, Amanda: City of Columbia Housing Authority, Columbia, S.C.

Satterfield, Melissa: Lexington County Sheriff's Department, Lexington, S.C.

Spencer, Jeniaka: Union County Pregnancy Center, Union, S.C.

Summer II, 2006:

Elmore, Ebony: HOPE Worldwide, Columbia, S.C.

Johnson, Kimberly: Turbeville Correctional Institution, Turbeville, S.C.

Williamson, Mollie: S.C. Equality Coalition, Columbia, S.C.

Summer I, 2006:

Abrams, Meg (Mary): Killingsworth Women's Shelter, Columbia, S.C.

Spring 2006:

Bullock, Alyson: American Cancer Society; Columbia, S.C.

Cole, Tiernan: English Programs for Internationals, USC Columbia

Drew, Laura J.: South Carolina Fair Share, Columbia, S.C.

Fry, Kacie: Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands, Columbia, S.C.

Galloway, Christopher: S.C. Dept of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services; Columbia, S.C.

Lee, Melissa: CASA, Guardian Ad Litem, Richland County, Columbia, S.C.

Rabieh, Sara: Sexual Health and Violence Prevention, USC Columbia

Rhodes, Heidi: Military Order of the Purple Heart, S.C. Chapter, Columbia, S.C.

Stenson, Lindsey: Sistercare, Columbia, S.C.

Wolffe, Courtney: CASA, Guardian Ad Litem, Richland County, Columbia, S.C.

Our interns are wonderful outreach agents for the Women's Studies Program and to the Midlands community. Each one has earned laudatory praise from their on-site supervisors. We appreciate all the agencies and organizations that host and supervise our interns. ■

WOST Graduate Program



DeAnne Hillinger Messias

I am pleased to report that our Women's Studies Graduate Certificate Program is, as always, a vibrant and exciting place to be! For the 2006 summer and fall

semesters we enrolled a record number of 12 new graduate certificate students. In December, four students graduated, raising to a total of seven the number of WOST certificate graduates in 2006. Completing the certificate program in December were Jessica Labbé, Keri Norris, Marya Shegog, and Christine Sixta. Congratulations, graduates!

Our graduate students are actively engaged in independent scholarship. The winners of the fall 2006 Harriott Hampton Faucette Award for Women's Studies Graduate Students were **Sara Marie Eye** and **Shawn M. Coyne**. Each student received a \$500 award to be applied to her research. Shawn is a WOST graduate certificate student and a doctoral student in community psychology. As part of her research on gender roles and sexism, Shawn is conducting a comparative study of existing gender role/sexism scales. Sara Eye is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History and will use her award to further her dissertation research, "Private Lives behind Public Battles: South Carolina Women during the Civil War and Reconstruction." She is examining the Southern Claims Commission Records at the National Archives in College Park, Md., to locate records of black women who, after the defeat of the Confederacy, sought compensation for property lost to federal forces.

The Women's Studies Program supported two certificate students with Graduate Student Travel Grants last fall. **Mekell Mikell** presented a paper, "Tangled Webs: International Cooperation within Terrorist Networks," at the International Studies Association Southern Regional Conference in Birmingham, Ala. **Kelsey Hanrahan** used her award to attend the 39th Annual Chacmool Conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where she presented her paper "The Legacy of Colonialism: Tradition and Identity Among the Konkomba of Northern Ghana."

Our graduate students appreciate your support. ■

Keynote Address

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ton, whom she had known, along with Hillary Clinton, at Yale. Gertner and Mrs. Clinton had been close, and the two stayed in touch over the years. In 1994, Clinton nominated Gertner for the U.S. Federal Court, District of Massachusetts. She had a powerful patron in the confirmation process—U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., a lifelong supporter of civil rights.

Honored in spring 2002 by the American Bar Association as a "human rights hero," Gertner was an activist even as a college student; she was president of the Undergraduate Association at Barnard College and joined marches and protests against the Vietnam War.

Gertner recently wrote a memoir titled *Lawyer with the Red Dress On* that focuses on what she calls her "improbable career"

building a high-profile, controversial legal career, which culminated in her appointment as a federal judge. Gertner has taught at Harvard University, Boston College, the University of Arizona, and Boston University. "There was always this dialectic between my academic ambitions and my practice life," she recalled.

She has managed to maintain another delicate balance: that between work and family. "Menopause and birth were neck-and-neck," Gertner says of her pregnancies at ages 39 and 41. "I feel privileged that I could have children, but I had so much to do before I could even envision myself ready." Gertner and her husband, current legal director of the Massachusetts ACLU, have three children. ■

Fall Semester Highlights



Affiliate faculty and women's studies students convene in Flinn Hall.



The WOST Graduate Students Research Series Lecture, "Students Creating New Knowledge," is a popular event.



Fellowship, food, and fun highlight the annual Women's Studies Faculty, Staff, and Students Holiday Luncheon.

See our spring 2007 calendar of events on page 7.

More Fall Semester Highlights



Left to right: Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Portia Cobb; and Lynn Weber, director, Women's Studies Program



Portia Cobb, associate professor, Department of Film, and director of the community media project, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, presented the 2006 Adrenée Glover Freeman Lecture in African American Women's Studies.



Columbia's Sesquicentennial State Park provided the perfect backdrop for our retreat.



At our WOST Annual Affiliate Faculty Retreat, participants connect across disciplines in the areas of interdisciplinary and collaborative research, teaching, and professional development.

Mark your calendar for these spring 2007 events!

Women's Studies Program 20th Annual Conference

Theme: "Feminisms and Justice"

Thursday, March 1, 2007

3 p.m. Community Panel,
School of Law Auditorium

5 p.m. Keynote Lecture,
School of Law Auditorium

Title: "The New Feminine Mystique:
Work and Family Collisions"

Speaker: The Honorable Nancy
Gertner, Judge

United States District Court
District of Massachusetts

Friday, March 2, 2007

9:30 a.m. Concurrent Paper Sessions
Daniel Management Center
Eighth Floor, Moore School of
Business

12:30 p.m. Josephine Abney Award
Lecture, Campus Room, Capstone
House

Exhibition: Spectacle Spectacular
Speaker: Dawn Hunter, Assistant
Professor of Art

2:45 p.m. Concurrent Paper Sessions
Daniel Management Center
Eighth Floor, Moore School
of Business

4:30 p.m. Closing Reception
Daniel Management Center
Eighth Floor, Moore School
of Business

Research Series Lectures (receptions will follow)

**Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007, 3:30 p.m., BA
Building, Room 008**

Title: "Situating Identidad de la Mujer
Negra: Feminism, the Cultural
Construction of Gender, and
the Emergence of a Black
Women's Movement in the
Dominican Republic"

Speaker: Kimberly Elson Simmons,
Ph.D., African American Studies
Program and Department of
Anthropology

**Wednesday, March 7, 2007, 3:30 p.m.,
Gambrell Hall, Room 250**

"Students Creating New Knowledge"
Women's Studies Graduate
Students' Panel

**Wednesday, March 28, 2007, 3:30 p.m.,
Gambrell Hall, Room 250**

Title: "Narratives on Race, Gender,
and Civil Rights: Listening to the
Voices of Older African-American
Women"

Speaker: Sadye L.M. Logan, DSW,
LISW-CP, I. DeQuincey Newman
Professor, College of Social Work

**March is University-wide Women's
History Month, coordinated by the
Women's Studies Program and the
Office of Women Student Services.**

If you are sponsoring an event and/
or would like to cosponsor an event,
please e-mail Rosa Thorn at thorn@gwm.sc.edu.

Mission Statement

University of South Carolina Women's Studies Program

Women's studies at the University of South Carolina promotes understanding of the diverse array of women's experiences through a complete program of teaching, research, and service to the University, the local community, the state, and the nation. Through its teaching mission, women's studies shares this knowledge with students so that they learn to think critically, to communicate effectively, to solve problems, and to interpret human experience. Through its research mission, women's studies reconceptualizes existing knowledge and creates new knowledge through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. Emerging from an activist tradition, women's studies serves University, local, state, and national communities by acting as a resource and guide for issues related to women and gender. Our teaching, research, and service missions interweave as we create, share, and apply knowledge, skills, and values that promote the full participation of women in society. At the core of the work of women's studies teaching and research at the University of South Carolina are broad but fundamental questions that drive examinations of the intersections of race, gender, ethnicity, and other dimensions of inequality. ■

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