I’m writing this on a beautiful spring afternoon, my mood boosted as we near the end of an academic year that could have been so much worse than it was! Last fall WGSS nightmared apocalyptic scenarios featuring departmental death-by-budget-starvation and other consummations devoutly to be avoided. It hasn’t been pretty raising class sizes to the bursting point and losing two-thirds of our operating budget, but we have made it through the year. We still have a viable and impressive MA program, we expect an infusion of new faculty next year (goddess willing and if the crick don’t rise), and WGSS has shown herself to be a place both students and faculty regard as attractive and desirable.

One reason WGSS has emerged relatively unscathed from this difficult year has been our Taft affiliation. You may remember that a year ago in Genderline I happily announced that WGSS had been admitted, along with Africana and Judaic Studies, to the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center. Our Taft membership began on September 1, 2010, and we have already greatly benefited from it. The Taft Foundation supported:

- Nancy Fraser’s lecture, part of the ReGeneration series organized by Adrian Parr
- Partial stipend (thus, partial UGS funding) for an MA student
- Keynote speaker Andi Zeisler at the Pop Praxis conference
- International Research Travel grants for Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama and Adrian Parr
  - Domestic Travel grants for several faculty
  - Amy Lind as a Taft Fellow, for the academic year 2011-12

In return for this largesse, several WGSS faculty members have volunteered their time to Taft. Anne Runyan serves on the Taft Board, Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama on the Travel committee and Deb Meem on the Competitive Lectures & Conferences committee.

A group of WGSS faculty and other participants is gearing up to participate in a grant project through COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning). Led by Anne Runyan, this group includes WGSS faculty member Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama, Marianne Marchand from UDLA (Puebla, Mexico), IT analyst Carolyn Stoll, and Director of International Programming Kurt Olausen. Through COIL and its related Institute for Globally Networked Learning in the Humanities, these partners will create online courses in the area of transnational gender studies. In future years they hope to collaborate with North American Women’s Studies (NAWS) or the Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in expanding this work.

A year ago I wrote of our “probable move from Old Chemistry Hall to French Hall.” Indeed WGSS packed ourselves up and moved last September, and we now inhabit the southeast corner of the third floor in French. A major shout-out goes to Molly Russell, Jayme Hughes, Kayte Gilmore, and Jessica Landis for heroic labor during the pack-move-unpack process. WGSS has now migrated from McMicken to Old Chem to French in eight years. As they say, three moves is as good as a fire, and we seized this unsought opportunity to downsize and organize. There is more work yet to do, however. Beginning this July, our French Hall area will be under construction. The end result will be a much improved work space for graduate students, and a central departmental suite, which we will share with Africana and Judaic Studies.

WGSS welcomes a number of new affiliate faculty members this year: Shailaja Paik from History; Sarah Whitton from Psychology; Mary Brydon-Miller from Ed Studies and Urban Educational Leadership; Danielle Bessett from Sociology; Lee Person from English and the Dean’s office; Stephanie Sadre-Oraifai from Anthropology; and Josh Chambers-Letson and Furaha Norton from English. We are glad to have so powerful an infusion of intellectual activity in our ranks.

Finally, let me mark the passing of three stalwart WGSS supporters. This year we have lost Marquita McLean, a member of the Friends of Women’s Studies since its first years and a major donor to the capital campaign for the endowed chair; Dr. Robert Howe, whose family established the department’s scholarship for Returning Women Students; and Margery Wing Sisson Runyan who, together with her daughter (and our faculty member) Anne, set up multiple endowed funds for travel and other departmental needs. WGSS will miss them all, and we owe a profound debt of gratitude to them and their families.

— Deb Meem
Lisa Hogeland, undergraduate program director

First of all, I want to say what a pleasure it’s been to advise our undergraduate majors and minors! WGSS students are smart and talented, interesting and interested, and committed to social justice and social change. This is a challenging time for our work, and I believe we’re up to it.

Even in this challenging time, our number of majors and minors continues to grow. We’ll graduate 16 students this spring – half majors and half minors – and I’ve already met with several first-year undergraduates who want to declare a WGSS major or minor. I attribute the growth among first-year students to our talented graduate students who teach Introduction to Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies so well; they are our best recruiters. Or perhaps our best recruiters are our undergraduate students themselves, who take their excitement about their classes all around the university.

Finally, I should announce that I’ll serve one more year as interim undergraduate director, and finish up our preparations for semesters the following year.

faculty updates


Amy Lind (WGSS) continues to serve as WGSS graduate director. Her edited volume, Development, Sexual Rights and Global Governance (Routledge) came out in 2010, and she has given several presentations at universities and conferences based on the book, including at the University of Toronto, York University, and a keynote at Columbia University. She is looking forward to next year, as she has been selected as a 2011-2012 Taft Center Fellow, which allows her to take a leave from teaching and administrative work to complete her book project, “Governing Sexuality: Development, Family Norms and the Struggle for Sexual Rights in Ecuador.”

Deb Meem (WGSS) has continued to work on Victorian journalist/novelist Eliza Lynn Linton. Her most recent work is her edition of the 1851 novel Realities. Deb’s Valancourt edition appeared in 2010. Together with grad student Kate Holterhoff, Deb is now working on an edition of Linton’s The Autobiography of Christopher Kirkl and (1885), her own autobiography written in a male persona.

Adrian Parr (WGSS, SAID) in collaboration with Michael Zaretsky published an anthology entitled: New Directions in Sustainable Design (Routledge, 2010). The book describes a variety of new ways to approach sustainable design and it equips the next generation of designers with necessary conceptual tools for thinking sustainably. Bringing together a series of well-known authors in contemporary philosophy with established practitioners of sustainable design, this book develops a coherent theoretical framework for how theories of sustainability might engage with the growing practice of design. Also in 2010, Parr published a revised and expanded edition of The Deleuze Dictionary (Edinburgh University Press, 2010). She also received a grant from the Faculty Development Council to develop and organize a university-wide speaker series: ReGeneration. Speakers included: the vice president of policy from the Pew Center for Climate Change, the director of the Biomimicry Institute, the founder and executive director of the International Women’s Coffee Alliance, the director of Living Routes ecovillages, animal liberation activist and scholar Marti Kheel, and lastly, with the support of the Taft Center for Research, Henry A. and Louise Loeb Professor of Political and Social Science at the New School, Nancy Fraser.

Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama (WGSS) taught a freshman course titled “Work-Family Conflict”, various sections of the third-year undergraduate course “Women and the Law,” and the undergraduate and graduate seminar titled “International Women’s Human Rights.” She also presented her research findings on the relations between militarization, the global trading system and women’s rights in Colombia at the International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association in Toronto, Canada, as well as the National Women Studies Association conference in Denver, Colorado. Based on recent fieldwork findings, Dr. Sanmiguel-Valderrama is also working hard on revising her upcoming book, tentatively titled No Roses Without Thorns: Trade, Militarization, and Human Rights in the Production and Export of Colombian Flowers. This book project is being supported by two grants that Dr. Sanmiguel-Valderrama won this academic year, one from UC’s University Research Council, and the other from the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center.

Professor Emerita of History (and Friends of WS Board Member) Barbara Ramusack and Professor of WGSS Anne Sisson Runyan at the Friends Fall Reception October 2010.


### New Graduate Students

**B Carbonara** joins the WGSS MA program from the great city of Chicago, Illinois. In May 2010 she graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a BS in psychology and a BA in gender and women's studies. She proudly takes part in the UC community working as the graduate coordinator of LGBTQ Programming and Education for the LGBTQ Center. Her research centers upon critical race and gender studies, body and identity politics, feminist and queer theory, and minority health and policy.

**John Fremli** is originally from Springfield, Illinois and graduated from Illinois College in Jacksonville in 2007 with a BA in German, religion, and gender and women's studies. While enrolled at Illinois College, he received full funding from the German government to study abroad for one academic year in Tuebingen, Germany, where he conducted research on the experience of homosexuals in a variety of different German churches. His current academic interests include queer theory, postcolonial feminisms, feminist and queer theologies, and pop culture studies. He is currently considering the possibility of studying queer Catholic activism for his MA final project.

**Sonnet Seeborg Gabbard** graduated from Butler University (Indianapolis) with a BA in political science in 2005. As an undergrad, Sonnet traveled to the Balkans to study peace and transformation from a feminist perspective. Following graduation, Sonnet worked as an organizer, activist, and communications and campaign director for a variety of issue-based social justice movements in Philadelphia and San Francisco. Sonnet returned to the Midwest after six years to join the WGSS program, hoping to further her passion for social justice through scholarship. She plans on returning to the Balkans in July 2011 to conduct field research for her final project, which focuses on transitional governance, nationalism, homophobia, and gender and sexual violence in Serbia and Montenegro. Sonnet's other research areas of interest include feminist security studies, performativity and disability studies, and the intersections of disability and reproductive justice.

**Caroline Hyatt** attended the University of Cincinnati as an undergraduate where she majored in international affairs and earned certificates in Asian Studies and in international human rights. She is currently continuing her education at the University of Cincinnati in the MA/ JD joint degree program, where she studies both in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department and the law school. Her academic interests primarily involve better understanding the interactions between gender, sexuality, and the law, as well as complicating heterosexual women's relationship with pornography.

**Sarah Maguire** is a 2008 graduate from the University of Cincinnati with a BA in English Literature. She began her career at UC in the interior design program in the College of DAAP but after three years decided that design just wasn’t for her. She was given the opportunity to co-op in Atlanta, GA and New York City though, so she does not regret pursuing her initial interest. During her time spent in the English department she focused many of her literary analyses on women authors and depictions of women in literature, leading to her decision to join the WGSS MA program at UC. Her research continues to focus on the intermingling of feminist theory and literary analysis, which is currently present in her study on Virginia Woolf and the use of diary and letter writing as a way to cope with mental illness. Sarah is currently the graduate assistant for the WGSS Graduate Program and also works at UC’s Langsam Library. She is always happy to help others navigate the labyrinth of library world!

**Rachel Nickens**, a native of Tallahassee, Florida, dreamed of “running away with the circus,” but didn’t get very far, instead attending Florida State University, where she received her BA in women’s studies and international affairs (plus an honors certificate in human rights), and performed as part of the Flying High Circus. Her academic interests include gender performance in circus and sports, pop culture and media, and transgender studies. Rachel’s current research explores women’s empowerment through the sport of roller derby, and this may become her thesis topic.

**Courtney Reynolds** graduated from the University of Kentucky, minoring in women’s studies, and majoring in English Literature, with an emphasis on creative writing, with Gurney Norman (Kentucky’s Poet Laureate) as her mentor. She is in her first year of the MA program in women’s, gender and sexuality studies. She has worked with IRRAD, an NGO based in Gurgaon, India where she studied the effects of globalization on rural farming cultures outside of Delhi and hopes to return to complete her research. Courtney’s other interests include reproductive rights and justice, the role of motherhood in a globalized world, post-colonial ramifications in the Caribbean and LGBTQ movements in the Caribbean. Courtney has also interned with Planned Parenthood of the Bluegrass, worked with the St. Croix Women’s Coalition & Shelter in the Virgin Islands, and lobbied on behalf of the ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project. Currently, she is working with Ohio Youth Advocates where she participates in sexual education workshops and blogs for Amplify, while also serving as teaching assistant for human sexuality.

**Lee Serbin** is currently pursuing an MA in women’s, gender and sexuality studies and a law degree through the joint MA/JD program at the University of Cincinnati. Lee graduated from The Ohio State University where she double majored in sociology and women’s studies. Lee’s areas of interest include visual and popular culture, environmental justice and sustainability, as well as feminist legal studies.

### First-Year MA Students

*Back to front: Rachel Nickens, Sonnet Seeborg-Gabbard, Courtney Reynolds, John Fremli, Sarah Maguire, B Carbonara, Lee Serbin, Caroline Hyatt*

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**First-year MA students**

- Rachel Nickens, Sonnet Seeborg-Gabbard, Courtney Reynolds, John Fremli, Sarah Maguire, B Carbonara, Lee Serbin, Caroline Hyatt

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graduate certificate students

Becky Bridgman, PhD student (Education)
Marie-Luise Buesch, PhD student (German)
Jacque Daugherty, PhD student (Educational Studies)
Jennifer Dye, JD/PhD student (Law & Political Science)
Maryam Fotouhi, MS student (Architecture)
Elizabeth Harmon, PhD student (English & Comparative Literature)
Sarah Mitchell, MA student (English & Comparative Literature)
Ethan Philbrick, MA student (English & Comparative Literature)
Jenna Schroer, MM student (Voice)
Priyanka Srivastava, PhD student (History)
Helen Turner, MS student (Architecture)
Ruth Williams, PhD student (English Literature & Creative Writing)

Joint Philosophy PhD and WGSS MA: Ayca Mazman

second-year MA students

Back: Angela Zippin, Kayte Gilmore, Jessica Landis
Front: Jayme Hughes, Krystal Cleary, Christina Black.
[not pictured Connie Underwood]

graduating MA students

Christina Black is completing an MA project titled “Beyond the Knapsack: Critical Approaches to Whiteness in the Women’s Studies Curriculum.” Her MA project focuses on pedagogical and curricular approaches to whiteness in women’s studies, particularly examining how introductory women’s studies curricula are situated within broader cultural narratives of whiteness. After graduation, Christina is seeking work in higher ed or the non-profit sector.

Krystal Cleary interviewed nine physically impaired motorcyclists for her MA project, titled “When the Bike(r) Breaks Down: Masculinity and Disability in the American Motorcycle Subculture.” Her paper focuses on how men with physical impairments negotiate the intersections of masculinity and disability, as well as their use of the body-as-bike metaphor. Next fall she will begin Indiana University at Bloomington’s PhD program in gender studies where she plans to continue with her research interests in feminist and critical disability studies; motorcycle life and culture; and men and masculinities studies.

Kayte Gilmore is working on a MA project titled " 'When you got this dog with you…you feel superior to everyone else:' Pit Bulls as Masculine Accessories.” It examines the ways that certain subordinated men use the pit bull to bolster their masculine identities. After graduation, she hopes to continue her advocacy work with pit bulls and to join Teach for America in 2012, with the long term goal of becoming a science teacher.

Jayme Hughes is working on a project titled “Queer(ing) Virginity: Destabilizing Hegemonic Narratives of First Sexual Experiences.” For her project, she conducted an online survey of LGBTQ young people in Cincinnati about their definitions of sex and virginity, and her paper is an analysis of the themes and patterns that arose in their responses. After graduation, she hopes to work at a nonprofit or in publishing or research.

Jessica Landis has been working on an MA project titled “Critiquing Sexual Assault Prevention Strategies in Higher Education & A Feminist Guidebook on Sexual Assault Prevention” which is an academic critique of current sexual assault prevention studies with an accompanying “guidebook” with suggestions for improvement and development of new prevention strategies. Following completion of the program, she hopes to continue her work in higher education student life.

Connie Underwood has served the WGSS department as undergraduate assistant advisor and co-chair of the Graduate Student Government Organization (WSGSO) while pursuing her master’s degree. Putting theory into practice, Connie has also worked weekends and summers with women in recovery from substance abuse at First Step Homes, Inc. in Cincinnati. Final project: “Incorporating Women’s Studies into Psychoeducational Group Therapy for Women Recovering from Substance Abuse.”

Angela Zippin is working on a project titled “’A Place You All Made Together’: A Feminist Oppositional Decoding of Lost.” In her project, she employs a readership practice which seeks out subversive material from mainstream cultural texts, using Lost as the site of her inquiry. After graduation, she plans to continue working in academic environments in the area of student support services.

graduating undergraduates

majors

Patrice N. Barnes is a senior graduating from WGSS this spring. Throughout her time at UC, Patrice has been extremely active in many areas of campus life, but most of her time is spent working to enhance the collegiate experience of women of color at the University of Cincinnati. Her involvement in Shades of You through the Women’s Center has allowed her to learn from as well as influence a strong community of women at UC. Perhaps her most noted achievement at UC was the establishment of the Shades of You Prom Dress Bazaar, which, through a campus-wide collection of prom dresses and community donations, was able to provide words of wisdom, lunch and free prom dresses for area high school girls. This program is now in its third year of existence and will be a point of pride for Patrice to leave as her legacy. Currently Patrice serves as the resident advisor for the Gen-1 House, a program for first generation college students. Being a first generation college student herself, Patrice enjoys being a resource to students through shared experiences and common-
abilities. "My past experiences enable me to serve as an inspiration for others today. I am thankful even on my darkest day, for it has worked to create a better me." Upon graduation Patrice intends to gain a few years of non-profit experience in the area of empowerment for women and girls and then pursue her masters and doctoral degrees. Patrice's WGSS capstone project focuses on her individual journey to spark social change through social media such as facebook and twitter through her self-love movement titled "365 Days of Love for Me." Patrice's long term goal is to convert her findings into a viable non-profit purposed to permanently build the self esteem of women and girls all over the world.

**Carmen Yvonne Gaines** looks forward to graduating with a BA in women's, gender, and sexuality studies in spring 2011. Currently, she serves as the coordinator for Sisters Youth Organization, an organization that prepares African American high school students for college. As a native of Cincinnati, Carmen is conscious of the deficiency of non-profit youth organizations for African-American teenage girls in the area. Carmen takes pride in working to help eliminate this shortage by volunteering and serving Sisters Youth Organization. Upon graduation, Carmen plans to launch SisterGirl Inc., a non-profit organization for African-American teen girls in Greater Cincinnati. This program will promote healthy living while shattering stereotypes that negatively affect the African-American community.

**Natalie Kirk** is graduating with a bachelor's degree from the women's, gender and sexuality studies program with a concentration in sexuality studies. Natalie is a member of the student organization Triota where she serves as the academic chair. Her capstone project is an analysis of the history of slash fan fiction and its potential for personal sexual exploration. Natalie will be attending law school at the University of Wisconsin in the fall on a scholarship. After attaining her law degree she intends to inject an intersectional view point into the field of law, where it is currently non-existent.

**Jill Snapp** is a women's studies major at the University of Cincinnati. Residing in Milford, she began her studies at Clermont College before transferring to the main campus. Jill's capstone is an investigation of underreported domestic violence and its possible causation. Jill holds an associate of arts degree from the University of Cincinnati. Her future may hold seeking a master's degree in social work and employment at the VA Hospital.

**Tasha N. Vaught** will be graduating with a BA in women's, gender, and sexuality studies as well as a BA in psychology. She has been the director of LGBTQ Affairs for the Undergraduate Student Government for the past two years as well as a volunteer at the LGBTQ Center on campus. Her research interests include feminist theology, transgender and masculinity studies. Tasha plans on earning a MA in women's, gender, and sexuality studies from UC through the 4+1 program in the fall.

**Christopher Kaetzel**—Major

**Elisabeth Ampthor** is an international affairs major with minors in WGSS and Spanish. During her years at UC, she studied abroad twice, spending a summer in Santiago, Chile and her full junior year in Copenhagen, Denmark. Although she has no definite plans yet, she intends to pursue a career abroad. Elisabeth is currently an intern at UC International Programs, where her passion for international education is put to good use. She is also very involved in student activism, participating in the Activists Coming Together (ACT) feminist leadership, an activism program through UC Women's Center. In addition, Elisabeth is a leading local coordinator of the Defend Ohio student movement.

**Desiré Bennett** is graduating with a women's, gender, and sexuality studies minor in conjunction with a journalism major. During her scholastic career at the University of Cincinnati, Desiré was afforded a myriad of opportunities including co-founding and writing for Verge Magazine, reporting for the New Media Bureau, studying abroad in several parts of Italy and winning various academic achievement awards such as the Lee Evans Memorial Scholarship. She is a Phi Theta Kappa honor society and National dean's list member. After graduation, Desiré plans to spend time with her children while concurrently seeking professional opportunities.

**Krysten Stein** is a University of Cincinnati graduate with a major in communication and a double minor in psychology and women's, gender, and sexuality studies. She was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and is currently a master's student in the department of Communication. Throughout her college career, she held two communications positions: one at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in the Department of Marketing and Communications, and the other as a communications specialist at the Literacy Network of Greater Cincinnati. Currently, she is a graduate research assistant in the Evaluation Services Center at the University of Cincinnati. After graduate school, she plans to work in the non-profit/social sector of the world and hopes to travel, and read and write for enjoyment. She has been the recipient of the Frank M. Jones Scholarship, the Lucille Pederson Scholarship Fund in Communication, and a nominee for the C-Ring Award through the Women's Center. She is a part of Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, The Golden Key International Honour Society, Triota National Honor Society, and Lambda Pi Eta. She presented her current research at the Pop Praxis: Social Justice & the Media Conference at the University of Cincinnati spring quarter.

**Carly (Caroline) Tamborski** is graduating with a WGSS minor in conjunction with a bachelor's degree in journalism. She will be graduating with honors spring quarter. While at the University of Cincinnati, Carly participated in Greek life, intramural sports, UC Sustainability, Mountaineering Club, and wrote for The News Record. She has worked for and contributed to several publications, both local and national, as well as interned at Channel 9 in Cincinnati. After graduation, she plans to travel and report for a news outlet full-time, and will always be a die-hard Bearcats football fan!

**Erin Davis**—Minor

**Ellen Flohn**—Minor

**Bonnie Higgins**—Minor

**Lindsey Wolf**—Minor
triota

The Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality National Honor Society, Iota Iota Iota (Triota) is a service and activist oriented chapter of the National Women’s Studies Honor Society committed to academic achievement and feminist activism. Triota is named for the ancient goddesses Inanna, Ishtar, and Isis. Triota strives to maintain the feminist values central to women’s, gender, and sexuality studies, to encourage diversity and egalitarianism, and to create a supportive academic environment for all students.

Alpha Mu, the University of Cincinnati’s chapter of Triota, almost became defunct at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, as all but three members had graduated and moved on. In August of this year, two of the remaining three members, Becky James and Hope Fidder, committed to getting the organization back on its feet and reviving its presence on campus. This daunting task included recruiting members, electing officers, and reworking the Constitution and by-laws in order to receive recognition by the university. With the assistance of the Women’s Study Graduate Students Organization (WSGSO), we are proud to report that their efforts paid off and now Triota is once again thriving!

The group became involved in the Pop Praxis Conference in early April through volunteering and attendance, and is currently working with another service fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega, to participate in a silent auction and Relay for Life. In addition, members are reaching out to form alliances with other diversity-based service groups and jointly planning future events.

With many of the current members graduating this year, they, together with WSGS assistant undergraduate advisor and Triota liaison, Connie Underwood, are striving to get in place guidelines to make it easier for the next generation of members to keep Triota running and ensure its future viability. In addition, preparation for the upcoming WGSS Awards Ceremony, which includes Triota recognition and new member induction, is generating a lot of excitement!

officers
President: Becky James
Vice President and Membership Chair: Michele Smith
Secretary and Web Master: Rachel Wurm
Treasurer and Public Relations Chair: Hope Fidder
Academic Chair: Natalie Kirk
Activism and Community Service Chair: Krysten Stein
Fundraising Chair: Patrice Barnes
Social Chair: Andrea Galloway

new inductees
Tina Allen
Patrice Barnes
Jamie Drout
Andrea Galloway
Annie Huelefeld
Addie Pickens
Tina Seger
Michele Smith
Krysten Stein
Shagun Sehgal
Rachel Wurm

graduating members
Patrice Barnes
Andrea Galloway
Becky James
Natalie Kirk
Addie Pickens
Krysten Stein

alumnae updates

Jenny Grubbs (MA 2009) is currently finishing her doctoral coursework, specializing in race, gender, and social justice, at American University in Washington, DC. Her current research on the Animal Liberation Front examines the social construction of terrorism in relation to public performance. Specifically, she utilizes Foucault and Althusser to examine public performance in negotiating power between the state and direct action activists in the animal and earth liberation movements. Her dissertation research will expand on these themes and the current political repression targeting dissent.

Jessica Haney (MA 2000) has been published in Mothering Magazine, in an anthology titled From the Heart and has made an appearance on CNN. She has recently welcomed a new baby to her family.

Laura Foster (MA/JD 2000) and her partner Scott Pitkin welcomed home their new baby boy, Kyler. He was warmly greeted by his big brother Garrett.

WGSS awards

Faculty Award  Jana Braziel
Graduate Student Award  Krystal Cleary
Undergraduate Student Award  Natalie Kirk
Friends Memorial  Marquita McLean
Returning Student Award  Courtney Reynolds & Desire Bennett
Alumna Award  Lea Webb
Staff Award  Kayte Gilmore, Jayme Hughes, Jessica Landis
Special Recognition  Michelle Gibson

WGSS Members at WGSS Awards Ceremony
Left to right: Natalie Kirk, Hope Fidder and Rebecca James
**WGSS in the news**

### New Sociology Professor Brings Expertise in Sexual Health and Reproduction

Assistant Professor of Sociology and WGSS affiliate Danielle Bessett studies medical sociology in an effort to create better health care models.

By: Kim Burdett

Danielle Bessett
Assistant Professor

Assistant Professor Danielle Bessett

In Danielle Bessett’s office lies a postcard with a quote by German artist Käthe Kollwitz: “I am in the world to change the world.”

So sums up Bessett, who took to the field of sociology because of her quest for knowledge and desire to help people.

This year marks her first as an assistant professor in the University of Cincinnati’s Department of Sociology. Fresh from a postdoctoral fellowship at Ibis Reproductive Health in Cambridge, Mass., Bessett brings with her an expertise in women’s reproductive health.

“The great thing about sociology is that it allows you to step back and have a critical perspective about how we live our lives,” Bessett says. “The quality of being reflexive is the only way we’ll be able to understand the problems we encounter.”

At Ibis, Bessett and her fellow researchers analyzed the effects of health care reform in Massachusetts on young adults’ access to sexual and reproductive health. One of the most exciting outcomes of this research, Bessett says, was being able to present their findings to policymakers in Washington, D.C. to ensure that young adults’ special concerns are addressed for the implementation of national health care reform legislation.

“I like to think that the very best sociology can aim to expand our knowledge base and at the same time contribute to a better society,” Bessett says.

Before Ibis, Bessett earned her BA from Mount Holyoke College and graduated in 2009 with her PhD in sociology from New York University.

Now that she’s at UC, she is excited to teach introductory sociology classes and continue her research. With funding from her postdoc, Bessett is currently conducting research with new mothers who have experienced stigmatized reproductive careers.

“I’m trying to understand how earlier reproductive experiences affect later pregnancies,” she says. “A great deal of research is done on women who are first-time mothers—but what does that really mean? What about a woman who has had three miscarriages but is giving birth for the first time? Her experience will be different than a woman who conceived for the first time.”

Her goal is to address problems that can improve the prenatal care system for all women.

Cincinnati is a great place to be a sociologist, she says, because the city offers a number of resources as well as a number of challenges facing many U.S. urban areas.

“I’m delighted to be at UC,” Bessett says. “We have an excellent sociology department with a unique specialization in health and family, wonderful faculty, graduate students and staff, and a fabulous group of majors. I’m excited to be able to work with such a great group of people.”

### WGSS Graduate Students Host Conference on Social Justice in Pop Culture

Faculty and students gathered on UC’s campus to discuss Lady Gaga in drag, Batman and masculinity, feminism on 30 Rock and much more.

By: Kim Burdett

What do Lady Gaga, Glee, the Bachelorette and Buffy the Vampire Slayer have in common? Aside from being ubiquitous in pop culture, they were all discussed last April at the University of Cincinnati’s “Pop Praxis: Social Justice and the Media,” a conference hosted by the graduate student organization of the Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) in the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences.

The conference took a close look at pop culture in its representation of race, class, gender, sexuality disability and religion.

“We started talking about this conference after all of us noticed common themes in our classes where we found that pop culture was a very important site of analysis for us,” says conference organizer and WGSS graduate student Christina Black. “This conference was an opportunity for us to make the conversation both academic but also popular in a way that might involve undergraduate students or members of the community.”

The conference included 35 speakers, including faculty and students (both graduate and undergraduate) from UC and other area institutions like University of Kentucky and The Ohio State University.

The keynote speaker was Andi Ziesler, co-founder and editorial/creative director of Bitch, a feminist magazine. Her lecture, “Feminism, Technologies and Pop Culture Activism,” highlighted the intersections of popular culture, feminism and activism.

**Other titles from the all-day conference included:**

- “Black Stereotypes and Resisting White Hegemony in Good Times”
- “Postfeminist Math Barbie: Danica McKellar’s Provocative Education Advocacy”
- “30 Rock and Feminism in Flux”
- “True love and happiness: Sexuality and romance on The Bachelorette”
- “Queer Sex in a Straight City: Gender, Bisexuality, and Heteronormativity in Sex and the City”
- “Outsider Within: Homosexuality and the Black Church”
- “Freak of Culture: A Feminist Analysis of Lady Gaga’s Post-modern Disability Drag”
- “All Is Not Glee-ful: How Glee’s Representation of Marginalized Groups Has Informed the Public Imagination and Perpetuated Harmful Stereotypes”
- “Consuming Buffy: Embracing the Darkness and Female Empowerment in the Buffyverse”
- “Batman and the Cultural Construction of Masculinity Ideals”
The conference was sponsored by the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center, Graduate Student Governance Association, Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region, Friends of Women’s Studies, the Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Graduate Student Organization (WSGSO).

**WGSS presents/ReGeneration**

In support of the UC President’s Advisory Council on Environment and Sustainability and the university’s commitment to “exercising leadership in our community by modeling ways to minimize global warming emissions, and by providing the knowledge and the educated graduates to achieve climate neutrality,” Adrian Parr developed the ReGeneration Speaker Series. The series has been generously funded by a grant from the Faculty Development Council and Taft. It has been supported by the Department of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, UC Sustainability, the Environmental Studies Program, DAAP CARES, and the School of Architecture and Interior Design. The series aims to increase knowledge of climate change, theories of sustainability, and contemporary sustainable practices through a variety of presentations, seminars, and workshops.

Since the beginning of the series in the fall of 2010, students, faculty, and the general public have heard talks from a variety of professionals, researchers, designers, and policy makers. Speakers include: Steve Seidel, the vice president for policy at the Pew Center for Climate Change; Bryony Schwan, the executive director of the Biomimicry Institute; a panel organized by Amy Lind with Faranak Miraftab and Noel Sturgeon; animal liberation activist, Marti Kheel, co-founder of ArchiAfrica; Antoni Folker, co-author of Retrofitting Suburbia; June Williamson, executive director of LivingRoutes ecovillages; Daniel Greenberg; a Civic Engagement Training Workshop by the Chicago Public Interest Research Group; a public lecture by renowned feminist theorist, Nancy Fraser.

**friends president’s report**

Just a quick note from the new Friends board chair. It has been so gratifying to take this leadership role for an organization that supports the Department of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. The Friends Board is committed to supporting the department through scholarships, fundraisers, and internships. We realize the value of WGSS for students who use their education to become leaders in the advancement of gender equality, and to form a foundation for their future educational and career development. The professors and department leaders that I have met through Friends demonstrate a commitment to UC students through mentoring and extending their personal attention to seeing that they, the students, are successful in their educational endeavors.

The students that are now enrolled in the program, both in undergraduate and graduate degree programs, serve the university well, and exemplify the spirit of the University of Cincinnati. These are tough economic times for educational institutions in the State of Ohio, and the Friends of Womens Studies are grateful for the willingness of UC Leadership to recognize the value of the WGSS program and to understand that these UC students have the potential to make the world a better place.

During this year, Friends has worked hard at fundraising, successfully supporting the Friends graduate assistantship, which has been held by Jayme Hughes the past two years. Jayme will hand the baton to incoming MA student Anna Laymon this fall. Friends has also cosponsored two significant community
events: Naomi Tutu’s lecture in March at the Women’s City Club of Cincinnati, and the Pop Praxis conference in April on the UC campus. Friends have been visible in the department at lectures and panels, and we hope this close connection between Friends and the WGSS Department will deepen yet more in the coming years.

— Becki Brenner

friends profiles

Marquita McLean was a founding member of the Friends of Women’s Studies and a long-time board member and generous contributor. Marquita was active on the Friends of Women’s Studies Capital Campaign Board to raise $1.5 million for an endowed chair for the department. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Virginia State College and an MA in history from The Ohio State University. Marquita worked as director of human resources at UC and taught at Taft, and she was also a co-presenter at NWSA in 2008 on the panel “University of Cincinnati Friends of Women’s Studies: The Making of a National Model.” In addition to her work with Friends, Marquita was active in many other organizations including the Hamilton County Democratic Party and the local chapter of Dollars for Scholars. She passed away February 3, 2011, at the age of 77, and her husband Cecil passed away on April 3.

Barbara Myers has been a member of the Friends board since February 2010. She has a BA in English from Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, an MA in English and Comparative Literature from Fairleigh Dickinson University, and an MBA in marketing and finance from Columbia University. Barbara is retired from International Paper Company after 30 years of service, and she was most recently finance business manager for various Business IT groups and for Global Telecommunications. She is involved in many women’s organizations including the Cincinnati Women’s Political Caucus, the Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Ohio Action Fund for the State of Ohio, and the Women’s City Club of Greater Cincinnati; she is active in the Democratic party at the county and state levels, and she has worked on numerous political campaigns in both Ohio and New York.
**honor roll of donors**

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Contact Information:
UC LGBTQ Center
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friends of women’s studies

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