Alison Bechdel Feted at Graduation

Oberlin alumna and MacArthur “genius” fellow Alison Bechdel OC ‘81 was granted an honorary degree at the 2016 commencement exercises. Bechdel took the time to attend the departmental celebrations for both Creative Writing and GSFS. Under the trees of outgoing GSFS Director Carol Lasser’s backyard, Bechdel chatted with graduates that included Eleanor Van Buren ’17 and Anne Buckwalter ’15, whose December 2015 honors project was a graphic zine on sexual assault prevention. This fall, Bechdel’s Tony-award winning musical Fun Home played in Cleveland’s Playhouse Square, with discounted tickets available for all Obies.

GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

GREGGOR MATTSON, GSFS DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY

As your new Director since July 2016, allow me to take a moment to introduce myself. I joined the GSFS Institute when I arrived in Oberlin in 2008, and helped it transition into a Program last year (see note on pg 11).

My training is in the sociology of sexuality among other things, and my research is on the regulation of prostitution in Europe and the relationship between gay bars and gentrification in the United States. I helped organize Oberlin’s Year of the Queer in 2011-2012, and teach courses on sexuality, cities, and law, including a seminar on prostitution.

GSFS is important to me because it embodies the causes I care about, the scholarship I read and contribute to, and the collegiality that sustains me. My main priority as Director over the next 2.5 years are to build a faculty with appointments fully or partially in GSFS who complement each other and provide leadership for the Program. The fruits of Program status were realized when GSFS was granted a position with the Religion Department to hire in the area of South Asian Religions and Gender. In Spring 2017, GSFS will hire in the area of LGBTQ Studies/Queer Theory jointly with the Comparative American Studies Program.

It is also my primary job to maintain the committee of volunteers who support these new hires and advise our majors, provide consistent curricula and support for our majors and minors, and to make sure that we are crafting a Program that meets the needs of Oberlin’s campus community and fulfills the goals of the National Women’s Studies Association.

This year GSFS is fortunate to have three visiting faculty with appointments in GSFS, a dress rehearsal for what a staffed Program might look like. “Professor Vange” (Evangeline Heiliger) continues to teach courses for us and Comparative American Studies such as
FACULTY UPDATES

Photo of the Week: Professor of Dance **ANN COOPER ALBRIGHT** holds a copy of her first book, *Choreographing Difference*, which has just been translated into Greek by Nissos Press. Here, she attends a press event with Petros Gallias, president of the Greek Association of Choreographers. During a two-week visit to Greece, Cooper Albright gave a lecture at the University of Patras Department of Theatre Studies, and she taught workshops for professional dance students and an intercultural group of German and Greek dancers in Athens.

**CRYSTAL BIRUK** is Assistant Professor of Anthropology. Crystal was on a junior research leave during the 2015-16 academic year, and spent the year based in lovely Philadelphia as a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania. Biruk completed their book *Cooking Data: Culture and Politics in an African Research World*, which is under contract with Duke University Press. They also gave invited lectures on the forthcoming book at Johns Hopkins, Yale, Wisconsin, Northwestern, University of Virginia, among others. Biruk recently received a Wenner Gren postdoctoral research grant to fund research on their next ethnographic project titled *The politics of vulnerability in the LGBT-rights/global health nexus in Malawi*. In 2015-16, they traveled frequently with their partner and with college friends to Senegal, Hawaii, southern California, the UK, and an assortment of National Parks (their favorite being Glacier National Park!). In Spring 2017, Crystal looks forward to teaching *Medical Anthropology* and a seminar titled *Anthropology of Good Intentions*.

Visiting Assistant Professor **VANGE HEILIGER** presented her research on pedagogy and decolonial feminist STS (science and technology studies) at the National Women’s Studies Association conference in Montreal in November, 2016, and at the Association for Environmental Studies and Society in Washington, DC in June, 2016. Professor Vange also presented a paper on postcolonial feminist STS approaches to tiny house building sciences and democratic engineering practices at the 4S/EASST international conference in Barcelona in Aug 31-Sept 4, 2016. Professor Vange received a Toni Morrison Society Teaching Grant to incorporate Morrison’s works into CAS 447: Queer Positions; the spring 2017 cohort will benefit from this enhancement to the syllabus. Professor Vange is also (slowly) building a tiny house on wheels, and is pleased to report that the tiny house now has a tiny roof.
Greetings from the Director cont.

LGBTQ+ Identities, TransGender Studies, and the Nature of Sexualized Identities. Kathryn Miller continues with a joint appointment between GSFS and the Politics Department, teaching courses including Introduction to GSFS, Feminist Research Methods, and Gender and Migration. And this year we welcomed Chris Barcelos as our first visiting assistant professor appointed fully in GSFS, teaching courses in gender and public health such as Queering Sex Education, Sexuality and Reproductive Justice, and Feminist Epidemiology.

The contributions of visiting faculty have long been key to the cutting-edge curriculum GSFS provides and this year is no exception. The Spring 2017 list of classes is the longest we’ve ever had, including such courses as Feminist Theory from Bogdan Popa in Politics, Feminist Ethnography of Performance by Meiver De la Cruz in Dance, Women Sex and Taboos in Middle Eastern Cinema and Literature by Jacinthe Assaad in Comparative Literature, Jewish Sexual Ethics by Rebecca Epstein-Levi in Religion and Jewish Studies, Gender and Sexuality in Indian Religions by Sarah Pierce Taylor in the Religion Department, and La Mujer: Latina Women in U.S. History by Irene Garza in History. The full list of classes can be seen at: [https://goo.gl/lJQSPD](https://goo.gl/lJQSPD)

MAJOR REPRESENTATIVES

**ALI NADEAU-RIFKIND**

My name is Ali Nadeau-Rifkind (they/them/their), class of 2017; I am a GSFS major with minors in Hispanic Studies and Sociology. From my first class in the Program, Sociology of Gender, I was hooked on gender studies. I wanted to be student representative to rally enthusiasm around taking GSFS classes and attending GSFS events to students beyond the Program. As student reps Tory and I do our best to support GSFS majors/minors and help the Program grow stronger.

**TORY SPARKS**

Hi! My name is Tory Sparks (she/her/hers), class of 2017; I am a double major in Anthropology and GSFS, double minoring in Politics and French. I am so happy to be a major representative this year, and I’m really excited about all of the cool things happening in the GSFS department! My main goal in being a major rep is to get underclassmen interested in the major early on in their time at Oberlin, and get upperclassmen thinking about how this major is applicable to radical organizing after graduation. Feel free to reach out at any time to talk about anything GSFS!
KATRINA ANDERSON-LITTLE  
Sociology major  
Project: *Dissecting the Melting Pot Myth*  
"In the coming semester, I will be investigating the concepts of race, ethnicity, gender, and marginalization in Trinidad and Tobago. Drawing from my understanding of the American racial paradigm that groups individuals as either white or other, regardless of ethnic nuances, I plan to launch a comparative study of the US and Trinidad. My objective is to unearth the ideological basis for the way Trinidadian social hierarchy is arranged, whether that be racism, hegemonic masculinity, colorism, ethnocentrism, or some other ideological framework completely unique to the island.

Using the primary research question, "How do mixed race communities create systems of social stratification?" I will be conducting a series of exploratory qualitative interviews with students at the University of the West Indies (Saint Augustine), community partners, and elders to gain insight into the social organization of the island. As I explore this topic abroad, I will consistently consider how race is gendered in the United States and ultimately places black women at what I would call a uniquely marginalized and vulnerable position. In upholding feminist research methodologies, I find it imperative that I maintain this information as a point of reference for my research without asserting this truth unto the women of Trinidad. Instead, I am doing elementary preliminary reading into race, gender, and ethnicity in the Caribbean before I get there, and allowing most of the answer to my research question to be informed by the personal narratives of my interview partners. I plan to expand upon the qualitative research I collect while abroad with quantitative information, when I return, in order to present a mixed methods, comparative analysis of race, gender, and ethnicity in the US and Trinidad next year."

STEPHANIE ATWOOD  
Psychology/Violin Performance major  
Project: *Implicity and explicit attitudes towards transgender people: The role of social desirability and tolerance for ambiguity.*

Although transgender visibility is on the rise, ample research suggests that people still harbor negative attitudes towards transgender individuals. My research in social cognition explores the issue of transgender stigma by examining the magnitude of association between people’s implicit preferences and explicit attitudes towards images of transgender people with a particular focus on the demographic and psychosocial variables that predict unfavorable reactions at the implicit and explicit level. Based on prior research in this field, it is hypothesized that there will be a positive correlation between participants’ implicit and explicit reactions towards transgender people that will vary based on their level of tolerance for ambiguity and their motivation to act in a socially acceptable, non prejudiced manner.

Due to the relative lack of research in this field, the current research is obligatorily exploratory in nature and seeks to identify correlational rather than causal relationships. This will be the first study to date that utilizes pictures of actual transgender individuals to assess implicit attitudes towards transgender people. The results of the present research will add to the current body of literature on the relationship between implicit and explicit evaluation by directly addressing the relationship between implicit and explicit measures of attitudes towards transgender people. Additionally, finding significant associations between psychosocial variables and attitudes towards transgender individuals will enhance our limited understanding of potential motivations behind prejudice and discrimination targeted against transgender individuals. Finally, these associations will shed light on the broader stigma against gender nonconformity that applies to many individuals who fall within the larger LGBTQIA+ community.
GREGGOR MATTSON, Director and Associate Professor of Sociology.
I was on leave in the Fall of 2015 to finish my book, which finally appeared in 2016 with Palgrave Press, The Cultural Politics of European Prostitution Reform: Governing Loose Women. My prostitution research continues with Professor Libby Murphy, Chair of the Department of French and Italian. With students we’re building a digital humanities archive about prostitution in early 19th century Paris, using joint courses to translate and contextualize archival documents from the Paris Police Archives, an 1836 sociological treatise, and lithographs from the Allen Memorial Art Museum. Our project—and some phenomenal exhibits by GSFS students—can be viewed at http://onprostitution.oberlincollegelibrary.org/about

I also began a new project on the disappearance of gay bars, a small piece of which was published in the Cleveland Neighborhood Guide. Another part of that new project, Mapping Lost Lesbian Bars 2006-2016, was mentioned on the lesbian webzine Autostraddle in September. You can see the map or contribute corrections to it here: https://goo.gl/U4Vwfa

REBECCA WHELAN is delighted to be part of GSFS at this exciting moment in its development. She is currently Associate Professor and Chair of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Her ongoing research program centers on finding ways to diagnose ovarian cancer at its earliest, most treatable stages. She is currently teaching a new First Year Seminar titled "Marie Curie’s Legacy: Radium Girls and Glowing Matter." This course uses the life, science, and iconography of the most recognizable female scientist as a way to examine larger issues in gender and science. She has also recently taught private readings on medical discourses describing intersex; (trans)gender and biology; and gender, race, and science.

MARGARET KAMITSUKA is the Francis W. and Lydia L. Davis Associate Professor of Religion. She has served on the GSFS Advisory Council from its inception and was director of GSFS from 2012 to 2014. She teaches courses at all levels on gender and religion and upper-level courses on methodologies in gender studies and religious studies. Her monograph, Feminist Theology and the Challenge of Difference, was published by Oxford University Press in 2007. Abstracts of the book's chapters are available at Oxford Scholarship Online: http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/search/results/1. She was the editor of and contributor to The Embrace of Eros: Bodies, Desires, and Sexuality in Christianity (Fortress Press, 2010). Her essay “Feminist Scholarship and Its Relevance for Political Engagement: The Test Case of Abortion in the U.S.” appeared in the inaugural issue of Religion and Gender (Vol. 1, no. 1 [Fall 2011], http://www.religionandgender.org/index.php/rg/article/view/2,), the first refereed online international journal dedicated to the systematic study of gender and religion in an interdisciplinary perspective. She is working on a book-length discussion of abortion rights tentatively titled “Abortion, Women’s Experience, and Fetal Life: A Feminist Theological Proposal.”

HARRY HIRSCH, Professor of Politics, has published a memoir about and commentary on contemporary higher education, Office Hours. He is teaching two sections of "Gender, Sexuality, and the Law" this fall, and in the spring will teach "The Politics of Sexual Minority Communities."
ANNE BUCKWALTER
Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies major
Project: Gendercomic
“Gendercomic” draws from two main sources to create a graphic narrative about gender and process. One source is the “Big Five,” the women whose work Hillary Chute examines in her book Graphic Women. These five women (Alison Bechdel, Lynda Barry, Marjane Satrapi, Phoebe Gloeckner, and Aline Kominsky-Crumb) have created graphic narratives, as Chute terms their work, which are works of book-length nonfiction that can only be told through the combination of words and images. The Big Five eke out a space for themselves in a comics world that has only recently become a little friendlier to women. Each narrative foregrounds the creator, demanding a space for themselves and their content in a male-dominated industry. Zine culture, the other main influence on “Gendercomic,” similarly foregrounds creators.

“Gendercomic” emerged partially from zine culture and the Oberlin Comics Collective (OCC). OCC publishes student comics and provides opportunities to attend comics conventions including Genghis Con and Comics Crossroads Columbus, and as a result the chance to learn from many contemporary zine and comics creators. Elements of zine culture found in “Gendercomic” include the playlist, handwritten text, and printing process. Including a playlist foregrounds the creator as a person with an existence beyond (but connected to) their work. All the text and drawings in “Gendercomic” are individually inked. Handwriting, as Chute argues, is incredibly personal and allows readers to connect with creators. Lastly, printing on a risograph reaffirms the handmade quality of “Gendercomic” and empowers the process of self-publishing and circulating “Gendercomic.”

“Gendercomic” contains both process comics and personal narratives. The process comics (titled “The…” ) make transparent the development of the work. Although similar works could have served as helpful models, no works with all major elements of “Gendercomic” were available as models. Information about the process of creating “Gendercomic” will hopefully be useful for other creators. The personal narratives in “Gendercomic” focus on the author’s relationship with gender and gender studies. One purpose of creating these narratives is personal healing, but aside from that motive, the narratives provide an opportunity for readers to learn about gender studies topics free from the often-convoluted language of scholarly articles. This accessibility has been a main goal of the work even as its form and content have evolved. Other gender studies majors can already learn about the topics “Gendercomic” addresses through scholarly articles. “Gendercomic” is intended primarily for people in the author’s life who are not studying gender studies: family, peers from home, and non-professor adults.

“Gendercomic” exists at the intersection of the Big Five and of zine culture. The author includes doodle monsters in the style of Lynda Barry, draws Oberlin scenes as does Alison Bechdel, and grounds the work in zine culture. “Gendercomic” includes two types of comics in order to make process and gender studies topics accessible. By synthesizing influences, “Gendercomic” demands space for the author and the work to exist and be valued in academia.

ZIA KANDLER
Environmental Studies & Comparative American Studies major
Project: Contextualizing Solidarity: Going deeper into Guatemalan resistance
This winter term I will be going to San Francisco for a weeklong educational programming and training on organizing and solidarity work in Guatemala. This program is designed to both educate about the historical context of Guatemala, the civil war and the resistance movements that happened there and talk about the collective trauma that occurred after the war. Guatemala is at a politically transformative movement with both the vice president and
Leah Freed Memorial Prize CONT.

president jailed within the last four months and the elections that happened last Sunday. This training really begins in December when they will send us readings to complete and begin conducting Skype phone calls to check in about comprehension. These readings will then work to inform the training and conversations that we have once we are all together in San Francisco.

This training will inform my research that I am conducting within the Environmental Studies department. My research is on land distribution, the extractive industry’s role in Guatemala, and women’s roles in resistance movements in Guatemala and this directly informs the work that I have been doing and will do in the spring. I spent summer 2015 in Guatemala conducting an oral history project using feminist methodologies to interview women about their lives and role in the resistance movements. During these conversations were focused on women because they have such a powerful role in these communities as healers, mothers, and community leaders. My research is based on this work. I am now in the process of writing a paper for publication and continuously need to keep both up to date, but also add to the already existing information and connections that I have in order to make this paper as relevant as possible. I believe that my research can have a large impact on accountability on a global scale and building solidarity networks within Guatemala and the United States.

2017 HONORS

Maddie Batzli

“I’m a GSFS honors candidate interested in understanding the usage rules for the word queer among college students. I’ve been interviewing Oberlin students and students at other schools in Northeast Ohio about their relationships with and perceptions of this word. My interest in the labeling and categorization of marginalized identity drew me to this project because I’ve observed a variety of different, sometimes paradoxical definitions of queer on campus and am curious about the boundaries and political schemas implied through these various understandings of the word. I feel lucky to have been able to talk with so many people who have such insightful perspectives, and I’m excited to share my findings at the end of spring semester!”

Allison Nadeau-Rifkind

My honors thesis for the GSFS Program explores trans* and non-binary identities and pronouns. I hope to uncover respondent’s feelings and experiences about their gender identities both within and beyond the gender binary through an analysis of interviews with trans* and non-binary Oberlin students and those within the greater DC area. Comparing these two groups will illuminate how non-normative gender identities and language used to discuss them are contingent upon social location.

Tory Sparks

My Honors thesis aims to show how students at Oberlin construct queer-only spaces as sites for formation of queer identities. I am interested in how queer, the non-identitarian identity that is open to all, is constructed in arguably closed Safe Spaces at Oberlin (primarily focusing on Queer Beers.) Through interviewing students, I will attempt to understand how queer theory and identity politics operate simultaneously in the creation and discussion of queer space on campus.
Leah Freed Memorial Prize CONT.

Nia Owen
Undeclared major
Project: Oberlin College Bonner Scholars - Winter Term 2016 in Amsterdam

For my Winter Term 2016 project, I engaged in a two-week service based trip with complementary lectures and site visits that addressed issues such as sex work, sexual health, human rights and their intersections in Amsterdam. The most prominent organization for me was the Prostitution Information Center (PIC). This visit was complemented by a lecture on sexual health, sex education and sex work in the Netherlands with Marije Janssen, a Research Panel Manager at MWM2 in Amsterdam. Originally I foresaw this project building on my existing interest in sex worker rights. Surprisingly, I found myself becoming more invested in sex education and the differences between its teaching in Holland versus America. For the most part the PIC did not offer me any new information on sex work, whilst I had no existing research in sex education and therefore everything I learnt was new. What has stayed with me from this project is Holland's liberal approach to sex education, which offers comprehensive and fairly radical information for a much younger audience. What was particularly astounding to learn is how America's typically abstinence-only education ironically leads to much higher pregnancy and STI rates than those in Holland. This method is taught for fear that teaching children how to have sex safely will promote sexual activity earlier in children. Despite research that shows Holland's liberal approach does not actually increase sexual activity or promote earlier sexual intercourse than in the States, America is still reluctant to change its philosophy on sex education.

Alan Reibstein
Dance and Creative Writing major
Project: Thanks For Coming

Thanks For Coming is an evening-length, multi-media dance theatre performance about women trying to find voice in a society that denies them of it. The eight female dancers of the piece find themselves constantly objectified by a male voice, which is an allegory for the performance itself and society. The voice mediates the entire show, and presents surreal situations for the women to overcome. For example, the women are asked to jump on a trampoline bra-less, and to dance "gracefully" in a dress that does not fit. Such scenarios are presented as a way to mirror the idiotic expectations of women. Trying to find power, the women play into these normative expectations so much so that they ultimately subvert them. They present themselves in "expected" ways, but then take that presentation to a point of absurdity. They curate gaze, then call it into question. Through gesture and facial expression the dancers ask, "What are you looking at?" challenging the traditional dynamic of looking and being seen.

I am working in collaboration with Cinema Studies student Katalina Cabrera ('16), who is creating video projections. As the show unravels, the projections put previous moments from the piece in new situations (in slow motion, with different music, in a new environment), in order to re-call and re-frame them. This further emphasizes the idea of gaze. It reminds the audience of what they saw, and that they were complicit in it. Live-feed video technology is also used to heighten the audience’s awareness of their gaze.

Oberlin Courses Featured in Elle Magazine

A summer piece in Elle Magazine that listed “63 College Classes that Give Us Hope for the Next Generation” featured the courses of two GSFS colleagues. Maggi Kamitsuka’s course Theologies of Abortion was listed at #20, while Anu Needham’s course Women in/and “Bollyood” is listed at #33. Congratulations! The full list can be found at http://www.elle.com/culture/news/g28427/college-classes-women-studies/
ALUMNI UPDATES

Abrahams, Bess '93
Complementary and alternative medicine therapies for pediatric populations with sickle cell anemia and cancer. Palliative care work (children and adults). Currently getting MSW.

Braucher Kamosso, Anne '98
Two weeks after my 40th birthday in March, I had a baby girl, Aurora Skye. The experience of having a baby at Advanced Maternal Age was difficult, and I had to fight to not be induced on my due date when it wasn't medically necessary. That said, Aurora is fantastic, and I look forward to her Oberlin graduation in 2038!

Campbell, Andy '04
Recently joined as Assistant Professor of Critical Studies at USC - Roski School of Art and Design in Los Angeles, California.

Chase, Sarah '10
I took over my family's dairy farm and I am converting it to organic and 100% grass fed production. My brother makes cheeses from the milk my cows produce. We also have events where people can come meet the cows and eat farmstead meals while listening to live music. chaseholmfarm.com

Diallo (Bah), Assiatou '08
Currently working as an epidemiologist at the Tennessee Department of Health.

Donover (Corsover), Sandra '88
I have been a full-time Certified Nurse Midwife since 1997. I am currently working for Penn Medicine at Penn OB/Gyn and Midwifery Care. My first daughter just graduated from Oberlin '16 with a major in Psychology. My second daughter will be a sophomore in high school. I've been married to my Obie guy, Scott O'donnol Donover '87, for the past 26 years.

Foshay, Elena '98
Served in the Peace Corps in Paraguay 2002-2005, went to graduate school at University of California Berkeley 2005-2008 and earned an MSW and MA in International Area Studies, worked on green jobs and clean energy policy with two different organizations from 2007-2010, managed green job training program serving low-income adults with barriers to employment at Rising Sun Energy Center in Berkeley from 2010-2016, recently moved to Saint Paul, MN and am currently working as Community Energy Program Manager at the Center for Energy and Environment.

Green, Sara '08
Since graduating from Oberlin, I've moved into drug development. I focus on the clinical development and commercialization of precision medicines for people with rare and life threatening diseases. Currently, I'm working to bring a leukemia drug to patients in Asia and Latin America.

Keenan-Bolger, Maggie '06
Since graduating from Oberlin I've founded a theatre company called Honest Accomplice Theatre which produces devised pieces of theatre about issues often seen as secretive or shameful or portrayed as one-dimensional. The Birds and the Bees: Unabridged, a piece about female and trans sexuality has been touring to colleges along the east coast. We are currently working on a Trans Literacy video series as well as a new devised theatre piece called ReconFIGUREd about the body.

Levine-Sauerhoff, Tessa '05
Moved to Seattle on a whim 10 years ago, and never left. Completed an MBA in Sustainable Business, and currently work at a creative agency where I lead our Social Impact practice, working with large companies on their sustainability and CSR efforts.

Lewis-Zavala, Arielle '13
After taking crisis calls at the National Domestic Violence Hotline for a few years, I'm now a manager there, supervising a team of amazing advocates who support survivors and their loved ones from across the country. In my spare time, I volunteer with local immigration Continued…
rights groups. The groups I work with fight to end family detention of immigrant mom's and children, and have also been working to end the collaboration between ICE and local law enforcement (la pulimigra) that puts the immigrant community at risk of deportation. Through the Austin Sanctuary Network, I've been honored to be part of the first Sanctuary campaigns in Central Texas (where immigrants seek sanctuary from ICE by living in a church while their deportation case is fought), including the first Sanctuary campaign in the nation to stop the deportation of a queer woman.

Litfin, Marne '07
I received my Master of Gender Studies from the Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany in 2015, having specialized in Gender and Globalization. I work as a content manager at a small software company.

Madris, Rachel '09
Rachel Madris has been teaching for 8 years, and recently completed a degree in Educational Leadership at Teacher's College, Columbia University. She is currently working as a teacher and instructional guide at a NYC Outward Bound School. She is hoping to start her own school in the future. This summer, she married her partner Josh Spiro, also an Oberlin graduate.

Mann, Larisa '96
I recently accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Emergent Media at Temple University's Department of Media Studies & Production. This suits me well, as they support my research on how marginalized communities carve out spaces of autonomy for culture-making. I also like teaching in urban public universities, and the nature of the department allows me to continue and incorporate my creative practice as a DJ (aka DJ Ripley) and ongoing experience as an event organizer, which I have been doing since about 1995. I'm coming up on a 1-year anniversary of a monthly event called HEAVY that I co-founded with a like-minded artist that is a platform for multigenre explorations of big bass sounds featuring up and coming artists from across many spectrums of identity and experience, and I continue to perform and organize events in the Northeast and far beyond.

Munkres, Susan '90
After stints in California, Wisconsin and South Carolina, I now live in Burlington VT where I direct the Community-University Partnerships Office at UVM, the state land-grant and research university. Bridging academia and community work is incredibly satisfying and requires the kind of attention to power, privilege and multiple perspectives that was so central to both the WGS (at the time) major and Oberlin itself.

Schiff, Lauren '04
I graduated from Mount Sinai School of Medicine in NYC in 2008 and completed by residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Boston Medical Center of Boston University. I completed subspecialty training in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and currently am an Assistant Professor of Obstetric and Gynecology in the division of Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I specialize in fibroid, endometriosis, and pelvic pain care.

Scott, Emily '94
Analyst at UCSF

Seligman, Eva '06
Teaching at CITYterm at the Masters School

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
The Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies Program would love to hear what our alumni have been doing since graduation. Please use this form to stay in touch with us and with your classmates.
ALEXANDRIA CUNNINGHAM  
Africana Studies and Sociology major  
Project: Hip-Hop Sexual Anthems, But Only If Ya Nasty: Unpacking Black Sexual Politics in the New Racism  
“Only If Ya Nasty” is my senior capstone in Africana Studies that engages sociologist Patricia Hill-Collins’s concept of Black sexual politics—a set of ideas and social practices shaped by gender, race and sexuality that frame Black men and women’s treatment of one another—to interrogate a precarious situation in hip-hop. Some of the most lucrative hip-hop music is very sexually explicit, aggressive and, well, nasty. Commercial hip-hop creates the conditions for this case to persist by marketing a fantasy of conspicuous consumption and adventurous sex to mass audiences. The fantasy depends on excessive sexual imagery and lyrical narratives that articulate stereotypical perceptions of Black women’s sexual performance, in particular, and Black hypersexuality, in general. In the capstone, hip-hop artist Nicki Minaj and her anthem, “Anaconda,” is used as a case study to explore the dynamics of Black sexual performativity and agency. The capstone’s core feature is its constant centering of the voices of Black women through the lyrical excerpts from Black women rappers’ sexual anthems to its Black feminist framing. In this way, Black women lead the dialogue about our bodies, sexual politics and critical consciousness to envision our own liberation as Black women and a wider Black community.

LEAH AKI WOOD  
Cinema Studies & East Asian Studies major  
Project: Dirty Laundry – A Screenplay  
Dirty Laundry is my second screenplay, and one that has challenged me as a writer and filmmaker. It is an attempt to write creatively and truthfully, to not write in order to please others, or even because there is an important or impressive message to convey. Rather, it is a story built from a few images, my fascination with the aesthetics of laundry, a first attempt to explore darker realms, and a desire to stay true to my own voice and vision. Often times I come to the conclusion that film is the only way that I can articulate what I see, feel, and hear in a way that others will understand. In an ideal future I would work with individuals to use different means of self-exploration, whether that be through music, art, film, or writing, to encourage them to tell stories and challenge their notion of self-identity through expression. One can only be what they push themselves to be, what they allow themselves to be, and I believe that the creative process is integral in realizing oneself.

I am fascinated by human connection and the complicated flow of needs and desire that exists between us all -- I wrote the characters, Max and Reggie, with this in mind.

Reinstatement of Program Status  
In Spring 2016, the College Faculty voted to reinstate GSFS as a Program, thus retiring the Institute model under which we were governed since 2008. This shift was more than a name change—program status allows GSFS to apply for faculty lines. Under the Institute, GSFS were an all-volunteer army where each faculty member on the Committee also had full-time jobs outside GSFS. We are currently hiring a position with the Religion Department where one-third is assigned to us and two-thirds in the area of South Asian religions, and in Spring 2017 we will hire in the area of LGBTQ Studies/Queer Theory with Comparative American Studies. We have had discussions with a number of other disciplinary and interdisciplinary partners, including Biology, Comparative Literature, History, and Rhetoric and Composition.
HONORS 2016

On April 21, Tomoyo Joshi successfully defended her GSFS Honor’s Thesis entitled, “Managing Racist Pasts: the Black Justice League’s Demand for Inclusion and Its Challenge to the Promise of Diversity at Princeton University. Tomoyo, a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, was advised by Ann Sherif from East Asian Studies and Jan Cooper in Rhetoric and Composition, with support from Afia Ofori-Mensa in the Office of Undergraduate Research. Her thesis, an critique of discourses of diversity and inclusion in higher education, closes with a charge: “it is imperative that students, staff and faculty create space to imagine the academy that we want, to transform it entirely, make its foundations and historical legacies transparent.”

STAY IN TOUCH

Tell us what you are doing! We are interested in building networks of our alums involved in various fields and activisms. To follow GSFS at Oberlin, go to http://new.oberlin.edu/arts-and-sciences/departments/gender/ or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GSFS.OberlinCollege

You can support us by giving online at http://oberlin.edu/giving. When you reach this page click on Donate. When asked to choose a designation, please choose Other. Under Special Instructions, please type Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies, which will direct your donations to GSFS.

Finally, please be sure to update your email address (and other information) with Oberlin via the Alumni Association’s TAPPAN Network at https://alumni.oberlin.edu/. Registration is free and takes only a moment. Please direct questions to alumni@oberlin.edu or call the Alumni Association at (440) 775-8692.

GSFS FACULTY & STAFF

DIRECTOR:
Greggor Mattson, Associate Professor of Sociology

PROGRAM COORDINATOR:
Linda Pardee, GSFS; Comparative American Studies; Rhetoric & Composition; Writing Associates Program; Mediator at the OC Dialogue Center

GSFS PROGRAM COMMITTEE (2016-2017):
Grace An, Director Cinema Studies; Assoc. Prof. of Cinema Studies & French
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