This spring we have enjoyed teaching the graduating emphasize...
Capstone Corner

Each spring the co-directors of WGS team-teach the WGS Capstone Course. This year we had a great group of WGS minors and emphasize. The course starts with the students choosing their own discussion topics and readings, giving them an opportunity to explore more fully topics that have come up over their years at UM. This year’s group, not surprisingly, chose to spend one unit discussing Sexual Assault Prevention and Bystander Intervention. The other units included Sexuality, Gender Identity, and Body Image; Feminism and Pornography; and Sex Positivity and Double Standards. Once again, we were blown away by our students’ interest and commitment to these issues and topics as they chose to expand the reading assignments for an additional week to fully discuss their chosen readings. After the readings and discussions, the students broke into groups to develop projects to finish their WGS careers. Here are their projects:

The Feminist Reading Room: A Blog of One’s Own group (Katrina Campbell, Mollie Murphy and Kaylie Reed) set up a Tumblr page and a Facebook page as a resource for people to expand their feminist reading lists and to critique popular culture and literature from a feminist perspective. They created their own logo for their site—a book superimposed on the female symbol with a definition of feminism written on it. Each group member posted her own review of books as well as posts by other people.

Works reviewed included: Marion Zimmer Bradley’s 1993 novel, Mists of Avalon, which deals with trying to keep a pagan mother goddess religion alive and demonstrates how women achieve their goals. Mollie examined whether the 2008 musical comedy film Mamma Mia, adapted from Catherine Johnson’s 1999 play, is or isn’t feminist. Katrina reviewed the young adult fantasy writer Tamora Pierce, whose works inspired her to study English literature and become a librarian. She particularly appreciated Pierce’s stories about women coming of age and assuming traditionally male-dominated roles such as Alanna’s training as a knight in The Song of the Lioness; Katrina considers the characters good role models for young women—although they can seem too didactic to adults. The group spread the word about their site through personal networking; they intend to expand it to reviews of feminist film and music lyrics. Visit their site for more info: http://feministreadingroom.tumblr.com/.

Another group took their inspiration from the readings on feminism and pornography. Emily Ahern, Jake Aldrich, Sean Jeffrey, Tiffany Meiwald and Kye Weber held a discussion in the University Center at the end of April entitled Understanding Pornography: Kink, Sex, Healthy Body Image. It was announced on Facebook and to students in Lindsay Doe’s Human Sexuality class, who made up a significant part of the audience, composed of more women than men, and a few non-traditional students. The group asked questions about the role of pornography in contemporary culture, as a source of sexuality, as well as its effect on body image, sexual behavior and personal relationships. Building on their readings from class, the group offered a nuanced view of pornography and sexuality through a feminist lens that allowed for both sides of the feminist debate around pornography to be heard.

One issue that continues to interest our students is how to do more outreach concerning gender to children and families in our community. Clay Chapman and Meghan Eckert used their expertise and connections at the Joseph Residence to develop art programs for children and families accessing the services of Missoula’s housing facility for homeless families. Art has been shown to be a great way to get children to open up about difficult issues and to give them fun and creative outlets for their interests. The weekly sessions that Clay and Meghan held with the families at the Joseph Residence did just that, allowing the participants to talk about the issues they face in a casual, non-confrontational way.

The final group (Kayla Blackman, Niccole Dusek and Emily Gutierrez) took their initiative from the sexual assault scandal to partner with affiliated WGS faculty member Danielle Wozniak from Social Work who was given the job of developing the mandatory online course on sexual assault for incoming UM students. Kayla, Nicci, and Emily gathered articles and curricular materials that stress the multi-media component of the course, including comprehension quizzes and other assignments. They included a section on Policies and Definitions, such as the Student Conduct Code, as well as Montana state laws, campus reports on sexual assault and the Missoula City police response. As this project is ongoing, the students will continue to work on it over the summer, and future plans involve having a component of the WGS Capstone permanently include review of the online course.
Meet the WGS Spring 2012 Scholarship Winner: Erin Harris

Each Spring, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program offers an undergraduate scholarship to a student who has displayed excellence in academics. This Spring the scholarship was awarded to Women’s and Gender Studies minor Erin Harris.

Erin was born in Livingston, Montana and is currently a double major in History and German. She decided to seek out a minor in Women’s and Gender studies when she realized her other course work had begun to reflect an interest in issues of gender and sexuality. The cross over has been clear. For instance she is writing her upper-division history research project on Montana women’s experiences with illegal abortion. Erin finds the WGS curriculum challenging and stimulating, offering food for thought long after leaving the classroom.

Erin credits the WGS courses she has taken with having informed and nuanced her understanding of the issues affecting women and LGBTQI folks.

“We live in a society largely structured to accommodate male primacy, and frustratingly, discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexuality is still flourishing. Hopefully, one day, the insight I’ve gained through this program will better equip me for the fight against it.” Erin recently began volunteering as an advocate for the YWCA’s Pathways program, which provides support and assistance for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. “Reading and class discussion about these issues is one thing; experiencing them first hand is quite another. My time at the Y has really emphasized the real-world importance and applicability of the things I’ve been learning in the WGS program.” states Harris.

Erin hopes to attend law school after graduation. She enjoys cooking Indian food, particularly while drinking a glass of wine, floating the river, camping, and cross country skiing. In between school and spending time at the YWCA, she is trying—and failing miserably—to learn to play the ukulele.

Featured Activist Organization: UM Student Assault Resource Center

The Student Assault Resource Center provides free and confidential services for students of the University of Montana who have experienced sexual or relationship violence, stalking, or harassment. Friends, family members, and partners are also welcome to use SARC’s services.

SARC provides free and confidential crisis counseling, walk-ins, support groups, and academic, legal and medical advocacy to survivors of sexual assault, rape, childhood sexual abuse, stalking, sexual harassment and relationship violence.

In addition to the above services, SARC has a Resource Library full of books, pamphlets, and articles on the following topics: sexual violence, violent relationships, sexual harassment, healing, recovery, and family and partners’ reactions to sexual assault.

SARC has been instrumental in the University and community response to the sexual assaults that have received so much recent attention in our community. In early March, SARC brought the national group Men Can Stop Rape to campus, a conference that led to the creation of the UM Men of Strength Group. In April, SARC hosted its fifth annual Walk a Mile in Their Shoes event. Walk a Mile is an event intended to empower everyone to be an engaged bystander, as well as continue to support ending sexual assault and relationship violence.

SARC is located in the east entrance of the University of Montana’s Curry Health Center, up the stairs, to the left, in room 108. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and no appointment is necessary. If you are in crisis, please contact SARC on the 24 hour help line at 243-6559.
New Student Group: UM Men of Strength

“We are striving to work together in a unified effort to make a change in the community and have a positive effect on our culture.”

-Brent Hildebrand

Men of Strength Group

The Men Of Strength group, or MOST, at the University of Montana is a student organization dedicated to preventing men’s violence against women and promoting healthy masculinity through discussion, awareness raising, and men’s activism. MOST strives to connect students, staff, faculty, administration, and the greater Missoula community in an effort to increase men's participation in primary prevention of violence against women.

MOST hosted Trivia Night this Spring and hopes to make it a bi-annual event. Future events will also include group bike rides and hikes, basketball tournaments, kickball, and BBQs. MOST will be represented at Welcome Feast in Autumn 2012.

For more information and to get involved with UM MOST group, visit https://www.facebook.com/UMMenOfStrength or contact Brent Hildebrand at 243-5336.

Faculty Achievements

Hiltrud Arens was awarded a Faculty Exchange for the Spring semester of 2013 to the University of Potsdam, Germany, in their Department of German Studies.

Heather E. Bruce will give the keynote address for the Montana Writing Project at the 2012 MEA-MFT Annual Educators’ Conference “Subversive Acts of Revision: Writing and Justice,” October 18, 2012, Billings, MT.

Casey Charles, Critical Queer Studies: Law, Film, and Fiction will be available from Ashgate Publishing July 1.


Anya Jabour received a Summer Stipend ($6000) from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support two months of full-time research and writing on Sophonisba Breckenridge.

Anya presented “Spheres of Influence: Sophonisba Breckenridge and Social Activism in Modern America,” at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago on January 5, 2012 and gave an invited lecture, "The Education of an Activist: Sophonisba Breckenridge's Kentucky Childhood” at the University of Kentucky, while on a research trip in January.


“‘Days of lightly-won and lightly-held hearts’: Courtship and Coquetry in the Confederacy,” in Weirding the War: Stories from the Civil War’s Ragged Edges, ed. Stephen Berry (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 95-121

(continued on page 6)
Congratulations to the Graduating Class of 2012

This Spring we see our first Women’s and Gender Studies Graduate Certificates awarded to four talented graduate students.

Heather Mulliner
After identifying a potential thesis topic in the newly processed Line Family Papers at the K. Ross Toole Archives and Special Collections at the University of Montana’s Mansfield Library, Heather rose to the challenge of painstaking research in handwritten manuscript sources, carefully deciphering handwriting, tracking down obscure references, augmenting the couple’s correspondence with other contemporary sources, and placing her case study in the broader context of early twentieth-century gender relations. The result is an insightful case study of one couple’s relationship in a volatile era. Heather successfully defended her M.A. Thesis, “Between the Lines: friendship, love, and marriage in the progressive-era correspondence of Robert Line and Louise Chapman,” in Spring 2012. While producing her thesis, Heather also completed the course requirements for both the history M.A. and the WGS graduate certificate while carrying the responsibilities of serving as a Teaching Assistant for both U.S. and European survey courses. She has also presented her research at multiple venues: the Phi Alpha Theta Northwest Regional Conference; UM’s Faculty-Graduate Student Conference; and the Rocky Mountain Interdisciplinary History Conference. In addition, Heather participated in the highly selective Newberry Summer Institute on “Native American women, gender, and feminisms” in Summer 2011.

Dustin Schneider
Dustin Schneider is completing his Master’s Degree in Communication Studies with a certificate in Women’s and Gender Studies. Dustin’s thesis, titled “Performative Rhetoric and the Constitution of Queer Identity in the 1972 APA Panel, ‘Psychiatry: Friend or Foe to Homosexuals? A Dialogue’” explores gay rights activism surrounding the 1973 delisting of homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM). While pursuing his M.A., Dustin has helped coach UM’s Debate Team and taught sections of both COMM 242—Argumentation and COMM 111—Public Speaking. Next year, he will serve as the debate coach at Rocky Mountain College in Billings after which he plans to pursue his Ph.D. in communication studies.

Virginia Summey
After relocating from North Carolina to Montana, Ginny returned to her roots by writing her M.A. thesis on a pioneering African American civil rights lawyer, Elreta Alexander Ralston. In addition to using oral history transcripts and manuscript sources in North Carolina archives, Ginny also conducted interviews with several of Alexander’s acquaintances to write her thesis, titled “Gender, Justice, and Jim Crow: North Carolina Judge Elreta Alexander and the Long Civil Rights Era.” Ginny successfully defended her thesis in Spring 2012. While producing her thesis, Ginny also completed the course requirements for both the history M.A. and the WGS graduate certificate, worked as a grader for Professor Tobin Miller Shearer, and learned the ropes in UM’s Archives and Special Collections. In addition to presenting several conference papers, she has an article forthcoming in the July 2013 issue of The North Carolina Historical Review. The journal’s outside referee praised her article, “Redefining Activism: Judge Elreta Melton Alexander and Civil Rights Advocacy in the New South,” as “a model submission—clearly articulated, well-organized, carefully researched, and an important contribution to civil rights scholarship.” Ginny’s work also has been recognized with several awards, including the Pat Williams Scholarship and the Women’s & Gender Studies Graduate Scholarship. Ginny intends to continue her work on Alexander at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, which admitted her to their History Ph.D. program with a very generous fellowship.

Jasmine Zink
Jasmine Zink is completing her MA in Communication Studies, with an emphasis in Rhetoric and Public discourse. Her research focuses on women in politics; her thesis is entitled Sarah Palin, Conservative Feminism, and the Politics of Family. Although Jasmine’s plans for next year are still unclear, she knows she would like to stay in Missoula. Women’s and Gender Studies was a great addition to her Communications degree because it offered her the opportunity to more fully explore feminist theory as it related to her research on the underrepresentation of women in politics.

Congratulations to the Women’s and Gender Studies Graduating Class of 2012
Emily Ahern  Jan Bents  Kayla Blackman  Sara Blaylock  Katrina Campbell  Clay Chapman
Alison Dillon  Emma Davidson  Niccole Duseck  Meghan Eckert  Emily Gutierrez
Sean Jeffrey  Mollie Murphy  Rachel Pauli  Kye Weber

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Unite Against the War on Women Rally

On April 28 a group of Montanans gathered at the capital in Helena to show solidarity. Julia Jackson, University of Montana graduate, organizer and participant, worked with the Women’s and Gender Studies Department to promote the event. Julia feels the current political climate has been a call to action, "I personally felt inspired and proud to be a part of such an empowering event, one that made waves not just in Helena but in 55 locations around the nation. I have felt deeply saddened reading the news and seeing my basic human rights being slowly chipped away, but being a part of Unite Against the War on Women has made me feel immensely empowered. It is great to know that activism does make a difference and to know that we will be heard!"

Bridgette Case Guild, the Montana state organizer, adds that even though the initial rally has passed, that the group intends to pursue future action. The major work going forward will revolve around the upcoming election. There are plans underway for a future rally during the legislative session as well as a campaign to register voters across Montana communities. For more information or to get involved, contact the Women’s and Gender Studies Program or visit http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/WOWMT/.

Spring 2012 UM Global Leadership Initiative

Teresa Sobieszczyk taught a new Global Leadership Initiative Freshman Seminar this spring called “Food and Society in a Globalized World.” In the class, they debated the pluses and minuses of various food systems, from hunting and gathering to the modern industrial agricultural system, and everything in between. They considered how the hunting and eating of meat has historically been a male activity, while gathering has been more of a female activity. They ended the course by considering various individual and social actions to ensure access to environmentally and small farmer-friendly, safe foods for our families, schools, and communities.

Professor Clary Loisel (of MCLL—Spanish) taught “Human Rights Issues in Contemporary Latin American Film and Literature” as part of UM’s Global Leader Initiative (GLI): He thoroughly enjoyed it and looks forward to offering another GLI seminar in the fall of 2013.

Faculty Achievements continued

Anya Jabour continued


Clary Loisel made the following presentations: “Rosamaría Roffiel’s Amora: Lesbianism is Alive and Well in Mexico;” Graduate Student and Faculty Research Conference; UM; April 14, 2012.

“The University of Montana’s Global Leadership Initiative via Human Right Issues in Latin American Literature and Film;” Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA); Salt Lake City; March 8-10, 2012.

Ruth Vanita taught a CREA Sexuality Studies Workshop in Khandala, India, April. She participated on a panel with Martha Nussbaum at the Women’s and Gender Studies Program’ conference “The Colonial Encounter: Women’s International Human Rights” at the University of Chicago, May 3, 2012. Her book, Gender, Sex and the City: Urdu Rekhti Poetry in India, 1780-1870 was published by Palgrave-Macmillan in March 2012.
Women’s History Month

Women’s History Month 2012 showcased a number of events honoring women. The month started with a screening of Jennifer Siebel Newsom’s documentary film *Miss Representation* on March 8th, International Women’s Day. The film corresponded with the International Women’s Day 2012 theme: Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures. The screening was held in the University Center by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and the University of Montana Student Involvement Group. Following the screening, a panel discussion was led by Women’s and Gender Studies Program Co-Director Elizabeth Hubble, Molly Bradford of MissoulaEvents.net, WGS student Saidee Johnston, and Women’s Resource Center representatives Emilie Loran and Brittany Salley-Rains. The Open Aid Alliance had a presence at the event, offering sexuality education information to attendees. The audience of approximately 100 was engaged and interested in discussing the film. The discussion ranged from the personal to the academic.

To find future screenings of the film or to get involved in the movement, visit http://www.missrepresentation.org/take-action/.

The National Film Festival Lunafest was held on March 14 at the Wilma Theater. Lunafest showcases short films by, for, and about women. The festival presented 10 unique films selected for Missoula. Proceeds benefited the YWCA’s GUTS! Girls’ leadership program and the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

On March 22 Kirsten Allford performed her graduation recital titled *Herstory: Women and Power*, at the University of Montana School of Music. The recital included soprano Linda Stratton on piano, Hermes Padilla on violin, Sarah Solie on cello, Barbara Blegen on piano and featuring the premiere of the new work by Women’s and Gender Studies Program faculty affiliate Lee Heuermann.

Women’s Opportunity & Resource Development, Inc. (WORD) celebrated their 26th year here in Missoula with the Many Faces of Women, their annual dinner and art auction on March 24th. Many Women’s and Gender Studies affiliated faculty and staff were in attendance to celebrate WORD’s year-round contributions to the Missoula community.
Women’s and Gender Studies, an interdisciplinary program founded in 1971, encourages the production, discussion, and dissemination of knowledge about women’s experiences, oppressions, and achievements, in Montana, the U.S., and the world. In the last decade, this focus has broadened to include study of the social and cultural construction of gender, sex, and sexualities. By fostering awareness of cultural and international diversity, as well as of the circulation of power mediated by race, class, age, and sexual orientation, Women’s and Gender Studies encourages students to think critically and to envision justice for all peoples.

Would you like to donate to the Women’s and Gender Studies Program? Send a check to The University of Montana Foundation, PO Box 7159 Missoula, MT 59807-7159 with a note on the memo line indicating that the donation is for the Women’s and Gender Studies Program. Donate securely on our website: www.cas.umt.edu/wsprog

For more information on gift giving, contact the UM Foundation at (800) 442-2593, (406) 243-2593 or UMFoundation@mso.umt.edu.