

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR:

I am pleased to be writing this message as WGSS Interim Chair for this year's newsletter. Last summer, Dr. Nick Syrett was promoted to Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences! We congratulate him on his success and are happy to have another WGSS colleague in the Dean's Office alongside our own Dr. Alesha Doan, who is also an Associate Dean. I agreed to serve as interim chair this year, and the department conducted an internal search for a new chair. I am pleased to announce that Dr. Katie Batza was selected! We are all excited that she is eager and willing to serve. Special thanks to Marta Vicente for coordinating the search process.

We are happy to report that two other important promotions happened in the spring of 2022. Dr. Akiko Takeyama was promoted to Full Professor, and Dr. Stacey Vanderhust was promoted to Associate Professor. We wish them both congratulations on their years of hard work, their dedication to our students, and their excellent research records. Another significant development for our department is that Dr. Aimee Armande Wilson joined our faculty this fall, transferring from the Humanities program at KU. Dr. Wilson has served on numerous WGSS Ph.D. committees and taught our core WGSS theory courses for years. She hit the ground running, becoming our new Director of Graduate Studies!

Our WGSS and Human Sexuality undergraduates continue to lead multiple initiatives on campus, push for political transformation regionally and nationally, and serve the community as advocates and volunteers for local organizations like the Willow Domestic Violence Center, Just Food, and the Sexual Trauma & Abuse Care Center, just to name a few. Our graduates go on to law school, graduate school, and medical school. Many undergraduates turn their volunteer service and internships into careers right after college.



Upcoming Events:

*February 15th 4:00 pm:
"Stories of Reproduction
Before and After Roe" Dr.
Aimee Armande Wilson*

*March 30th 7:00pm: Verne
Wagner Visiting Professor, Dr.
Marquis Bey presents, "Trans
Insurgency, Black Radicality:
Abolitionist Endeavors"*

*See Page 16 of the newsletter
for highlighted events details.*

ARE YOU A WGSS ALUM?

Let us know what you're up to!
We would love to hear from
you.

Please fill out the [alumni update survey](#) on our website, or email us at wgss@ku.edu with your updates!

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR (CONT.)

In what must be a record, we had four Ph.D. students graduate in 2022, and they all have taken full-time positions. Dr. Rachel Trusty is in a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship at Bucknell University. Dr. Melinda Chen is an Assistant Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Abigail Barefoot is an Assistant Professor of Instruction at the Center for Legal Studies at Northwestern University. Dr. Marcy Quiason is an Assistant Professor of Gender Studies at Lawrence University. Be sure to stop by the Alumni page on our website to see more updates from our undergraduate and graduate students.

Speaking of the website! Please check out our impressive new website, designed and managed by our Administrative Associate Amara Simons. The website is a fantastic way to keep current with our upcoming events and to get to know more about our students, faculty, and programs.

We are a department that is evolving and growing in significant ways. Last spring, we were able to hire not one but THREE new faculty members: Dr. Abe Weil, Dr. Jeanne Vaccaro, and Dr. Kelly Sharron. Dr. Vaccaro holds a Ph.D. in Performance Studies from NYU. Dr. Vaccaro is jointly appointed with Museum Studies. She has already taken on several advisees in both departments, and she is actively developing several new classes for WGSS. Dr. Vaccaro continues her pathbreaking research in Transgender Studies, connecting our students to this vibrant field nationally. Dr. Weil holds a Ph.D. in Gender and Women's Studies from the University of Arizona. He is the co-editor of the top journal in transgender studies, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*. He brings a wealth of teaching experience, an outstanding publication record, and carefully honed mentorship skills to KU. Dr. Sharron is an Assistant Teaching Professor jointly appointed with the Department of Sociology. Dr. Sharron holds a Ph.D. in Gender and Women's Studies from the University of Arizona. We are so fortunate to have Dr. Sharron's expertise in carceral politics, social movements, and feminist theories of care. Those of you familiar with the academic world know how difficult it is to secure funding for one faculty position, so it is a major indication of the College's support of our mission when we were able to hire three outstanding scholars from that search.

Dr. Vaccaro and Dr. Weil are working with Dr. Marta Vicente to offer a two-year research seminar on Trans Studies at the Hall Center for the Humanities. This will become the intellectual foundation for a Trans Studies Initiative in our Department. We hope this initiative will bring together the top transgender scholars at KU and beyond. Please stay tuned for updates on that initiative in the coming years. We would love your ideas and support as we build something of great consequence on the campus.

I have long asserted that WGSS Department at KU has the most fellowship and grant active faculty of any department I know. This year is no exception. Congratulations to Dr. Vanderhurst and Dr. Batza on their fellowships this academic year. Dr. Vanderhurst was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for her new research project in Nigeria. Her first book, *Unmaking Migrants* with Cornell University Press, was published in 2022!

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR (CONT.)

Dr. Batza was awarded the Hall Center for the Humanities Faculty Resident Fellowship as she completes her second book, *AIDS in the Heartland*. Congratulations also to Dr. Charlene Muehlenhard, who was awarded the prestigious Alfred C. Kinsey Distinguished Research Award in 2022. Professor Sarah Deer has successfully completed her two-year Carnegie Foundation fellowship, and she jumped right back into leadership in our department, serving as the Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies. Dr. Ayesha Hardison continues to lead multiple initiatives on campus, including directing the nationally renowned Project on the History of Black Writing, serving as the editor of the *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* journal, and securing several interdisciplinary research grants. Dr. Akiko Takeyama continues her role as the director of the Center for East Asian Studies, winning multiple multi-million-dollar grants to fund the center.

We want to express our gratitude to our donors. Because of your thoughtful generosity, we were able to increase the stipend on our end-of-year undergraduate awards and offer travel support to seven of our graduate students for scholarly research and to present at conferences. Your contributions allow us to support our students when and how they most need it. Thank you!

On February 16th we are celebrating the 6th Annual *One Day. One KU* 24-hour giving day. Jayhawks around the world will come together to support KU's current and future Jayhawks by donating to the program or school that means the most to them. This year's theme is EveryONE Counts because it's all of us coming together that makes a difference. You can support WGSS by visiting the [department website Giving page](#) and making a donation. Every contribution makes a difference!

We hope that you will stay in touch and continue to partner with us to support our students and faculty. This is a vital time in the life of WGSS departments nationally, and we look forward to hearing from you about your work and ideas for our future. Please complete the [alumni survey](#) on our website, or email us at wgss@ku.edu with your news!

Best,

Hannah

Hannah E. Britton

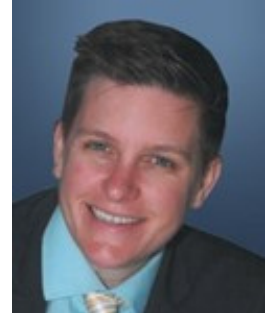
Interim Chair and Professor, Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Professor, Department of Political Science

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WGSS FACULTY?

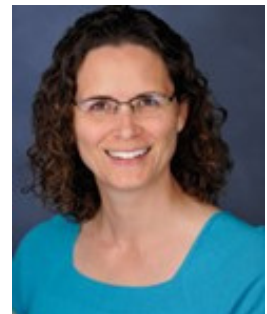
Katie Batza:

Katie Batza is spending the 2022-2023 academic year on writing her latest book manuscript *AIDS in the Heartland*. She is able to dedicate all her time to this endeavor thanks to a sabbatical and a Hall Center for the Humanities Faculty Fellowship. In addition to completing her book, she has also published her audiowalk podcast, *The Boston Reproductive Justice Audiowalk*, funded in part by the Whiting Foundation and a Harvard Mellon-Schlesinger Summer Fellowship. You can find this podcast by searching for the title wherever you get your podcasts. Katie has also published a handful of co-authored articles in predominantly medical and public health journals examining the barriers to care for LGBTQ folks in today's medical system. Though mostly writing, Batza has continued to serve as an Honors Faculty Fellow this year, helping plan the Common Cause Symposium that occurred in January and explored health inequalities amidst climate change. Batza is excited to return to the classroom and take over as Chair of the WGSS department in Fall 2023.



Hannah Britton:

Hannah Britton is serving as interim chair for WGSS this academic year. Last spring, she was fortunate to teach the University Honors Seminar, *Justice or Reconciliation? Building Sustainable Peace after Conflict*. Students in the class examined how communities and countries worked to deal with the legacies of conflict, war, genocide, and slavery. Students examined cases from across the global – from Rwanda to Japan – as well as situations closer to home, including in Lawrence, KS. Through art, music, policy, and national reconciliation commissions, students explored how and how not to foster sustainable peace. Hannah has also been part of several research teams in the past few years, including a team led by KU's Cheryl Holmes examining health, food, and family issues in the rural Midwest and the effects of decision making related to COVID-19 programs. Similarly, she has worked on a project led by KU's Hyunjin Seo that developed a technology education program for women transitioning from incarceration. Hannah hopes to return to South Africa this year, for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, to continue her work on gender and political leadership.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WGSS FACULTY?

Sarah Deer:

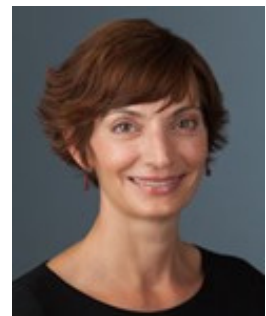
Professor Deer re-joined the classroom in Fall 2022 after a two-year hiatus courtesy of the Carnegie Foundation. Her book manuscript, tentatively titled *The Reckoning: Indigenous Voices from the Anti-Rape Revolution*, is a study of 50 interviews with Native people about sexual assault. Recent WGSS PhD graduate Melinda Chen will share authorship for her contributions to the project. Professor Deer has also been working with her Nation, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma to redraft criminal laws about sexual assault and statutes of limitation. Professor Deer has an article forthcoming in the Harvard Journal of Law and Gender about the impact of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* on Tribal Nations. She also sits on the Leadership Council of *Our Bodies Ourselves Today* – an online version of the famous feminist health book.

<https://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/>



Alesha Doan:

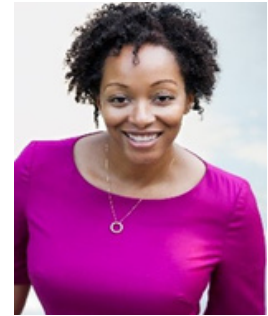
Professor Doan is an associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She works with the social and behavior science departments and directs academic affairs for the College. Her latest edited book, *Managing Sex in the Military: Gender, Identity, and Behavior* was published in 2022, as well as several journal articles on abortion politics and organizational inequity. Professor Doan continues to work with a collaborative research team on two grant-funded research projects investigating gendered eating disorders in the military; in 2023 this research team received a \$4.3 million grant to continue this research. With the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision in June 2022, which re-criminalized abortion, Professor Doan has engaged extensively in public scholarship, presentations and panels exploring the dire public health, policy, and legal consequences stemming from the Court's decision. She continues to research the implications of criminalizing abortion in half of the states in the nation on abortion providers and those seeking abortion care.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WGSS FACULTY?

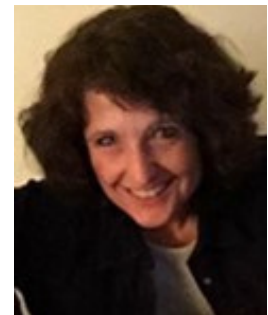
Ayesha Hardison:

Ayesha Hardison's research and teaching focus on African American literature and culture, with particular interests in genre, historical memory, and Black feminist theory. She is an Associate Professor with a joint appointment in WGSS and the Department of English. Hardison is also the editor of *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, a multidisciplinary journal centering the study of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian American communities, hosted in WGSS. The journal recently published a [special online issue](#) consisting of 21 essays written in memoriam of Black feminist scholar bell hooks. In 2022, Hardison published the co-edited collection [African American Literature in Transition, 1930-1940](#) with Eve Dunbar. Additionally, as director of the History of Black Writing (HBW), she worked with a team of graduate and undergraduate students to highlight Afro-Latinx and Afro-Latino Literature in a StoryMap exhibit titled "[Black Beyond Borders.](#)" Currently, Hardison is planning a digital exhibit as part of *Stories for All: A Digital Storytelling Project for the Twenty-First Century*, which is a partnership between the Hall Center for the Humanities and the Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities.



Charlene Muehlenhard:

I am continuing to work with my students on several studies: Eddie Wright is studying gay and bisexual men's conceptualizations of masculinity and whether their feelings of masculinity are influenced by their sexual positioning (topping or bottoming). Alli Smith is studying stressors affecting military families and associated relationship conflict and intimate partner violence. Johanna Ramirez and Nikki Cohen are both studying sexual coercion experienced by sexual/gender minority individuals; Johanna is focusing on individuals' reports of whether—and if so how—they were affected by these experiences, and Nikki is focusing on factors affecting whether individuals shared these experiences with a therapist. Hannah Clark is studying individuals who experience pain during sexual activity; in November, we presented data indicating that—despite rejecting many aspects of heteronormativity—some nonbinary and trans* individuals were nevertheless influenced by the “coital imperative.”

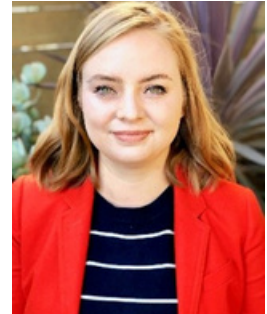


In September, Cyd and I attended the Kinsey Institute's 75th Anniversary Research Symposium at Indiana University. I presented a talk in conjunction with receiving the 2022 Alfred C. Kinsey Distinguished Researcher Award. At the reception, I got wild and talked with people maskless for the first time since March of 2020—and got COVID, as did Cyd and many other attendees!

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WGSS FACULTY?

Kelly Sharron:

Dr. Sharron joined KU in fall 2022. Her work is situated in feminist theory, Marxism, state theory, racial formations, and political geography. Specifically, her research examines the ways that a feminist ethic of care is appropriated and manipulated by institutions to produce violent effects. This year, she presented research at the American Studies Association annual conference and the National Women's Studies Association annual conference. She's also had the chance to teach courses in her field of study at KU and develop a research-intensive course with support from the Center for Undergraduate Research. She is currently co-editing a gender and women's studies textbook titled *Feminist Studies: Foundations, Conversations, Applications* (Routledge 2023). This textbook will be the first to feature original work from exclusively scholars trained in the field. Additionally, as part of the Center for Public Feminism, Sharron has worked on collaborative pedagogical projects such as escape rooms, trivia podcasts, and a mini-golf course centered around reproductive justice.



Nick Syrett:

In the summer of 2022, Nick Syrett stepped down as chair of the department to become an associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He is grateful to Hannah Britton for stepping in as interim chair at the last minute. That summer he also co-chaired QHC22 at San Francisco State University, the conference of the Committee on LGBT History, the national organization for queer history. He has finished a draft of his fourth book, *The Trials of Madame Restell: Nineteenth-Century America's Most Infamous Female Physician and the Campaign to Make Abortion a Crime*, which should be published by the New Press in the summer of 2023. He continues to co-edit the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*.



Akiko Takeyama:

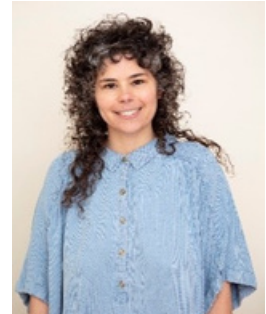
Dr. Takeyama is happy to be promoted to full professor! Two book chapters were published last year: one was about extramarital romance in contemporary Japan and the other about the contract-making process in Japan's adult entertainment video industry. Her second book, *Involuntary Consent: The Illusion of Choice in Japan's Adult Video Industry* will be out this summer, finally. As Director of the Center for East Asian Studies, she succeeded in winning two institutional grants: Department of Education Title VI (\$2.1M) and Korea Foundation seeded hire (\$344K) last year.



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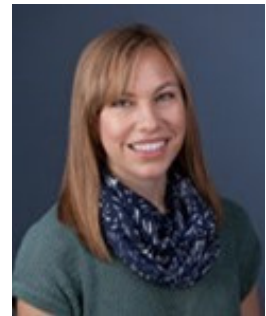
Jeanne Vaccaro:

In her first semester at KU, Jeanne taught a graduate seminar, "Transgender Theory," for WGSS, and as part of her joint appointment in Museum Studies, a seminar on "Decolonizing the Museum." Her essay on trans photographer Loren Cameron was published in *If I Had a Hammer* as part of the biennial Fotofest, and her writing is forthcoming in *Transgender Hirstory in 99 Objects*, *Texte zur Kunst*, and multiple artist catalogues. She curated a digital public art presentation for the Museum of Transgender Hirstory & Art for the City of West Hollywood, and is preparing to open *Scientia Sexualis*, an exhibition supported by the Getty Foundation, at the Institute of Contemporary Art Los Angeles in 2024. Jeanne received a New Faculty Research Development Award from the Hall Center for the Humanities to support the completion of her book manuscript, *Handmade: feelings and textures of transgender*.



Stacey Vanderhurst:

2022 was a banner year for Prof. Stacey Vanderhurst, and she is so grateful for the broader WGSS community that made it all possible. She published her book *Unmaking Migrants* with Cornell University Press, she was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, and she was selected as a US Fulbright Scholar to conduct a year of fieldwork and teaching in Nigeria. As a visiting professor with the University of Lagos, she is currently leading a graduate seminar on family and launching a new research project on sexual harassment. She is also busy eating as much jollof rice as possible.



Marta Vicente:

This has been an exciting year research-wise for me. Because of the pandemic I had to postpone my trip to the archives for two summers in a row. This June and July I was finally able to go to Europe to consult the documentation on transgender individuals housed at the Wellcome Institute in London. In London, I was also able to work in the British Library, which houses documentation for the eighteenth-century trans French diplomat, the Chevalier/e d'Eon. In Barcelona, Madrid and Cuenca (Spain) I consulted inquisitorial documents and met with trans poets and authors. In 2022 I also presented my work in different venues such as the North American Catalan Studies Conference in Barcelona, where I delivered the paper "Rethinking Identity: Transgender Studies and Catalan Independence," and the American Studies Association Conference, which took place in New Orleans in November.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH WGSS FACULTY?

Marta Vicente (cont.):

There I presented “Queer Metamorphosis: Tales of Becoming in Trans* Narratives.” In 2022 I also finished the writing of two articles, which were accepted by The Journal of Women's History and Catalan Review; their scheduled publication is Spring 2023.

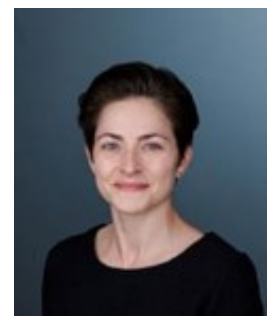
Abraham Weil:

Abraham Weil joined the KU faculty in fall of 2022. His areas of focus are black studies; trans theory; Continental philosophy; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari; affect studies; sexuality studies; and feminist theory. His current projects include: Transmolecular Revolution: Trans*versality and the Mattering of Political Life which focuses on radical political formations, anti-black racism, trans theorizing, and continental philosophy in the US and France from the 1960s to the present and On Jargon, which focuses on the language of contemporary black intellectual production. This year, he published three essays: “Transmolecular Revolution” in Deleuze, Guattari and the Schizoanalysis of Trans Studies (Bloomsbury Academic); “Transversal Tipping Points” in Critical Inquiry (Duke University Press); and “Assemblage Converters: Cosmopolitics, Mediations, and Les Mirabelles” in New Materialism and Intersectionality: Making Middles Matter (Routledge University Press). In his editorial capacities, he collaborated in the production of Feminist Studies: Foundations, Conversations, Applications (forthcoming 2023 from Routledge University Press) in gender and women’s studies that exclusively features scholars trained in the field. And, as general editor of TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly (Duke University Press), he oversaw two issues with a focus on trans sports and the forthcoming 10-year anniversary issue. This year he has given public lectures at University of Kansas, University of Redlands, University of Minnesota, UC Berkley, and CSU Northridge as well as conference presentations at the National Women’s Studies Association and American Studies Association annual meetings.



Aimee Wilson:

Professor Wilson joined the WGSS Department in fall 2022. She has enjoyed getting to know the WGSS undergraduate majors through her teaching of courses such as Feminist Research Methods, and graduate students through her role as director of graduate studies. Wilson’s research is focused on modern literature, especially by female- and queer-identifying authors, topics related to reproduction, and feminist theory. In 2022, she completed the manuscript for her second book project, *Masculine Pregnancies: Modernist Conceptions of Creativity and Legitimacy, 1918-1939*. It is under contract with SUNY Press and will come out some time in 2023. In February, Wilson will deliver the Seaver Lecture at the Hall Center for the Humanities. The title of the lecture is “Stories of Reproduction Before and After Roe.”



WGSS GRADUATE STUDENTS:

Amber Brown:

Amber is a 4th year PhD student in the department as well as an MPA student in the School of Public Affairs and Administration. Her work is currently focused on Black maternal healthcare disparities in the United States, and she is in the early stages of preparing research questions for her dissertation. Amber continued her work with the DEI Committee this year, and she is also the graduate representative on the Undergraduate Committee. Over the summer, Amber worked with Professor Stacey Vanderhurst and the College of Online and Distance Learning to organize the course shells for several undergraduate courses, and she hopes to continue working to improve the undergraduate courses within the department. This year she began teaching Perspectives in LGBTQ+ Studies, and she looks forward to teaching it along with Gender, Sexuality, and the Law in the spring 2023 semester. During the coming year, Amber plans to finish her PhD coursework and begin preparing for her comprehensive exams.

Kelsey Carls:

In 2022, Kelsey continued her work supporting the efforts of KU's Graduate Teaching Assistants Coalition (GTAC - AFT Local 6403), serving for another year on the Executive Board as Treasurer for the 2022-2023 academic year. She remains committed to building grad worker power on campus and fighting for better wages and sustainable working conditions for all graduate workers at KU. In addition to this work, Kelsey continues to focus on preparing for her Oral Comprehensive Exams and plans to defend soon. Beyond this, she also created a new special topics course for the department: The Politics of Sex Work (WGSS 396), which explores the social, political, and material realities of sex work. The course enrolled well each semester and has been a delight to teach. Finally, Kelsey was honored to receive the 2022-2023 Outstanding GTA Award from the Office of Graduate Studies this year. She looks forward to continuing her support of students both within and beyond the classroom.

Arlowe Clementine:

Arlowe Sue Clementine is a first year PhD student. Clementine completed their master's in Public History at Oklahoma State University in Summer of 2022 before relocating to Lawrence. In the Fall of 2022, they were named one of Point Foundation's Flagship Scholars for their work on preserving contemporary Queer history in the Heartland. While they are still settling into the program, 2022 brought a renewed interest in Kansas' own Gilbert Baker for Clementine, something they look forward to expanding upon in future months. During their first semester, Arlowe presented at the American Folklore Society's Annual Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma and was sponsored by the Hall Center to attend the National Humanities Center's Winter Podcasting Institute.

Rachel Denney:

Rachel Denney is a Ph.D. candidate in WGSS with a concentration in Political Science. Her research focuses on the intersection of international non-governmental organizations and the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean through an analysis of girls' education programs. In Fall 2022, Rachel taught two undergraduate courses, Politics of Human Trafficking and Women & Politics. After a long and winding road, Rachel will defend her dissertation and graduate this summer.

Pere DeRoy:

2022 was a year where I deepened my practice as an activist scholar in the discourse of international health and development, reproductive health disparities and equities, doula intervention, and as an instructor. I believe I have a greater appreciation for the classroom, and with that I focused a lot of attention this year on challenging and developing my pedagogical toolkit.

I spent 2022 engaged in a series of interrelated endeavors: preparing my Doctoral portfolio for my comprehensive exam, conducting preliminary fieldwork in Guyana, and participating in conferences and public conversations on hate crimes, reproductive oppression and freedom, abortion rights, and digital storytelling on Assisted Reproductive Technology for Queer and Trans Reproductive Justice. I collaborated across disciplines to co-author Op-eds on health disparities and became a perinatal and postpartum doula certified to work in Kansas and internationally. These endeavors, I hope, will be of benefit to the people and places who participate in my research, my personal and career growth in the areas of reproductive policy, intersectionality-based policy analysis & agenda setting, and transnational decolonial feminist practice.

My work in 2022 has culminated in (hopefully) me successfully completing my comprehensive exam in Spring 2023, heading to Guyana to complete fieldwork, and continuing activist social engagements on Queer and Trans BIPOC Reproductive Justice.

Jessina Emmert:

Jessina is in her third year in the WGSS PhD program, in which she has completed a certificate in African American Studies and will be finishing her concentration in American Studies in the Spring semester of 2023. In November 2022, she went to the National Women's Studies Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota and presented on a panel with other graduate students from the WGSS department titled, "Black Feminist Approaches to Visibility Among Women of African Descent." Jessina also had the opportunity to write a book review for *The Global History of Black Girlhood* in the *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* journal that will be published in Spring 2023. Her goals for the future are writing her dissertation prospectus and passing her comprehensive exams that are scheduled for April 2023.

Meherafroz Ghani:

Meherafroz Ghani is in her last semester of the WGSS master's degree program. She has recently passed her qualifying exam and is looking forward to graduating this semester. Last year she received her LLM degree from Koc University of Turkey while also continuing her studies at KU. She also completed the '1000 Voices Fellowship Program' organized by Every Women Treaty which focuses on adopting a global treaty that aimed at ending preventable violence against women and girls in every part of the world.

Additionally, she successfully received a PhD offer from KU's WGSS department. Her goal for this year is to successfully start her PhD degree along with her GTA position which will take her one step closer to her dream of becoming an instructor and scholar. Additionally, she is also working on publishing her articles this year.

Agnes Phoebe Muyanga:

In November 2022, it was an honor for me to actively participate in the National Women Studies Association (NWSA) conference for the first time. I presented a paper on a panel under the theme "Black Feminist Approaches to Visibility Among Women of African Descent" together with my WGSS colleagues and facilitated by Dr. Hardison. In addition, I was able to connect with key scholars in my line of research such as Dr. Currier which was very helpful.

I made progress on my dissertation proposal with the support of Dr. Britton, Dr. Vanderhurst & Dr. Garlough - members of my doctoral committee. These lists were approved in the Fall semester (2022). I am currently doing preliminary research site visits to Uganda and Tanzania (thanks to the financial support from the DEIB department and CTE departments) to connect with organizations, universities and some prospective local research advisors and participants, and to ignite the process of obtaining research approvals.

Currently, I am also writing my annotated bibliographies with the goal of submitting them to my academic advisor in February 2023. I am grateful to the WGSS department for the financial support that made this possible. My service on the Kansas African Studies Centre ExCo, WGSS faculty committee and co-facilitating the CTE workshop with Dr. Warren have been great learning experiences as well. Finally, my goal for 2023 is to successfully defend my dissertation proposal, obtain the IRB approval and start data collection in East Africa. Thank you all for the support!

Marian Phillips:

Marian Phillips is a first year PhD student with a research focus on trans* and queer theory, horror, and LGBTQIA+ history. As a freelance writer of all things horrific and punk, Phillips has been featured in several publications tackling gender, sexuality, race, and feminism including Simon Bacon's *Spoofing the Vampire: Essays on Bloodsucking Comedy* (2022) as well as Meg Hafdahl and Kelly Florence's *The Science of Witchcraft: The Truth Behind Sabrina, Maleficent, Glinda, and More of Your Favorite Fictional Witches* (2022).

In October 2022, they moderated a panel through the Emily Taylor Center's annual Feminist Fright Fest on the film *Teeth* (2007). Phillips is a longtime member of the University of Pittsburgh's Horror Studies Working Group where they assist in the annual programming of "Queer Horror Week" as well as other initiatives that focus on horror as a social force. This year, they presented their work on an untitled research project discussing trans* and queer hauntings on the "Emerging Voices in Horror" panel through the University of Pittsburgh. In 2023, they will attend the Popular Culture Association conference in San Antonio, Texas to discuss their ongoing work titled "Growing Up Grotesque: Women Coming of Age in Horror." In the future, Phillips anticipates delving further into current and historical representations of queerness in horror and other forms of "low brow" art.

Sameen:

Sameen is a first-year Ph.D. student in the WGSS Department. The past year has been quite eventful for her. She moved from India to the States; started her Ph.D. journey; lead discussions as a GTA; presented her Master's thesis ("Phoenix: An Autoethnography of Child Sexual Abuse and Repression") at the NWSA Conference 2022 - all while trying to settle in a new country and finding a community where she can belong. While 2022 passed by in a daze, she feels calmer and at home now in 2023. She has found friends that help her feel at home. She has also been awarded the University Graduate Fellowship for Spring 2023, and she is looking forward to working as a GRA. She plans to use the opportunity to start preparing and planning for her Ph.D. dissertation. She aims to research the nexus of sexual violence, kinship, and the nation-state by looking at the Marital Rape Laws in India or the lack thereof. She hopes that this year will bring her closer to her academic and personal goals!

Shawna Shipley-Gates:

In my fourth year, I accomplished milestones, presented at conferences, and participated in fellowships. In March 2022, I passed my comprehensive exam and dissertation prospectus. I received IRB approval in April 2022 and continue to progress through my dissertation. In June 2022, I presented virtually at the KU LGBTQ Research Symposium on my work titled: "Uses of the Digital Erotic: Black Queer Women's Resistance Against Sexual Oppression." In August 2022, I served as a graduate research assistant for The Project on the History of Black Writing: Black Lit Network. In November 2022, I presented at the conferences for the National Women's Studies Association and Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality on my work titled: "Uses of the Digital Erotic: Black Queer Women's Resistance Against Sexual Oppression." Additionally, I presented at the American Public Health Association on my work titled: "Uses of the Digital Erotic: Black Feminist Resistance and its Potential Impact on the Sexual Health Behaviors of Black Women." I was awarded the Graduate Studies Scholarly Development Scholarship in November 2022. I contributed a book chapter titled "'WAP': Erotic Revolutionary Hip-Hop by Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion." for a forthcoming book edited by Kirsty Fairclough, Benjamin Halligan, Shara Rambarran, and Nicole Hodges Persley, *Diva: Hip-Hop, Feminism and Fierceness*.

I also contributed a chapter titled "A Black Woman's Guide to Erotic Self Care" for a forthcoming book edited by Jan Boulware, Rondrea Mathis, Clarissa West-White, and Kideste Yusef, *Mamas, Martyrs, and Jezebels: Myths, Legends, and Other Lies You've Been Told about Black Women*. In Spring 2023, I designed my own course on gender, sexuality, and health. Currently, I am a doctoral fellow for the KU Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities, KU Institute for Policy and Social Research, and the Center for Black, Brown, and Queer Studies. Also, I continue my role as the graduate student representative in the WGSS DEI committee.

Mie Takikawa:

My future research compares women's complex sexualities in Japan and the United States who are enthusiastic about "Boys' Love." "Boys Love" is a genre featuring male-male romantic and/or sexual relationships in various media, including Japanese anime, manga, novels, musicals, movies, and games. My research aims to reveal women Boys' Love fans' complex sexual desires toward male characters that are sometimes incongruent with their sexual identities in public and domestic spaces. Since Spring 2021, I have conducted in-depth interviews with women who prefer Japanese anime, manga, and Boys Love fantasy in Japan and the United States. My future Ph.D. dissertation combines ethnographic research methods, feminist theory, and critical legal studies and explores women Boys Love fans' socio-historically stigmatized and marginalized subjectivities in Japan and the United States.

Rachel Trusty:

In July 2022, Rachel Trusty successfully defended her dissertation, "Embodiment and Agency within the Artistic Genre of Queer Abstraction." She graduated in December 2022 and is now working as a visiting assistant professor in the Women's and Gender Studies department at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA. To support her research at KU, Trusty was awarded the Travel Research Grant by the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, which she used to conduct interviews and participant observations at Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, AR in October. Trusty presented her doctoral research at two conferences: the Embodied Posthumanisms Conference at the University of Warwick, UK and the Dismantling the Body: Possibilities and Limitations in Art Making Symposium at the University of Washington.

In coordination with the Spencer Museum of Art on the University of Kansas campus, Rachel Trusty curated *Mining the Gap* in May, an exhibition of work from the permanent collection that addressed the gap between queer and feminist theories. This exhibition coordinated with the class Feminist and LGBT+ Art History that Trusty created and taught in spring 2022. As a visual artist, Trusty participated in several group art exhibitions in 2022 including *Each Other* at Aplomb Gallery in Dover, NM, *Beyond Craft* at the Chico Art Center in Chico, CA, *Tender with the Other* at the Wavelength Gallery in Chattanooga, TN, *Growing up Queer in the South* at the Greenville Museum of Art in Greenville, NC, and *Queer* at the Fenix Gallery in Fayetteville, AR. Trusty's work was also included in Issue #28 of *The Museum of Americana*.

WGSS GRADUATES, AWARDS, & ACTIVITIES:

Class of 2022 Graduating Seniors:

Grace Brown [WGSS BA], Taylor Eby [WGSS BA], Elizabeth Grinage [WGSS BA], Jordan Hefner [WGSS BA], Lauren Henderson [WGSS BA], Emma Hopkins [WGSS BGS], Elise Jones [WGSS BA], Sophie Kunin [WGSS BA], Rachel Lane [WGSS BA], Jess Martin [WGSS BA], Chaaya Minhas [WGSS BA], Grace Mlynek [WGSS BGS], Abby Ragain [WGSS BGS], Sarah Ratliff [Human Sexuality BGS], Jeddrek Rowden [WGSS BA], Kaya Shafer [WGSS BGS], Valerie Soto [WGSS BA], Grace Squires [WGSS BA], Emma Whitaker [WGSS BA]

Departmental Honors: WGSS BA graduate Elizabeth Grinage.

A Mile in These Shoes Award: for an outstanding essay or creative work that considers race alongside gender and/or sexuality. Awarded to: **Lena Mose** for their project, "Kansas Latina Legacies in Education, 1960 – 1980."

Virginia's Purse Award: Award for outstanding WGSS or Human Sexuality Major who excels through their activism, scholarship, and/or leadership in WGSS. The award was given to **Sophie Kunin** for her unwavering dedication to the health and safety of all campus constituents during the pandemic. Her work received national attention, and, more importantly, resulted in meaningful change.

LGBTQ Studies Award: Award for the best LGBTQ-related paper or project produced by an undergraduate KU student in a WGSS course. The award was given to **Jess Martin** for their paper, "The Recent History of Transgender Pathologization."

Spring 2022 Graduate Certificate Recipient:

Fatemeh Shayesteh (Journalism)

WGSS HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS:

February Sisters Annual Lecture

The annual February Sisters Lecture honors the thirty women from faculty and staff, and four children who occupied the East Asian Languages Building on February 4th, 1972 and issued demands for changes in KU policies affecting the lives of women on campus. Calling themselves "The February Sisters," their demands galvanized action already in motion at the university regarding the need for an affirmative action office, a women's studies program, a free day-care center, a health care program sensitive to women's needs, more women in administrative positions, and greater equity in women's salaries. This year's lecture is presented in conjunction with the Hall Center's 34th Annual Seaver lecture:

Dr. Aimee Armande Wilson presents "Stories of Reproduction Before and After Roe"
Wednesday, February 14th at 4:00 pm
Hall Center Conference Hall

Verne Wagner Visiting Professor

We are excited to host Dr. Marquis Bey in late March for a series of activities and events culminating in a public lecture at the Hall Center on March 30th:

"Trans Insurgency, Black Radicality: Abolitionist Endeavors" This talk will move through the concepts of "trans" and "black" in ways that think them through a sense of the radical. That is, reconfiguring trans and black as more than identity descriptors, as more than something someone unchangeably is, the talk will make the assertion that these terms name in fact modes of insurgency, radicality, and fugitivity. As such, we will end up in abolitionist territory—territory that seeks an overhaul of the ills that define our world, including coloniality, white supremacy, and the gender binary.

Marquis Bey is an Assistant Professor of African American Studies and English, advisory board faculty member of Critical Theory, and faculty affiliate and advisory board member of Gender and Sexuality Studies at Northwestern University. Bey is the author of multiple books: *Them Goon Rules: Fugitive Essays on Radical Black Feminism* (2019), *Anarcho-Blackness: Notes Toward a Black Anarchism* (2020), and *The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Gender* (2020).

Thursday, March 30, 7:00 PM
Hall Center Conference Hall

Hall Center for the Humanities Seminars: *Gender Studies and Trans* Studies*

The Hall Center provides an intellectual hub for scholars in the humanities and fosters interdisciplinary conversation across the University of Kansas. The Interdisciplinary Research Seminars at the Hall Center engages diverse communities across the state, nation, and world in dialogue about compelling local, national, and global issues that humanities research addresses. WGSS coordinates two Interdisciplinary Research Seminars, the Gender Seminar, and the newly convened Trans* Studies Seminar.

Katie Batza (WGSS) and Marie Grace Brown (History) co-direct the Gender Seminar series this academic year. The Gender Seminar studies gender as a basic concept in humanistic scholarship and/or as a fundamental organizing principle in social life. The seminar promotes the study and application of gender as a viable analytical tool that not only provokes new scholarship in its primary base of women, feminist, and sexualities studies, but also explores possible research dimensions in fields such as race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and (dis)ability.

Marta Vicente (WGSS), Abe Weil (WGSS), and Jeanne Vaccaro (WGSS and Museum Studies) initiated and co-direct the Trans* Studies Seminar. The Trans* Studies Seminar will study the modes of cultural, social, political, and linguistic production of knowledge that have assembled predominant hierarchical and binary divisions between male/female, straight/queer, human/non-human across history and cultures. In keeping with the evolving place of this field in various disciplines, we find that it is important to speak of trans* studies instead of “transgender” studies because of the exciting implications for broader humanistic inquiry that such an approach promises.

Seminar Speakers:

Fall 2022:

Thursday, September 1, 3:00 pm: Chris Forth, History – University of Kansas, “What’s the Meaning of Life Without Scars?": Fight Club and Fascist Vitalism in Europe”

Thursday, October 6, 3:00 pm: Rachel Schwaller, History – University of Kansas, ‘I left my Bible at Home’: Understanding Discipline and Martyrdom in 1980s Women’s Evangelical Periodicals”

Wednesday, November 9, 2:00pm: Abraham Weil, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies – University of Kansas, “Rising Temperatures: Coral Bleaching, Trans Being and the Metamorphosis of Living and Dying” co-sponsored by Gender Studies and Trans* Studies seminars.

Spring 2023:

Thursday, February 2, 3:00 pm: Jeanne Vaccaro, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Museum Studies – University of Kansas "I wanted the world to see us: On what a photograph does" co-sponsored by Gender Studies and Trans* Studies seminars.

Thursday, March 2, 3:00 pm: Myrl Beam, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies – Macalester College "Trans Politics After the Tipping Point: Lessons from Trans Activist Oral Histories" co-sponsored by Gender Studies and Trans* Studies seminars.

Thursday, April 6, 3:00 pm: Ayah Wakkad, English – University of Kansas "Arabic Prison Literature: a Manual of Resilience and Resistance"

Wednesday, April 19, 2:00 pm: Megan Moore, Chair of the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures – University of Missouri "The Court as a Fiction: Trans*Spatial Practices, Ecofeminist Epistemologies & Medieval Texts" co-Sponsored by the Trans* Studies and Medieval & Early Modern seminars.

Hall Center Resident Fellows Speaker Series:

Katie Batza, Associate Professor, Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies presents:
"Searching for Home in the Early AIDS Crisis"

In the early 1980s, popular culture portrayed the American Heartland as a cultural ideal, particularly for white America. However, in exploring the realities of the AIDS crisis in the region, we see that home was much more complicated and elusive, particularly for those whose lives were most impacted by the epidemic. This talk will explore the confluence of cultural erasure, a deadly pandemic, and a need for home. It will not only touch upon the history of community building amidst the early AIDS epidemic in the region, but will also explore the machinations of exclusion for folks of color and queer folks as well as the various forms of resistance to find, make, and be home.

Thursday, February 9, 12:00 - 1:30 PM, Hall Center Conference Hall



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