

## Program in Women's Studies

Women's Studies (WS) continues to build on its success as an interdisciplinary undergraduate program, and provides a framework and community for scholarly inquiry focusing on women, gender and sexuality. Exploring gender cross-culturally, historically, and artistically, with respect to other identity categories such as race, nation, religion, and class, WS subjects strive to help MIT students better understand various constructions of knowledge and value, and to realize the range of personal and intellectual discoveries made possible by using gender as a category of analysis. The program is also an important resource and support for faculty with an advanced knowledge of women's and gender studies within particular disciplines but interested in learning more across disciplinary lines; moreover, it welcomes faculty who have an emerging interest in the field of WS.

Some highlights from this year were the symposium that professor Evelyn Fox Keller (Science, Technology and Society) coordinated entitled "Why Feminism Needs Biology: A Biology and Feminism Symposium." Anne Fausto-Sterling, professor of biology and gender studies in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology and Biochemistry at Brown University spoke on "The Bare Bones of Sex" and Elizabeth Wilson, with the Institute for the Advanced Study of Social Sciences at Princeton presented "Gut Feminism: Neurology, Psychoanalysis, and the Stomach." Professor Keller served as commentator. On March 8, Nilüfer Göle, professor of sociology at the École des Hautes Études in Paris, presented the spring semester 2004 Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart lecture entitled "Veiled Women: The Forbidden Agents Between Islam and Modernity (Cases from France, Turkey and Iran)." To a packed audience, Göle described detailed case studies of Turkish, Iranian, and French Muslim women who look for guidance to Islamic gender codes on the topic of veiling and covering. Based on her fieldwork, oral histories, and personal interviews, Göle's approach embraced a broader critique of emerging Islamic identities rooted in the complexities of women living in Turkey, Iran, and France. Also noteworthy was the Workshop on Gender and Politics series coordinated by assistant professor Sarah Song (Political Science), which will continue in spring 2005. The three speakers were Brooke Ackerly, assistant professor political science at Vanderbilt University, Hawley Fogg-Davis, assistant professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Marion Smiley, professor of philosophy at Brandeis University.



*Women's Studies book party: Diana Henderson, Ruth Perry, Elizabeth Wood, and Philip Khoury.*

### Program Administration

During 2003–2004, Sally Haslanger (Philosophy) served as acting director in the fall. In the spring, associate professor Elizabeth Wood (History) resumed her role as director.

During academic year 2003–2004, the WS steering committee consisted of associate professor Thomas DeFrantz (Music and Theater Arts), professor Jean Jackson (Anthropology), associate professor Anne McCants (History), professor Ruth Perry (Literature), assistant professor Charity Scribner (Foreign Languages and Literatures), lecturer Abha Sur (WS) and professors Haslanger and Wood (chair). Ex-officio members of the steering committee were: associate head librarian and collections manager for Women's Studies Marlene Manoff (Humanities Library) and WS program coordinator Emily Meghan Morrow Howe. The curriculum committee consisted of senior lecturer Wyn Kelley (Literature), associate professor Christine Walley (Anthropology), and professors Haslanger (fall), McCants (chair), and Wood (spring). The programming committee consisted of assistant professor Christopher Capozzola (History), lecturer Rebecca Faery (Writing and Humanistic Studies) and professors DeFrantz, Haslanger (fall), and Wood (spring). The advisory committee consisted of Lotte Bailyn, the T. Wilson '53 professor of management (Sloan); professor Ellen Harris (Music); Professor Mary C. Potter (Brain and Cognitive Science); professor Bishwapriya Sanyal (Urban Studies and Planning); dean of science and professor Robert Silbey (Chemistry); and vice president and secretary of the Corporation Kathryn Willmore.

### **Curriculum and Faculty Development**

The program in Women's Studies offers an undergraduate curriculum consisting of core classes and cross-listed subjects from approximately 10 departments. Students may concentrate, minor, and petition for a major departure in WS. The program offered 25 subjects during AY2004, with approximately 300 students enrolled. Due to student demand, the WS program was able to offer three full sections of Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, which allowed approximately 60 students to explore the field of WS at the introductory level. This year we offered several new courses: SP.409 Global Feminisms: Women and Global Activism in Art, Media and Politics (lecturer Odile Cazenave, WS); SP.458 Gender, Race, Class, and Colonialism (Dr. Sur); SP.485J Technology and Gender in American History (Professor Deborah Fitzgerald, Science, Technology, and Society); SP.576 Writing about Gender (lecturer Andrea Walsh, Writing and Humanistic Studies); and 21H.225J/SP.607J/WMN.607J Gender, Law, and Society (Professor Capozzola, History).

The WS Faculty Intellectual Forum continued this year with new and tenured faculty sharing their current work with other WS faculty members. The following faculty members presented their work at the Forum:

- Dr. Sur: Ever since Orientalism: Rethinking Postcolonial Histories of Modern Science in India
- Lecturer Heather Paxson (Anthropology): The Ethics of Gender and Family Planning in Contemporary Greece
- Assistant professor Heghnar Watenpaugh (Architecture): The Coffeehouse: Architecture and Sociability in the Mediterranean City
- Professor Scribner: Towards a Requiem for Communism: Lessons for Feminism

- Lecturer Manjari Mehta (WS): Rural Communities in the Indian Himalaya: Negotiating Spaces and Identities in a New Century. (A report on Fall 2003 research in India)
- Professor Song: Conflicts between Multiculturalism and Feminism
- Assistant professor Anthony Lioi (Writing and Humanistic Studies): Beyond the Disease of Doubt: The Bisexual as Mulatto in the Contemporary Anglophone Novel

The Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies (GCWS) offered three graduate-level courses: Women, Representation, and Music in Selected Folk Traditions of the British Isles and North America; Re-Mapping Frontiers: Gender and the Construction of the American West, 1860–1930; and Feminist Inquiry: Strategies of Effective Scholarship; as well as a dissertation workshop for writers in women's and gender studies. Professor McCants was the MIT WS representative to the GCWS.

In terms of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), Professor Resnick (Foreign Languages and Literatures) directed a successful and ongoing project on the oral histories of MIT women graduates. The project completed four additional histories this year. The work has focused on international as well as American women graduates. This summer the group to be interviewed includes women graduates from Asia and Europe as well as American women graduates. Professor Capozzola supervised a UROP student on "Women and Anti-War Activism in World War I: The Letters of Kate Richards O'Hare." The student researched legal cases about gender and citizenship in US history, particularly in the years from 1905 to 1929. With a women's studies perspective, this student explored topics such as immigration and naturalization, military service, eugenics and reproductive rights, and marriage and parenting.

### **Programming Highlights 2003–2004**

WS programming continually reflects the wide spectrum of issues and disciplines involved in the program. Especially given the absence of an Institute-wide women's center, many groups and programs also seek our administrative and financial cosponsorship of events. In keeping with the interdisciplinary and holistic educational focus of our field, WS was pleased to sponsor the following events this year:

#### **The Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Lectures on Women in the Developing World**

—Veiled Women: The Forbidden Agents Between Islam and Modernity (Cases from France, Turkey and Iran)—Nilüfer Göle.

—New Aesthetics of Performance: Africa, Education, and a Vision for the Future—WereWere Liking, a prolific author from Cameroon and the Ivory Coast.

### **Women in Science, Engineering, and Technology**

– Why Feminism Needs Biology: A Biology and Feminism Symposium – Professor Fausto-Sterling, Professor Wilson, and Professor Keller.

– Diversity across Science and Engineering Disciplines – Donna Nelson, associate professor of chemistry at the University of Oklahoma. This event was cosponsored with the Office of Minority Education.

### **Contemporary Political Science and Women’s Studies**

– Building Suburbia – Dolores Hayden, professor of architecture and urbanism and professor of American studies at Yale University. The event was cosponsored with the Center for New Words.

– Workshop on Gender and Politics: “Gender, Culture, and Human Rights Theory” – Brooke Ackerly. This event was cosponsored with the Political Science Department.

– Without Compassion and Comprehension: Why Current Policies Will Erode Conservative Power – Ellen Messer-Davidow, professor of English at the University of Minnesota.

– Workshop on Gender and Politics: “The Allure of a Black Conservative Disposition” – Hawley Fogg-Davis. The event was cosponsored with Political Science.

– Workshop on Gender and Politics: “Welfare Dependence: The Power of a Concept.” – Marion Smiley. The event was cosponsored with Political Science.

– Women, Men and Militarization: Feminist Perspectives at Home and Abroad – Cynthia Enloe, research professor of government and international relations at Clark University.

– Margaret Cho Live – Comedienne Margaret Cho. This event was cosponsored with the Undergraduate Association, Counseling and Support Services, LBGT@MIT, the Graduate Student Council, the Office of the Arts, the Division of Student Life and the de Florez Fund for Humor.

### **Women’s Writing and Literature**

– Beyond US Multiculturalism?: Asian Diasporas and New Transnational Cultures. – The event was cosponsored with the Department of Literature, the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies, the Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Studies and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at MIT

– “I am not a separate woman:” a Student Spoken Word Event—Hosted by associate professor Helen Elaine Lee (Writing and Humanistic Studies) and her class Contemporary US Women of Color: Reading and Writing the Short Story and by Professor Faery's class Writing about Race.

–How We Became Human—Joy Harjo, poet and professor of American Indian studies at the University of California at Los Angeles. The event was cosponsored with the Office of the Arts, the Committee on Campus Race Relations, Counseling and Support Services, the Office of Minority Education, Music and Theatre Arts, Literature, and the Writing and Humanistic Studies Program.

### **Women's Studies Film**

Filmmaking on the Margins:

–*Vulnerable Women and Girls in South Africa*, by filmmaker Julie Frederiske. This event was cosponsored with the Comparative Media Studies Program.

Chicks Make Flicks screenings and discussions:

–*My Father, The Genius*, by filmmaker Lucia Small

–*Next Stop Wonderland*, by filmmaker Laura Bernieri

–*Getting to Fenway* and *El Tiante: A Red Sox Story*, by producer Patricia Alvarado

–*Tupperware*, by director Laurie Kahn-Leavitt

–*Touched*, by filmmaker Laurel Chiten

–*94 years*, by filmmaker Laurel Greenberg

–*Dance by Design*, by producer Wendy Chan

–*The Flute Player*, by director and producer Jocelyn Glatzer

### **Global Women's Issues and International Women's History**

–*Ayesha's World: A Butcher's Family in Nineteenth Century Bombay*—Professor Asiya Siddiqi, professor of history at Bombay University. The event was cosponsored with the South Asia Forum

–MIT Celebrates Women's History Month: A Global View of Women's Power—Max Dashu, independent scholar with the Suppressed Histories Archives. This event was cosponsored with Counseling and Support Services

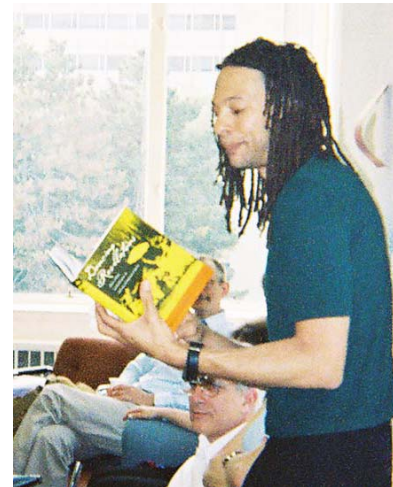
—Rights of the Body and Rhetorics of War: The Many Faces of Globalization—  
Rosalind Petchesky, professor of political science and women's studies at Hunter College and the Graduate Center at the City University of New York. The event was cosponsored by Women in Health and Medicine, MIT Western Hemisphere Project, MIT Pro-Choice, Social Justice Cooperative.

— “If Iola Were a Man:” The Sexual Politics of Ida B. Wells—Mia Bay, professor for the History Department at Rutgers University. The event was cosponsored with the History.

### **Theatre Arts, Dance, Music, and Women’s Studies**

—Residency in Music and Theatre Arts and the Literature Section—Peggy Seeger, folk singer of traditional Anglo-American songs and activist songwriter.

—Fish Tales, Rivers, and Other Female Parts—Anna B. Scott, assistant professor of dance for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of California, Riverside. Cosponsored by Theater Arts.



*Women’s Studies book party:  
Tommy DeFrantz.*

### **Research, Publications, and Service**

The WS faculty continued their active contributions to their individual fields. Most of their accomplishments are listed in the reports of their home departments, so special attention is given here to achievements relating to work on gender.

Professor Capozzola published “Marsden Hartley: The Return of the Native?,” in the *New England Quarterly* in March 2004. He delivered presentations titled “The Politics of Women’s Voluntarism in World War I America” and “Where do Conservative Women Fit in US History?” at the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute at Smith College in July 2003. In spring 2004, he supervised a UROP student on women and anti-war activism in World War I examining the letters of Kate Richards O’Hare. He gave an MIT presentation on the Goodridge decision, called “Everything You’ve Always Wanted to Know about Same Sex Marriage, but Hadn’t Even Thought To Ask” in January 2004.

Professor Cazenave published “Calixthe Beyala: Shaking the Establishment,” in the *Companion to Modern French Thought* (Routledge, 2004).

Professor DeFrantz published *Dancing Revelations: Alvin Ailey’s Embodiment of African American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2004). He also published several articles: “The Black Beat Made Visible: Body Power in Hip Hop Dance,” in *Moving Ideologies*,



edited by Andre Lepecki (Wesleyan University Press, 2004); and "Thelma Hill" in *Notable American Women*, edited by Susan Ware (Radcliffe Institute, 2004). Professor DeFrantz also published entries for Alvin Ailey, Michael Bennett, Robert Joffrey, and Jerome Robbins in the *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered History* (America Charles Scribner's and Sons, 2004). He was the production dramaturg for the workshop production of *Sleeping Beauty Notebook* with Spectrum Dance Theater in Seattle, WA, in April 2004; directed the world premier of *Ennobling Nonna*, at Kresge Little Theater in March 2004; and was the writer and director of *Queer Theory! An Academic Travesty*, a Second Staged Reading for the Theatre Offensive in Boston, MA, in September 2003.

Professor Jackson coedited the anthology *Indigenous Movements, Self-Representation and the State in Latin America* (University of Texas Press, 2003).

Associate professor of architecture Caroline Jones published "Talking Pictures" in *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science*, edited by Lorraine Daston (Zone Books, 2004). She spoke on "Walls of Harem and Dwellings of Chador, Thoughts on the Harem, Harem in History and Imagination," held by the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT in May 2004, and gave a presentation at the "Regulating the Queer Laocoön: Queering the Archive" session, at the Association of Art Historians conference held in Nottingham, UK, in April 2004.

Professor Keller published "What Impact, If Any, Has Feminism Had on Science?" in the *Journal of Bioscience* 29(1): 7–13, 2004, and "Génome, post-génome: quel avenir pour la biologie?" in *La Recherche* in June 2004. She served as visiting professor and historian-in-residence for National Centre for Biological Sciences in Bangalore, India, in February 2004, and as organizer of a workshop on intersubjectivity, development, and dynamical systems at the University of Minneapolis in April 2004.

Professor Lioi delivered a paper entitled "Giving Them the Axe: Witches, Slayers, and a Final Feminist Enchantment" at the second annual Slayage Conference in 2004.

Professor Perry published *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Culture and Literature, 1748–1818* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). She published an entry on "Mary Astell" in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), and two articles, "Jane Austen, Slavery, and British Imperialism" and "The Sexual Politics of Emma," in *Approaches to Teaching Austen's Emma*, edited by Marcia McClintock Folsom (Modern Language Association (MLA), 2004). She also wrote "Anthropological Approaches to Teaching *Clarissa*" for MLA's *Approaches to Teaching Richardson's Clarissa*, "Home Economics: The Representation of Poverty in Eighteenth-Century Fiction," for *Blackwell's Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, and "Mary Astell and the Enlightenment" for *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, edited by Barbara Taylor (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). She delivered a talk titled "Novel Relations: Changing Definitions of the Family," for a Riley Lecture at Alfred University in March 2004 and presented a workshop on 'Twa Sisters' (Child Ballad 10) at the New England Folk Festival held in Natick, MA, in April 2004. Professor Perry served on the MIT

Gender Equity Committee and the board of directors for the graduate consortium of Women's Studies.

Professor Resnick ran an international symposium in Madrid on Alice Bache Gould, a historian of early modern Spain. Ms. Gould was the first woman allowed to participate in the Spanish Royal Academy. The event drew participants from the United States, Spain, and England. The two-day conference took place at the International Institute in Spain and the Spanish Royal Academy in October 2003.

Professor Scribner published *Requiem for Communism* (MIT Press, 2003). She also published an article entitled "Second World, Second Sex, and Literature on the European Left," in *Comparative Literature: Journal of the American Comparative Literature Association* 55(3):217–28, 2003.

Professor Susan Slyomovics, who is the Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart professor of women and development in the Middle East and of anthropology, published "The Gender of Transposed Space," in the *Palestine-Israel Journal* 9/4:110–117, 2004, which was a reprinted revision from *Object of Memory*, published in 1998. Professor Slyomovics translated two works with Isabelle de Courtivron titled "Arabic: The Silenced Father-Tongue," by Leila Sebbar and "Writing in the Language of the Other," by Assia Djebar, in *In Other Words: Writers on Bilingualism, Creativity and Identity*, edited by Isabelle de Courtivron (St. Martins Press). Professor Slyomovics was granted a 2002–2003 Radcliffe Institute/Bunting fellowship and a 2002–2003 National Endowment for the Humanities award. She spoke on human rights in Morocco at the Radcliffe Institute on February 12, 2003. Professor Slyomovics has served on the advisory board for *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* since 1992.

Lecturer Sur received an National Science Foundation grant to organize an international working meeting for exploring social studies of science in India. She organized the International Conference on Social Studies of Science in India at MIT in November 2003, at which she gave a presentation on ranked hierarchies and modern science in India. She also organized several seminars and documentary screenings for the South Asia Forum at MIT. She presented on postcolonialism and science studies in the Post-colonial Studies Seminar, held at the Humanities Center at Harvard University in February 2003. She spoke on a panel entitled "Women in Science in Third World Societies" at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association held in Atlanta, GA, in August 2003. She also delivered a talk titled "Ever Since Orientalism: Implications of Graded Hierarchies of Race for Postcolonial Histories of Science" at the annual meeting for the History of Science Society held in Cambridge in November 2003.

Associate professor Emma Jinhua Teng (Foreign Languages and Literatures) published *Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683–1895* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

Professor Walley published *Rough Waters: Nature and Development in an East African Marine Park* (Princeton University Press, 2004). She was awarded the 2004 Jasper and Marion Whiting Foundation field grant. She presented on the film about female genital



cutting, *The Day I Will Never Forget*, by Kim Longinotto, at the Margaret Mead Film Festival held in New York City on November 16, 2003.

Professor Wood wrote entries on Inessa Armand, Nadezhda Krupskaya, and Zhenotdel in *The Encyclopedia of Russian History* (Macmillan, 2003) and was chosen to serve on the editorial collective of the journal *Gender & History*.

### **Affirmative Action Goals and Successes**

The Women's Studies Program remains committed to affirmative action in all that we do. We had no long-term staff or faculty appointments and no tenure-track faculty hires this year. The student work study team continues to be a diverse group of MIT students.

In our programming we have always paid close attention to diversity. For example, this year, we hosted acclaimed Native American poet Joy Harjo for a residency where she met with native students to discuss her work and the state of native America today. She also read her latest works and a diverse group of local native women singers, the Wolf Cry Singers, opened to a delighted interdisciplinary audience of MIT students and faculty, and Boston-area women's studies and Native American community members. In terms of diversity in curriculum, each women's studies class takes into account race as a key factor in looking at gender. Specifically, our classes Contemporary US Women of Color: Reading and Writing the Short Story; The Science of Race, Sex, and Gender; and Writing about Race tackle race directly.



*Women's Studies students, student staff, and coordinator of the program: Shereen Katrak, Priscilla Del Castillo, Akua Nti, Emily Meghan Morrow Howe, Jean Choi, and Bruno Sugai.*

### **Future Plans**

Professor Wood will serve as the director through AY2006. She is interested in working to widen faculty participation in the program across the Institute, and to strengthen the sense of intellectual community within WS on campus. The program will continue to pay special attention to the international, comparative study of gender and to the roles of women in science and technology, as areas particularly appropriate to WS at MIT. The program will be preparing to celebrate its 20th anniversary in February 2005.

**Elizabeth Wood**

**Director**

**Associate Professor of History**

More information about this program can be found on the web at <http://web.mit.edu/womens-studies/www/>.