



WOMEN'S STUDIES

INVIGORATING, EVOLVING, TRANSFORMING

DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 2 ISSUE 3

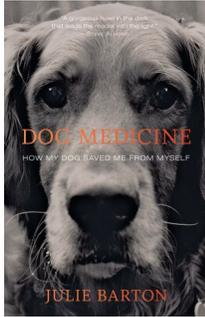
JULIE BARTON, WMS M.A. GRADUATE, AUTHOR OF *DOG MEDICINE*

Julie Barton graduated from the Southern Connecticut State University Women's Studies graduate program in 2004. She is currently living in California with her daughters. Her book, *Dog Medicine*, was published and released on November 10, 2015. You can view Julie's work on her website byjuliebarton.com.

Looking back on her time at Southern, Julie admits she is a Women's Studies nerd. During her time at our program, Julie knew she wanted to write and used her talent to produce a feminist novel for her thesis with the encouragement of her professors. Julie knew writing was her passion, but what she did not know was at this time in her life she was trying to tell her story. Her feminist novel was the beginning of her memoir, *Dog Medicine*.

Julie was asked how Women's Studies affected her life and her response justified everything Women's Studies and feminism fight for. She explained that Women's Studies is a constant reminder for her that she has permission to tell her story and that it is valid. She, as well as everyone, has the "right as a human being" to tell her story, "Nobody is going to give it to me, I have to take it." Julie still has books from her Women's Studies classes, such as *A Woman's Way of Knowing*, *Night Wood*, *A Feminist Anthology*, and *Black Feminist Thought*, are among her favorites.

Julie explained how Women's Studies became a major part of her thinking, citing mainstream feminist thinkers like Roxanne Gay and Lidia Yuknavitch. "It's really informed the way I approach the world." She further disclosed that Women's Studies and feminism is a place where she feels seen, safe, and at home. "I completely believe and understood that [feminism] was my



track, which is not exactly popular in the mainstream world, which is fine. The more work we do, the more subtle and not so subtle messages we get out there the better."

Julie credits Southern's Women's Studies program as her foundation for being a "self-driven student and writer." She pointed out that anyone can get a degree and get a job, but a degree in something you have a passion for is way more fulfilling. Julie stressed that the effort you put into something is the equivalent reward you will receive, so if you put in half effort, you will get half the reward, but if you put your heart and soul in, you will be fruitfully rewarded.

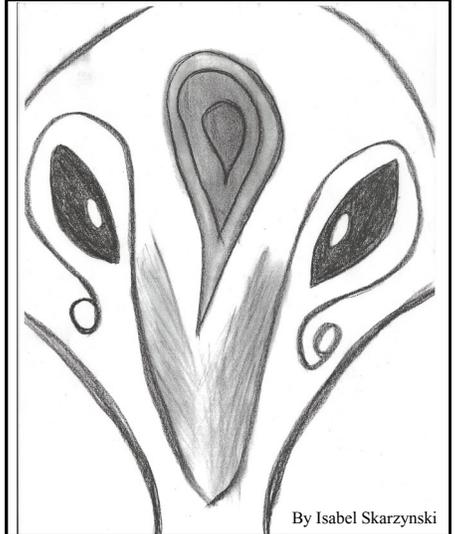
When asked for advice about being in or going into a Women's Studies program Julie replied with the following words: "I would say have deep pride in your program because it has a long history of being a humble producer of brilliance. I believe that when you take it out into the world, take it with confidence, the things you learned there, the patience and kindness and every bit of learning you get there is going to resonate in your life and it may not be in the traditional 'I'm going to get a degree and get a job related to that degree,' and it's not as easy as it sounds, but it will serve you in ways a vocational degree can't. Be grateful and have pride in this program, it's a wonderful place and get the most out of it as you can while you're there, people both in the Women's Studies department and outside the department."

-Interview and article written by
Isabel Skarzynski

STUDENT FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Lauren Todd was published on *The Feminist Wire* November 19, 2015. She wrote an article examining Drake's "Hotline Bling" and black masculinity. Follow the link below to read the article. "[Why Were We Laughing at Drake's Dancing in 'Hotline Bling?': On Body Movement and Black Masculinity.](#)" Or visit thefeministwire.com.

PASSIONS & PATHS



By Isabel Skarzynski

SAVE THE DATE

December 11, 2015: Women's Studies Holiday Party @5pm
March 31, 2016: Slut Walk @ SCSU
April 15-16, 2016: 22nd Women's Studies Conference at SCSU: "Women, Community, Technology"
Spring 2016: 64 Days of Nonviolence

Women's Studies Staff

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FEMINIST OF THE MONTH: DR. KIM MCKEAGE

Dr. Kim McKeage, professor of Women's Studies at Southern Connecticut State University, is passionate about the experiences of transgender and queergender individuals in the market place. She and two colleagues, Beth Crosby, of University of Wisconsin LaCrosse, and Terri Rittenburg, of the University of Wyoming, presented a poster on this topic at the NWSA conference in Milwaukee, WI earlier in November 2015. McKeage is exploring the experiences transgender and queergender people as they shop and patronize services. She explains that much of our "gender identity is constituted and communicated to others through consumption." For example "cosmetic kits to display feminine aspects or binders used to conceal breasts." Because the marketplace has a "relentless binary gender identity logic," the navigation of stores can be difficult for people who identify with non-traditional gender identities. Furthermore, Kim clarifies that transgender individuals may "make use of the gender binaries to cue the ways in which they want to express their identity," and that "queergender consumers may be more involved in disrupting the binary." Lastly, she warns that people who do not conform to the "dominant social norms about gender identity" can be at risk for harms of social disapproval and personal safety. Overall, McKeage's research focuses on the ways in which a "strongly binary gendered marketplace creates potential vulnerabilities" for transgender and queergender people.

NWSA RECAP

Dayeshell Muhammad, WMS MA student, attended the National Women's Studies Association conference, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. **Lauren Todd**, WMS MA candidate, attended the National Women's Studies Association Conference, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Lauren said her time there "was an outstanding, educational, and empowering experience." Todd's panel and roundtable choices revolved around the theme of feminist research and activism. She exclaimed, "it was beyond inspiring to listen and be a part of these academic papers and presentations." Todd presented on a panel, "Sexual Divestments from Empire: Women's Studies, Institutional Feeling and the 'Odious' Machine." She stated, "it was a rewarding experience to present on the panel, which was a sponsored session of the Anti-White Supremacy Taskforce," and she looks forward to NWSA 2016, which will be held in Montreal, Quebec.

HEALTH TIPS BY ERMONDA GJONI

- ⇒ Between work, school, and other activities, we tend not to find a moment to ourselves. Be sure to schedule some "you time" to relax, reflect, and rejuvenate, even if it's just 10 minutes.
- ⇒ Be your own best friend! Practice self-compassion, uplift, and encourage yourself. Being hard on yourself in difficult situations only releases the stress hormone cortisol, which lowers your motivation.
- ⇒ Put down your smartphone. Resist the urge to constantly stare into your screen to avoid interaction with others. Engage with people around you, and simply be in the moment, otherwise enjoy the silence.

From everyone at Women's Studies, we would like to congratulate our undergraduate intern, Ermonda Gjoni, on earning her degree in Public Health, in December 2015.

ALUMNI NEWS

Lauren Chicoski graduated from the WMS Graduate Program in May 2015. Her thesis is titled "Youth Involvement in Extracurricular Activities: Perceptions of Stakeholders in a School-Based Leadership Program." It involves extensive surveys and a focus group with student participants, their parents and school staff. Lauren believes the field of educational leadership has deep roots in traditional theories created by individuals whose biases continue to influence how some leaders develop and promote harmful policies and practices. She is currently in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at SCSU, and during her time in the program she wants to explore how feminist scholars have infused feminist theories and methods into social science research with particular implications for education policy.

22ND WOMEN'S STUDIES CONFERENCE

The 22nd SCSU Women's Studies Conference: "#FeministIn(ter)ventions: Women, Community, Technology," April 15-16, 2016. The conference aims to provide a critical site of inquiry into the intersections of women, community, and technology. In what ways have women and girls worked with technology, broadly defined, for the advancement of communities and/or shaping and building movements? We collectively investigate the past, present, and future of the intersections of women, community, and technology and showcase feminist in(ter)ventions with technology. How have women and girls participated (or not) in the fields of technology? In what ways does this inquiry intersect with the studies of gender, race, class, and sexuality?

We invite you to join us at this exciting conference on women, community, and technology. Specifically, how have feminist practices and women's movements impacted women's place in the world of technology? What are some of the global movements that underscore feminist interventions and inventions of technology? What lessons may we glean from women in communities throughout the world utilizing media and technology in fighting against war and destruction? What are some of the best practices of feminist in(ter)ventions for sustainable communities? Registration information will be forthcoming.

For more info: www.southernct.edu/womensstudies