



SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
WOMEN'S STUDIES

Invigorating, Evolving, Transforming

OCTOBER 2015 NEWSLETTER
 VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

INTRODUCING THE NEW COHORT



Christina Fawcett is a Women's Studies graduate student at SCSU. She graduated from UCONN in 2013 with a BA degree in political science. Born and raised in New Britain, CT, she is very active in her community. Christina is the program coordinator of the Slut Walk at SCSU in Spring 2016. In addition, Christina is the graduate student representative for the Women's Studies program and president of Graduate Student Affairs Committee. Christina has found herself being pushed to the limit and succeeding with the support of not only her cohort, but the entire WMS program.

Kristen Leigh is in her final year of the MFA program at SCSU. After taking one Women's Studies class in Spring 2015, she fell in love with the program and decided to add the graduate certificate to her academic plan. A fiction and nonfiction writer, she is working on a collection of essays about her hometown of Wallingford, CT, for her thesis. Kristen works as a GA in the Office of International Education (OIE) and has participated in a program in Germany through her office. This winter she will travel to South Africa through the OIE on the women's studies/geography interdisciplinary study abroad program. As an undergrad, she studied at the University of Hawaii and Oxford University, and graduated with a BA in Creative Writing from Salem College, North Carolina. She lives with her two children and beast of a dog in Wallingford.



Alisha Martindale is a first-year WMS MA student currently working in the Women's Studies Office as a graduate assistant. Her interest is in feminism and gender representation in the Arts and in Business. She received her B.S. in Studio Art and Photography from SCSU in 2010 and minored in Theater and Marine Studies. She hopes to one day figure out how to successfully incorporate all her interests in one career.

Aubrie Mazur is in her first semester of the Women's Studies Master's Program at Southern. She graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University in May 2015 with a bachelor's degree in English and a double minor in Women's Studies and Writing. For her thesis next year, she will be focusing primarily on domestic violence within the home, correlating the study with alcoholism and the cause and effect behind it.



Anthony Mitrano is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in English and an Advance Graduate

Certificate in Women's Studies. They are fascinated with language – specifically with English vernacular's ability to constantly evolve while blighting utterly dead language. They see this trend occurring within gender pronouns and their continual growth to accommodate non-cisgendered people. They are currently enrolled in both programs to research the bifurcation of language and gender in cultural, academia, and policy-based settings. Their goal is to inspire basic human rights and preferred gender pronoun usage in governmental and educational institutions.

Nicole Ratliff is in the Graduate Certificate Program in Women's Studies at SCSU. She has been a Campaign Coordinator with Know Your IX (KYIX.org) for two years. In addition, she also works for the United States Department of Agriculture in Fort Collins, Texas. She is taking the Certificate Program to keep her mind sharp before she heads to the University of Amsterdam next September for her Master's in Research: Gender, Sexuality and Society. In her free time, she spends time with her 5-year-old twins.



Sarah Sahib graduated with a BA in Media Studies and is currently working on her MA in Women Studies. She plans to be an activist and help women in the Middle East. Sarah grew up in the Middle East, and she realized that women's rights are vanishing there and someone needs to start a revolution!

Isabel Skarzynski is a first-year WMS MA student. Her interest is in media representation and feminist interpretation and integration of mediated images of women. Isabel received her BA in Media Studies from SCSU. She hopes to incorporate media studies and women's studies together and conduct research on how women use media to teach media literacy to young adults in efforts to raise awareness about the misrepresentation and stereotypes the media perpetuates about women. Her passions include karate and media activism. She also loves live music and having in-depth, interesting conversations with people.



Loraine Stokes is a first-year student in the Women Studies Master's program. From the beautiful island of Jamaica, Loraine chose to study at Southern because the institution is known to have an excellent Women Studies program. Her B.S. degree was done at the University of the West Indies in the field of Social Work. Her aim is to be a part of the dual Masters degree in Social Work and Women's Studies, and she anxiously awaits the experience. Loraine has a keen interest in working with teenagers who are pregnant and classified by society as "high school drop outs." She desires to create programs and other creative ways that can improve and empower the lives of this population. She lives by the philosophy that once you can think it, you can do it. Selah.



Diane Thompson's professional career involves two areas of concentration: special education and professional volunteerism. Her background in special education and leadership roles provide a foundation for making a difference in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment. She took two elective SCSU courses while pursuing her last master's, which inspired her to pursue a Masters of Arts Degree in Women's Studies. Through the Women's Studies program her goal would be to more clearly define specific areas to become involved in to improve the quality of life for young women today. Her experience in education and facilitating groups and coordinating volunteers are useful skills in pursuing this goal. Improving access to reproductive health services, with a special emphasis on adolescent development, is an area she sees a need in currently. Another area she wants to explore is empowering young women through career programs, which could include resumé writing, interview skills, and career exploration.

Pracilya Titus graduated from Pace University, with a double major in Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies and minors in French and East Asian Studies. She is currently in the Master's in Women's Studies program and plans to apply to the Social Work program and earn the Duals Master's degree in Women Studies and Social Work. She will be studying the concept of colorism and its effects on women. Pracilya has also always believed in girl empowerment, previously interning during her undergrad years for a women's rights organization facilitating discussions about social issues with young minority girls aged 14-18 as well as, more recently, in her previous job, forming a young girls' group to discuss similar issues. She currently works in higher education and provides students with support to be successful. She believes that education is the key that unlocks opportunities and plans to continue working with students.



Vanessa Young, while pursuing her WMS master's degree, hopes to combine her interests in geography and women studies in order to make a difference in women's lives. Within her community, she anticipates to begin volunteering at an alternative to incarceration program for women in the Bridgeport area. Currently, she is a GA for the geography department as well as a bartender in Black Rock, looking forward to traveling to New Zealand in December 2015. She would like to pursue research interests in social and environmental justice as well as human rights around the world. After completing her graduate degree, she has plans to be a writer, traveler, and political women's advocate.





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STATUS UPDATE



Amanda DiGioia is currently working on her MA thesis about birth and motherhood in the horror genre, while writing about gender issues in heavy metal in her spare time.

Lauren Todd is the Vice President of Triota, advisor of LGBTQIA Prism Club, Graduate Intern at the Sexuality and Gender Equality (SAGE) Center, and in her second/last year in the Women's Studies Master's program. Her master's thesis is titled "Loving Interracially: Queer Manifestations, Representations, and Narrative of (In)Visibility." She received her Bachelor's of Arts at UCONN, majoring in Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies and Spanish with a minor in Film Studies. She aspires to open a feminist healing center with her partner, where they can offer workshops, support groups, programs, and shelter for people of color, the LGBTQIA+ community, women, low-income people, people with disabilities, and any other oppressed/marginalized group.



PUBLIC HEALTH INTERN ERMONDA'S HEALTHY TIPS



Ermonda Gjoni a Public Health senior, she is graduating in December 2015. Ermonda is Albanian. She moved to the U.S. when she was 12-years-old. She is interested in health promotion/education, nutrition, and wellness. She is currently interning in the Women's Studies office. Ermonda loves music, babysitting, and family time. She plans to attend graduate school next year for her Master's in Public Health.

This column is to provide reminders on nutrition, exercise, mental health and well-being. Reach your best wellness by exercise, nutrition, and relaxation. The better your well-being, the more productive you are. Here are some quick tips to keep you energized for the semester!

- *Beat the stress by making time to do the things you love. Give yourself a break from work and studying. Relaxing with hobbies gives your eyes and mind a break, and leaves you feeling refreshed.
- *Never skip breakfast, regardless of when you wake up. This is the most important meal of the day.
- *Keep track of what you eat, and learn to eat proper portion sizes. Foods vary by type, but most of your servings should be fist size or a handful.
- *Get quality sleep. Good sleeping habits improve your mental and physical health.
- *Take advantage of the gym or any exercise space as much as possible. Squeeze in a workout at least three times a week. Exercise helps improve mood and boosts your energy.

STUDENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Amanda DiGioia will attend the Legion of Steel, a Metalfest and Conference in Berkeley, California, October 22nd-24th. Her paper is "Lechery, Lycanthropy, and Little Red Riding Hood in Type O Negative's 'Wolf Moon' (including Zoanthropic Paranoia)." She says this song, by gothic/doom metal band Type O Negative, is a modern-day feminist retelling of the Little Red Riding Hood myth.

Lauren Todd will be presenting on a Anti-White Supremacist Tack Force sponsored roundtable titled, "Sexual Divestments from Empire: Women's Studies, Institutional Feeling and the 'Odious' Machine," at the 2015 National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) conference in Milwaukee, WI, November 12th-15th.

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Presenting E-Board Members, 2015-2016

President: Dixie Waife is president of Triota. She is from Worcester, MA. She received a dual degree in Women and Gender Studies and Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. She will graduate with an MA degree in Women's Studies from SCSU in May 2016. She loves to hang out with friends and read novels in her spare time.

Vice President: Lauren Todd is vice president of Triota. She is currently involved in the group in New Haven Reads' 4th Annual Spelling Bee as a way to help the nonprofit raise funds for their critical literacy programs. She hopes Triota can raise awareness of intersectional feminist issues, encourage radical student activism at the university, and to get involved in the New Haven community.

Secretary: Kate Anderstrom is the secretary of Triota. She is responsible for recording minutes and the meeting, emailing them, posting them on OwlConnect. She also emails different events and reminders to the Triota members. Kate is the keeper of the binder, which will be passed down to the next Triota E-board. Her goal for Triota is to create the binder as a guide for instructions on how Triota conducts meetings, which will hopefully make it easier for future Triota leaders. She also wants to make sure Triota has a successful performance of *The Vagina Monologues* this year. In general, she hopes to help create a great camaraderie in Triota, which will in turn translate into successful fundraising and community service opportunities!

Treasurer: Betsy Nilan serves as Treasurer for Triota at SCSU. Her involvement in Women's Studies stems from her interest in social justice and women's rights issues. Betsy graduated from the University of Virginia in 2013, with a degree in Anthropology, she is currently in the Master's degree program in Women's Studies. In her free time, she works for the Get In Touch Foundation, a global breast health non-profit that teaches girls the importance of and how to do a breast self-exam. She also chairs the Young Professionals Advisory Committee for the Ms. Foundation for Women. She loves sauerkraut.

Mediator: Cake Turnip serves as the Mediator and Public Relations for Triota this year. She is an undergraduate major in Anthropology and minor in Women's Studies. She gets inspiration from ecofeminist discourse, intersectional feminism, and maple syrup coated coconut flakes.

STAFF OF WOMEN'S STUDIES

Fun Facts About the Staff

- Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, Ph.D.,** (Director and Professor of Women's Studies Program). A serious foodie, she puts food in the category of feminism, human rights, and social justice.
- Ms. Ermonda Gjoni,** (Public Health intern). She speaks Albanian and her immediate family consists of 60 family members.
- Ms. Alisha Martindale,** (Graduate Assistant). She can juggle, and makes homemade butter.
- Ms. Isabel Skarzynski,** (Graduate Assistant). She has practiced Tang So Doo karate for 12 years and trained mixed martial arts for 14 months.

SAVE THE DATE

- October 15:** Title IX Speakers Cathy Christy, Simona Sharoni, and Heather Turcotte @5pm in EN 121 A+B SCSU
- November 9:** Sage presents Pauline Park and Trans Issues and Activism @5pm
- November 12-15:** NWSA Conference: "Precarity," Milwaukee, WI
- March 31, 2016:** Slut Walk @ SCSU
- April 15-16, 2016:** 22nd Women's Studies Conference at SCSU: "Women, Community, technology"