

Program in Women's Studies

The MIT Program in Women's Studies (WS) continues to build on its success as an interdisciplinary undergraduate program and to provide a framework and community for scholarly inquiry focusing on women, gender, and race. Exploring gender cross-culturally, historically, and artistically with respect to other identity categories such as nation, sexuality, religion, and class, WS subjects strive to help MIT students better understand various constructions of knowledge and value and 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 advanced knowledge of women's and gender studies within particular disciplines who want to enrich their work by collaborating and studying across disciplinary lines. In addition, the program welcomes faculty who have an emerging interest in the fields of women's and gender studies.

Some highlights from this year were the inclusion of several events on South Asian and Indian women's studies, thanks in large part to the arrival of a new faculty member, assistant professor Haimanti Roy (History); the continued commitment of lecturer Abha Sur (WS); and the addition of visiting scholar Nandini Manjrekar (Women's Studies Research Centre, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, India). For the first time, MIT hosted a public celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 that included a multilingual, international, public reading of women's poetry by MIT faculty, staff, and students in Lobby 10.

Working with the Center for New Words, the Program in Women's Studies cohosted the second annual Women, Action, and the Media: Making Noise, Making Change (WAM!2006) conference, at which progressive journalists, academics, authors, activists, and students met, shared skills, and strategized to increase women's influence in the media.

As in the past, faculty from WS collaborated with faculty, staff, and students from the Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies (GCWS). The GCWS moved to MIT in August 2005 and has settled into its new home, adding a richness to the already strong women's studies community on campus.

Program Administration

During 2005–2006, associate professor Elizabeth Wood (History) directed the program. The WS Steering Committee consisted of assistant professor Beth Coleman (Writing and Humanistic Studies), lecturer Rebecca Faery (Writing and Humanistic Studies), Professor Jean Jackson (Anthropology), associate professor Christine Walley (Anthropology), lecturer Abha Sur (WS), and Professor Wood (chair). Ex-officio members of the Steering Committee were associate head librarian and collections manager for women's studies Marlene Manoff and WS program coordinator Emily Meghan Morrow Howe. The Curriculum Committee consisted of senior lecturer Wyn Kelley (Literature) and Professors Roy (History), Sur, and Wood (chair). The Programming Committee members were associate professor Helen E. Lee (Writing and Humanistic Studies), Professor Rae

Langton (Linguistics and Philosophy), assistant professor Anthony Lioi (Writing and Humanistic Studies), lecturer Faery, and Professor Wood (chair).

The Advisory Committee consisted of T. Wilson '53 professor of management Lotte Bailyn (Sloan); Class of 1949 professor of music Ellen Harris; Kenan Sahin dean and professor Philip Khoury (History); Professor Mary C. Potter (Brain and Cognitive Sciences); Ford International professor Bishwapriya Sanyal (Urban Studies and Planning); dean of science and Class of 1942 professor of chemistry Robert Silbey; and Kathryn Willmore, vice president and secretary of the Corporation.

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 and sections. Students may concentrate, minor, and petition for a major departure in WS. WS offered 34 subjects during AY2005–2006, an increase of four classes from the previous year. Approximately 350 students enrolled in women's studies classes, the majority registering for women's studies core classes. In response to student demand, WS offered two sections of Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, which allowed approximately 30 students to explore the field of women's studies at the introductory level. In keeping with the interdisciplinary and cutting-edge nature of the field of women's studies, this year WS offered several new courses in diverse areas—Close Encounters: Gender, Islam, and the West (lecturer Nilufer Gole, Women's Studies and Foreign Languages and Literatures); Sexual and Gender Identities (lecturer Kim Surkan, Women's Studies); Women in South Asia from 1800 to the Present (Professor Roy, History); and the Properties of Violence, Race, and Gender (assistant professor Sandy Alexandre, Literature).

The WS Faculty Intellectual Forum continued this year with new faculty sharing their current work with other WS faculty members and MIT faculty from other disciplines. Five WS-affiliated faculty members presented their work: Professor Coleman, "Race as Technology"; lecturer Surkan, "(Cross-)Dressing the Part: Butch Thespians at Women's Colleges, 1900–1940"; Professor Alexandre, "Hers & His(trees): Gendering the Nature of Lynching in *Beloved*"; Professor Roy, "Masculinity, Violence, and the Politics of Rehabilitation after the Partition of Bengal, 1947–50"; and visiting scholar Manjrekar, "Conflict, Education, and Gender in Contemporary India."

GCWS offered the following graduate-level courses: Interrogating Gender and Globalization; Women, Representation, and Music in Selected Folk Traditions of the British Isles and North America; Women's Health and the Body: A Cross-cultural Perspective Linking Personal and Social Change; and Feminist Inquiry: Strategies of Effective Scholarship. It also offered a workshop for dissertation writers. Professor Walley was the MIT representative to GCWS; in her role, she worked with MIT faculty members and GCWS coordinator Andrea Sutton to organize course-development events such as "Women, Wealth and Poverty: a Faculty Tea and Course Development Discussion" (with associate professor Anne McCants) and "Women, Religion, and Politics: a Curriculum Development Workshop" (with visiting scholar Manjrekar).

WS Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programs continue to be rigorous, providing excellent research experiences for MIT students and collaboration opportunities for faculty and students alike. For example, associate professor Margery Resnick (Foreign Languages and Literatures) continued her successful and ongoing project, "Oral Histories of MIT Women Graduates." The project completed four additional histories this year. The work continues to focus on international as well as American women graduates of MIT.

Programmatic Highlights

WS programming continually reflects the wide spectrum of academic disciplines and gender issues related to the field of women's studies. Especially given the interdisciplinary nature of women's studies and our commitment to cross-cultural collaboration, the Program in Women's Studies continues to initiate work with groups around MIT and in the Cambridge community. Many groups and programs also approach WS, seeking our administrative and financial cosponsorship. In keeping with the interdisciplinary and holistic educational focus of our field, WS was pleased to sponsor the following events during the past year:

The Geneviève McMillan–Reba Stewart Lectures on Women in the Developing World

- "Has Anyone Ever Seen a Photograph of Rape?" Ariella Azoulay, academic director of the Camera Obscura School of Art in Tel Aviv and professor of visual culture and critical theory at Bar-Ilan University
- "Palestinian Women Artists," Gannit Ankori, associate professor of art history at Hebrew University and visiting associate professor and research associate at the Women's Studies in Religion Center at Harvard Divinity School

Assorted lectures in women's studies as related to political science, African American studies, media studies, literature, environmental studies, philosophy, sociology, art, and history

- "Womanist-Feminist Social Movements, Power...and Much More," Christina Brinkley, professor of Africana and African-American Women's Studies at Simmons College
- WAM!2006—Women and the Media: Making Noise, Making Change, annual conference where progressive journalists, authors, activists, and students meet, share skills, and strategize to increase women's influence in the media; keynote speakers were Farai Chideya, Maria Hinojosa, Caryl River (cosponsored by the Center for New Words, Cambridge)
- "The Gender of Citizenship: Bodies, Subjects, and Publics in Weimar Germany," Kathleen Canning, professor of history, University of Michigan (cosponsored by the History faculty and the Sahin Lecture Series)
- "Women and Water," Marcia Brewster, task manager, Interagency Gender and Water Task Force, Sustainable Development Division, United Nations (cosponsored by the Technology and Culture Forum at MIT)

- “International Take Back Your Time Day,” Juliet Schor, professor of sociology, Boston College
- “His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in 18th-century England,” Amanda Vickery, reader in modern British women's history, Royal Holloway, University of London
- “The Downright Sexy Adventures of Drew Durango,” a staged reading featuring Broadway and cabaret star Darius De Haas produced by associate professor Thomas DeFrantz and the MIT Dance Theater Ensemble

Women in Science, Technology, and Engineering

- “Rocking the World: Women in Science,” a production by Thomas DeFrantz and the MIT Dance Theater Ensemble

MIT-specific faculty development

- “Affirmative Action at MIT,” a discussion lunch for WS faculty
- “MLK Scholars in Women's Studies,” a discussion lunch for WS faculty
- WS faculty lunch conversation with feminist historian and scholar of African American studies Leslie Harris

MIT student-centered events

- “Young Women, Feminism, and the Future: ‘Can I Be a Feminist and...Shave, Date Men, Eat Meat, Be Girly?’” Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, leading third-wave feminists; coauthors of *Grassroots: A Field Guide for Feminist Activism* (2005) and *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future* (2000); and cofounders of Soapbox Inc., a speakers' bureau representing outspoken experts with a progressive take on current events and culture
- Open House for MIT Students Interested in Women's Studies
- “Spoken Word,” an MIT student writing event (cosponsored by the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies)

Chicks Make Flicks (film screenings and discussions with directors, cosponsored by Women in Film and Video/New England along with Comparative Media Studies)

- *The Pursuit of Pleasure*, Maryanne Galvin
- *Echoes of Bats and Men* and other selected shorts, Jo Dery
- *Stay Until Tomorrow*, Laura Colella
- *Nothing Like Dreaming*, Nora Jacobson
- *Hineini: “Coming Out” in a Jewish High School*, Irena Fayngold
- *West 47th Street*, June Peoples and Bill Lichtenstein
- *Anonymously Yours*, Gayle Ferraro
- *The Devil's Music*, Maria Agui Carter

Global women's issues (2005–2006 emphasis on South Asian women's studies)

- A Celebration and Reflection of the 58th Anniversary of South Asia's Independence from Colonialism—*Bheetar Bahe Muktidhara/The Stream Within*, a documentary about women in the Indian freedom struggle, followed by a panel discussion, "New Challenges for Women's Movements in South Asia," moderated by visiting scholar Manjrekar
- *UnLimited Girls*, a film exploring feminism in contemporary urban India (cosponsored by the South Asia Forum at MIT, the Program in Women's Studies, and the Alliance for a Secular and Democratic South Asia)
- International Women's Day, a celebration and poetry reading by MIT faculty, staff, and students (cohosted with the MIT Alumni Association)
- "Feminism, Community, and Caste in India," a lecture by Nivedita Menon, associate professor of political science, University of Delhi, India, and fellow, International Center for Advanced Studies, New York University (2005–2006)
- "Writing about Women & Human Rights in Contemporary Pakistan," Beena Sarwar, artist, journalist, and filmmaker from Karachi, Pakistan, who is active in the country's women's rights, human rights, and peace movements
- "Politics of Sexuality in Contemporary India," Meena Gopal, faculty member in the Research Centre for Women's Studies, SNDT University, Mumbai; Jyoti Puri, associate professor of sociology, Simmons College, Boston; and Parmesh Shahani ('05, Comparative Media Studies)
- "Militarization, Fundamentalism, and Violence against Women in Bangladesh," Elora Chowdhury, assistant professor of women's studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston

Research, Publications, and Service

The WS faculty continued to make 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 explicitly relating to women's studies and gender analysis.

Assistant professor Christopher Capozzola (History) published "A Rough Draft: Selective Service in the Women's History Classroom" (*Journal of Women's History*, December 2005). Also, he presented a lecture at the Library of Congress titled "Mary Pickford Saves (for) America: Political Obligation and the Liberty Loan in the First World War." At the Policy History Conference, he presented "'Philippine Uncertainty, an American Problem': Marriage, Migration, and the Meanings of Filipino Citizenship, 1898–1946." He reviewed a manuscript for *Gender and History*. Professor Capozzola also served on the MIT Council on Work and Family.

Assistant professor Ian Condry (Foreign Languages and Literatures) organized the collaborative research project "Cool Japan: Media, Culture, Technology," which held three seminar meetings for faculty and graduate students in the Boston area who have an interest in Japan, media, popular culture, and globalization. He hosted the two-day "Violence and Desire in Japanese Popular Culture" (April 2006) international

symposium, which included presentations by professors from MIT, Harvard, Tufts, and Duke as well as by anime industry professionals from New York City and Tokyo.

Professor DeFrantz hosted a weeklong residency (March 19–26, 2006) of Broadway actor Darius de Haas to develop the stage work “The Downright Sexy Adventures of Drew Durango,” an original musical that explores issues of race, gender, sexuality, class, and individual identity. He also produced “Rocking the World: Women in Science,” coproduced with the MIT Dance Theater Ensemble.

Professor Sally Haslanger (Linguistics and Philosophy) published *Theorizing Feminisms* (coedited with Elizabeth Hackett; Oxford University Press, 2005). She served as coeditor for *Symposium on Gender, Race, and Philosophy* and taught an Independent Activities Period class, “Teachers as Scholars: the Social Construction of Gender and Race.” She chaired the Gender Equity Committee for the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Associate professor Stefan Helmreich (Anthropology) wrote “Kath Weston’s Gender in Real Time: Power and Transience in a Visual Age” (*Body and Society*, 2006). He was awarded the 2006 MIT Levitan Prize in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Associate professor Diana Henderson (Literature) was awarded the D’Arbeloff Fund for Excellence in Education Award (2006) and the Everett Moore Baker Memorial Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (2005). She published a review of *Dido, Queen of Carthage* at the American Repertory Theatre, for *Shakespeare Bulletin* (Winter 2006). She served as cochair of the Women and Culture in the Early Modern World seminar (Humanities Center, Harvard University).

Professor Henry Jenkins (Literature) published “So You Want to Teach Porn,” in *More Dirty Looks: Women, Pornography, and Power* (Pamela C. Gibson, ed.; British Film Institute, 2006). He presented “He’s in the Closet but He’s Not Gay: Male-Male Desire in Letters to Penthouse” at the Console-ing Passions: Feminism, Television, and New Media conference (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, May 2006). He also presented “Just Men in Tights: What Superhero Comics Can Teach Us About Genre” at Harvard University (January 2006) and the University of Texas, Austin (April 2006).

Associate professor Caroline Jones (Architecture) published *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg’s Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Professor Langton published “Feminism in Philosophy” in the *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Analytic Philosophy* (Frank Jackson and Michael Smith, eds.; Oxford University Press, 2005).

Professor Lioi published “An End to Cosmic Loneliness: Alice Walker’s Essays as Abolitionist Enchantment” in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* (fall 2006). Lioi delivered an invited lecture, “Dance Mix for the Devil’s Party: Heretical Unions in Feminist Theory and Practice,” at the Women, Poetry, and Politics

conference in honor of Alicia Ostriker (Rutgers University, April 2006). He serves as the liaison between the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment and the Conference on College Composition and Communication, which sponsors yearly discussions on ecofeminism pedagogy.

Lecturer Kelley wrote a chapter for *Melville and Women* (Elizabeth Schultz and Haskell Springer, eds.; Kent State University Press, 2006).

Marlene Manoff continued as an editor of WSSLinks, a comprehensive women's studies website sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries Women's Studies Section. This year she received the Association of Research Libraries Career Achievement in Women's Studies Librarianship Award.

Professor Resnick ran an international symposium on the history of women's education in the United States (International Institute, Madrid, October 2005). She served as president of the International Institute, which has promoted women's education in Spain since 1970. She supervised a senior thesis titled "Gendered Interior Spaces: A Comparison of Spanish Novelist Carmen Martín Gaité and Mexican Painter Remedios Varos."

Geneviève McMillan–Reba Stewart professor of the study of women in the developing world Susan Slyomovics (Anthropology) served as associate editor of the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*.

Abby Rockefeller Mauzé professor of the social studies of science and technology Sherry Turkle (Science, Technology, and Society) continues her work as director of the MIT Initiative on Technology and Self. Her 1984 book *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* has been published by MIT Press in a revised 20th anniversary edition with a new introduction, epilogue, and notes that bring it up to date.

Affirmative Action Goals and Successes

The Program in Women's Studies 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 staff team continues to be a diverse group of MIT students.

In terms of diversity in the curriculum, each WS class takes racial diversity into account as a key factor in looking at gender. In AY2005–2006 WS offered a number of classes that directly addressed the issue of American racial politics: *The Properties of Violence, Race, and Gender*; *Contemporary US Women of Color: Reading and Writing the Short Story*; *Advanced Essay Workshop: Negotiating Identities*; *the Science of Race, Sex, and Gender*; *Race and Gender in Asian America*; *Writing about Race*; and *the Psychology of Gender and Race*.

In our programming we continue to pay close attention to a variety of forms of diversity, prioritizing a rich schedule of multiracial speakers and events that address women's studies issues at the intersections of race, class, nation, sexuality, and gender expression.

Future Plans

Professor Wood will serve as the director in fall 2006 and Professor Haslanger as acting director in spring 2007. They are interested in working to widen faculty participation in the program across the Institute and to strengthen the sense of intellectual community within women's studies 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, areas particularly appropriate to women's studies at MIT. Drawing on past successes, WS will continue the Women's Studies Intellectual Forum faculty development series, the Geneviève McMillan–Reba Stewart Lectures on Women in the Developing World, the Chicks Make Flicks film screenings and discussions with local female filmmakers, and the WAM conference. In addition, the faculty are proposing two Martin Luther King scholars who will enrich the feminist academic community on campus. The dean's office will be hiring a new faculty member for the Geneviève McMillan–Reba Stewart women in the developing world professorship.

Elizabeth A. Wood

Director

More information about the Program in Women's Studies can be found at <http://web.mit.edu/womens-studies/www/>.