Notes from the Chair

Congratulations to this year’s graduating class of majors and minors, the first to have our new name, Gender and Sexuality Studies, on their diplomas. A special shout out to Angelica Hic, winner of the CHASS Tomás Rivera award.

We have begun living the promise of our change of name with an impressive range of initiatives this year. A new GSST Bachelor of Science degree has been approved by the UCR Academic Senate and will go into effect beginning in Fall 2015. This degree, unique in the nation, takes an interdisciplinary, transnational, intersectional approach to understanding the connections among gender, sexuality, and sustainability. We are working closely with the campus Sustainability Officer, the R’Garden, the Certificate in Sustainability Literacy committee, and many others to jump start the conceptual and pragmatic changes that the world’s accelerating climate crisis demands.

Two new faculty members joined Chikako Takeshita and me to develop the new B.S. curriculum. Feminist political ecologist Jade Sasser and political scientist Juliann Allison teamed up with us to write the proposal. Along with Tammy Ho, we introduced new courses for the B.S., including Gender and Sustainability; Women and Climate Change; Sustainability, Gender and Development in the Global South; Feminist Politics of Food, and Methodologies of Feminist Sustainability Studies.

We are launching another new initiative in the field of Trans Studies, expanding and strengthening the college’s offerings in LGBIT Studies. In January we will welcome new faculty member Eric Stanley, currently the holder of a UC President’s Post-doctoral Fellowship at UC San Diego and an outstanding scholar/activist in Trans Studies.
Eric took his Ph.D. at UC Santa Cruz, where he worked with Angela Davis, Donna Haraway, and José Muñoz. He is planning a foundational conference at UC Riverside to launch Trans Studies on campus and to explore this field’s broader implications in academia and beyond. The synergies between the analytical approaches of Sustainability Studies and Trans Studies, both of which require transitioning from binary, linear logic to relational thinking, profoundly enrich the concept of “interdisciplinarity.”

We are delighted to welcome two more new faculty in 2015-2016. Anthonia Kalu from the Ohio State University will split her appointment between GSST and Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages. Her research and teaching focus on African and African diasporic women’s writing and culture, oral history and historiography, and women’s experiences of war. She has also been very active in developing Afro-centric programs of study at African universities. Katja Guenther is joining GSST from UCR’s Sociology Department. She has done extensive transnational, comparative research on the diversity of feminist movements that have evolved in postsocialist East Europe since the end of the Cold War. She focuses on the importance of place and the scale of government in the development of women’s movements and is currently investigating how women’s activism in eastern Germany affects women’s participation in the STEM fields.

A grant from the Undergraduate Education Office for Spring 2015 has supported a more robust version of our Internship Program and seminar. Twenty students in WMST 198G have been working ten hours a week in positions at a wide variety of on and off-campus organizations, including the Undocumented Student Programs office, the Women’s Resource Center, the Office of Sustainability, the R’Garden, Operation Safe-House, and Annointed Vessels Inc. Guest speakers have visited the seminar to speak about sexual harassment in the workplace, new ways to look for jobs, and the wide variety of conventional and unconventional careers open to students graduating with a Gender and Sexuality Studies degree.

The department has also sponsored or co-sponsored many events, lectures, screenings, and performances on the UCR campus, and GSST faculty have made many presentations across the country and abroad, as you will read in the pages that follow. Our amazing majors and minors have been no less active; a few of them also share their experiences in this issue.

At the end of June 2015, I will be stepping down as Chair after three years of extraordinary interaction with a group of faculty who every day leave me more in awe of their brilliance, creativity, energy, and commitment to both teaching and research. Juliann Allison, who has been directing Interdisciplinary Programs, will become the new Chair, and Jane Ward, who served as Acting Chair during Fall 2014, will take up the position of Vice Chair. Juliann and Jane will ably guide the department through an exciting time of expansion and innovation.

A warm send-off to seniors. Stay in touch! Send your new emails and updates to the department at genderstudiesucr@gmail.com; let us know what you are doing. Come back and visit. Know that we are here to support you in this new chapter of your lives.

- Margie Waller

SENIOR FAREWELL: Yasamin Sanaiha

Dearest Faculty, Family, & Friends: I would like to thank you for making a difference in my life and pushing me to my best possible potential. I will never forget all the great memories and the friendships that I’ve made at UCR. I am truly blessed not only to have had this opportunity, but also for the place I’ve known as my second home for the the past 3 years. Thank you for teaching me how to persevere and giving me the unconditional support and confidence to reach my goals. I have been inspired to be the best version of myself and to find my path. I can’t wait to see what the future holds in store for me!

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.”

Love, Yasi
Tomás Rivera Award

Angelica Hic

The Tomás Rivera Awards are annually presented to two graduating seniors from UCR’s College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) based on academic excellence, creative achievement, and commitment to community service. The GSST faculty are thrilled that Angelica Hic was chosen as one of this year’s recipients. Below are edited excerpts from Prof. Margie Waller’s nomination letter:

Angelica Hic is a profoundly engaged person, who connects readily and deeply with the young people in serious trouble who find their way to Operation Safe-House, a program for at-risk youth. Her background in Guatemala and El Salvador seems to have prepared her to deal empathetically and effectively with the problems of others.

Angelica is a double major in Sociology and Women’s Studies/GSST who will graduate in June. Her family has deep indigenous roots, and she is bilingual in Spanish and English. As a first generation college student, she has been resourceful in connecting with the Chicano Student Programs, Women’s Resource Center, and Native American Student Programs.

Angelica is dedicated to helping survivors heal and find their way. She wants to work in a non-profit that supports the healing of people who have undergone domestic violence and rape. After graduation, she plans to continue working at Operation Safe-House and at a rape crisis center.

Among her many campus activities, she has served on the student staff of Chicano Student Programs, as a Highlander Orientation Facilitator, and as a Chicano Link Peer Mentor. She is a member of United Students Against Sweatshops and RAZA. She has spent two summers volunteering for UCR PACE (Pursuit of Awareness through a College Education) and has volunteered at the Cathedral City Public Library and for Cathedral City’s High School Special Ed Program.

The department faculty are deeply impressed with Angelica’s natural leadership abilities and her intellectual brilliance, as well as by the tremendous energy with which she engages the most intractable seeming situations.

SENIOR FAREWELL: Stephanie Ochoa

I am so happy to have been able to find this department my first year here at UCR. I would like to thank Piya Chatterjee, Margie Waller, Tamara Ho, and Alicia Arrizón for exposing me to a new world of possibilities. Being a part of this department has opened my eyes to what the world can be, as well as the work that needs to be done in order to achieve our vision. As a first generation Latina student, it was a struggle to find materials that helped support my everyday lived experiences. Life to me seemed so limited until I was able to read and hear the voices of women like me who have struggled to get a higher education, all the while having to take care and support their family. I now leave UCR ready and with the energy and knowledge needed to continue on with my education. I hope to attain my Master’s in Higher Education and continue to support the visions of our students.

Outstanding Achievement & Academic Excellence Awards

Zachary Gillett

In addition to receiving the Academic Excellence award among the students in the GSST department, Zachary Gillett was chosen by the CHASS Dean to receive the College’s Outstanding Achievement Award, which recognizes exemplary achievement in academics and research or creative activity, breadth of involvement, and commitment to service and citizenship.

Raised in California, Zack graduated from San Dimas High School, began with a psychology major at UCR, and later added a second major in Women’s Studies. He joined the UCR Honors Program during his sophomore year, has maintained a 3.9+ GPA, and has been on the Dean’s Honors List for 14 quarters. Zachary plans to go to graduate school to complete a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and hopes to become a practicing therapist.
Anthonia C. Kalu

Anthonia C. Kalu will be joining UCR next year as a professor jointly appointed in the Departments of Comparative Literature and Gender and Sexuality Studies.

She comes to our campus from the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Kalu is a Past President (2013-2014) of the African Literature Association. Her research interests include African and African American literatures and literary theory construction, Women in the African Diaspora, African development issues and multiculturalism.


Eric Stanley

Eric Stanley will be joining the department in Spring 2016. He earned a Ph.D. in the History of Consciousness at University of California Santa Cruz and, prior to coming to UCR, was a President’s Postdoctoral Fellow in the departments of Communication and Critical Gender Studies at UCSD.

Along with Chris Vargas, Eric is a co-director of the films Homotopia (2006) and Criminal Queers (2011), and co-editor of the collection Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex (2011) with Nat Smith.

Eric’s current monograph, Gender Non-conformity, and the Aesthetics of Violence is interested in what forms of life exist in the wake of the structured abandonment and direct attacks on trans/queer and gender non-conforming people of color in the US. Through an analysis of incarceration, murder, HIV and flows of capital and visual cultures, Eric argues that these forms of violence are not the work of “a few bad apples” but constitute the democratic form itself.

Eric continues to organize with the activist group Gay Shame in the Bay Area and is excited to offer classes at UCR on queer prison studies, disability and normativity, trans media cultures, and postcolonial feminism.

Katja M. Guenther

Katja M. Guenther is delighted to be joining the Department of Gender and Sexuality Studies after spending seven years as a faculty member in Sociology at UCR. Her research focuses on gender, social movements, and the state in comparative perspective. Her first book, Making Their Place: Feminism After Socialism in Eastern Germany (Stanford U Press, 2010) looked at how gender and opportunities for feminist resistance vary across places and scales of governance.

Professor Guenther is continuing to work on feminist social movements in post-socialist Europe, as well as engaging in two other research projects. The first of these examines gender politics within secular social movement organizations with a particular (continued on page 5)
emphasizes the importance of understanding how discourses of science and rationality exclude women. The second explores race, class, and gender issues in human-animal relationships and the policing of such relationships through state agencies like animal control services. Her work has been published in journals such as Gender & Society, Mobilization, Signs, and Politics & Gender, among others.

Guenther enjoys SCUBA diving, traveling off the beaten path, and hiking with her dogs. She is looking forward to teaching the department’s introductory course "Gender and Sexuality" (GSST 001S), as well as "Women, Politics, and Social Movements" (GSST 109) in the 2015-16 academic year.

Juliann Emmons Allison

Juliann Emmons Allison joined the GSST faculty in Fall 2014. She is among the founding faculty of UCR’s School of Public Policy, and was Director of Interdisciplinary Programs through Spring 2015. Allison’s research and teaching interests emphasize political economy, environmental politics and policy, and community-based social change, especially as it relates to the gendered dimensions of environmental sustainability and conflict resolution.

During the past year, Allison has collaborated in the development of the new B.S. in Sustainability Studies. She also supervised more than 30 undergraduate interns in CHASS and the School of Public Policy. Some of these interns participated in one of Allison’s community based participatory research projects—on Inland Southern California’s logistics industry, or on suburban walkability. The current foci of the logistics project are improving warehouse workers’ access to health care, and developing a field guide to the region’s logistics industry. The recently completed walkability project provides a template for improving public health through suburban land use planning, and guide to the community organizing necessary to support these efforts.

Allison’s current research projects include: women’s leadership in the renewable energy sector; gender, geography, and natural gas fracking; and the embodied geographies of drought and development in Southern California.

Allison will be teaching a version of GSST 21 “Gender and Sustainability” in the CHASS Connect series on Sustainability in Fall 2015. In addition to sharing teaching responsibility for core GSST courses, Allison expects to offer courses in sustainability studies; gender, development, and environmental change; and the gender politics of energy.

Oscar-Nominated Former UCR Women's Studies Instructor Releases New Film

On May 12, the GSST Department and the Women’s Resource Center co-hosted a well-attended screening of the new documentary on campus sexual assault, The Hunting Ground, directed by Kirby Dick and produced by one of our own, Amy Ziering, who taught in the department in the 1990s. Ziering and Dick are Academy Award nominees for their documentary The Invisible War about sexual assault in the military.

The Hunting Ground is sweeping the nation and has already eventuated in new legislation in several states. After the screening, attended by over 300 students and UCR administrators, there was a lively question and answer session.

UCR, along with other UCs, is developing new procedures for the prevention and handling of campus sexual assault. Student input is welcome and should be sent to either James Sandoval, Executive Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, or Susan Allen Ortega, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Health and Wellness. The student-run, peer mentoring program SAVE (Sexual Assault and Violence Education), based in the Women’s Resource Center, also welcomes volunteers and interns.
The UCR Academic Senate voted to approve a new Bachelor of Science in Sustainability Studies in May 2015. Through this new program, the Gender and Sexuality Studies department is excited to offer a comparative, interdisciplinary, transnational approach to the theories and practices of building a sustainable future. The B.S. in Sustainability Studies is an organic outgrowth of the department’s curriculum, linking issues of Gender and Sexuality Studies with an extensive range of courses in climate change, cultural studies, environmental studies, environmental economics, health and medicine, media production, and public policy.

We anticipate that the new curriculum will be of strong interest to students from other colleges, such as College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (CNAS) and Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE).

Courses counting toward the new major will bring scholarship in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences into conversation with real world problems and public policy. Sustainability studies aims to equip students with both theoretical and practical understandings of research design, proposal-writing, data collection tools, analysis of results, and the dissemination of research results to key stakeholders. The new major will enable students to deepen their understandings of sustainability, gender, and sexuality, and will develop practical skills for conducting community-engaged research.

Women Seen as Competitive Advantage in Renewable Energy.

Congratulations to All our Graduates!!

GSST Department Awards

**Academic Excellence**

Zack Gillett

Katherine Zoque

Angela Xu

Melissa Rodriguez

**Activist Scholar**

Jorge DeLos Santos

Angelica Hic

Stephanie Ochoa

Toni Pasion

Lex Soto
Alumni Update: Eli Tizcareño (Environmental Science, 2013)

Since graduation in 2013, I’ve been working for American Friends Service Committee in Los Angeles as Program Coordinator for the Roots for Peace program. Through my position, I work with high school youth of color and community members who are interested in organizing in their communities. We use food as a method to promote critical thinking, organizing skills, and plan social justice actions that support positive health changes in neighborhoods where we work. When not at work, I am spending time with family, supporting causes, biking, trying to learn to play guitar and slowly but steadily transforming our yard into a medicinal plant, native, fruit tree garden. If you’d like to get in touch, my email is eli.tizcareno@gmail.com.

Below is a poem Eli shared at the department’s Graduating Seniors luncheon in 2014:

La Camisa Blanca
by Eli Tizcareño

I hold it in my hand
Still moist from the sun
Sweat from their back
Cold in my hand as I swipe it off the couch
Upset.
I can never make this room look my way
"Calmate" I tell myself, give it a rest.
My father’s white shirt
I’ll find it again,
Hanging on a wooden chair
On the oak floor next to their bed
On the bathroom floor like a mat in place
As if it needs to rest...
"Calmate" I tell myself, they deserve to rest.
The sun shines on their face
The sweat
The hammer and drill that he holds throughout the day
The splinters on his short stubby tan fingers
The scar from the metal he once tried to cut
The worn down blue jeans he now likes wearing
After not wanting more than brown and gray Docker pants.
Manos like Diego Rivera…
"Mas bien como su mama," my mom explains
He smiles in excitement when we tell him this
As he prides in her living on
"Trabajadora y buena como el"
The percolation across their face
They drink ice-cold water in the hot sun
Glass at home, and plastic when they're gone
7 to 7, maybe 8 or 9pm
Tired, darkened face, from the stresses of life.

“Go to sleep,” we tell him
Snoring like the lion king gone mad.
La Camisa Blanca...It tells a story we only partly see
It’s the story of a worker, parent, mother, brother, and me
It’s the story of labor and the art of the kitchen as well as of carpentry
Of the women's labor in the past and present scenes
Of my father, my mother, and my grandmothers.
La Camisa Blanca...a story we only partly see
Ritualized early morning showers
Wheat toast with butter and sugar
Hot instant coffee with 2% milk
All prepared by my mother in perfected quantities.
The cutting, gluing, screwing, and painting of wood
It tells a story we only partly see...
Of a mother and wife that helped him become who he is
Of a mother and wife that support the work he gives
Working without pay for something they love and breathe
It’s the unpaid labor that brings light to this...
The cooked food
The cleaned floors, kitchen, bathroom, and living room where I find this shirt
The invisible labor that so many women put without a fee
Yet the smell of lavender from the overuse of softener reafirms what I clearly see
This is the story of immigrant labor, familia, salud, and sweat that speaks
This is the white shirt that I hold, wet, still cooling down from the heat.
Alumni Update: Roxette Villegas (WMST & Anthropology, 2012)

I graduated UCR in 2012 with a BA in Anthropology and Women’s Studies. As a first generation college student it was very easy to forget to plan for life after college because I was so busy trying to succeed in a world completely new to me. During graduation, I remember feeling excited to hold my hard-earned degree in my hands and yet extremely anxious because I did not know what I was supposed to do next. I took courses at Mt. San Antonio College in order to reflect on my career and educational goals and interned at two hospitals under the Clinical Care Extender Program. I became interested in nursing and health fields, because I knew I could apply what I had learned from my majors and have personal relationships with people in need.

While at Mt. SAC I met a professor who was kind enough to recommend a new job opportunity working at The Genesis Group, a surrogacy and egg donation agency located in Old Town Pasadena. The Genesis Group’s mission is to assist prospective parents, surrogates, and egg donors with every aspect of the in vitro fertilization process. We work with heterosexual, gay and lesbian prospective parent(s) from around the world and facilitate the process of finding their ideal egg donor or surrogate. Egg donors and surrogates are highly in demand and are compensated well for their contributions.

Initially I felt intimidated working in a field I knew very little about. I started working at The Genesis Group as an administrative assistant. My current title is Surrogate Coordinator. In this role, I am responsible for recruiting and educating new surrogates on the journey of gestational surrogacy. I have the opportunity to establish personal relationships with the surrogates because I am involved in every aspect of their journey. I “hold” the surrogates’ hands throughout their surrogacy journey. I accompany them to their most important medical appointments, including the embryo transfer. I share their moments of joy such as when they learn the embryo transfer was a success and are ecstatic to share the news. I also share moments of sadness such as when a surrogate discovers she miscarried or had a failed transfer and is heartbroken to inform the prospective parents. Everyone involved in the surrogacy process is at a vulnerable state, from those who have dreamed of having a child to the surrogates that want nothing more than to give prospective parents the greatest gift.

I enjoy the fact that my job requires me to be emotionally involved. All the surrogates have my personal cell phone number and are encouraged to contact me if they ever need anything. All pregnancies have their highs and lows, but due to the great pressure the surrogates may feel, we want to make sure everything possible is done to care for them, both physically and emotionally. The company arranges for local surrogates to meet once a month for a group therapy session. This allows the surrogates the opportunity to get to know each other and create a support network. I am part of an amazing industry that not only helps create families but also empowers women who enjoy being pregnant.

My life has changed so much in the past few months. I completed the nursing prerequisite classes at Mt. SAC thinking that it was the career path I would pursue. Now that I have been exposed to the growing field of egg donation and surrogacy, I am having second thoughts.

Those interested in learning more about surrogacy or egg donation may contact Roxette at: roxette@genesissurrogates.com.
New Faculty Book: *Romancing Human Rights*

Tamara Ho was thrilled to celebrate the publication of her new book *Romancing Human Rights: Gender Intimacy, and Power between Burma and the West* with University of Hawai‘i Press in spring 2015. Weaving together the fictional and non-fictional, *Romancing Human Rights* maps “Burmese women” as real and imagined figures across the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Focusing on Burma/Myanmar, Ho puts literature in conversation with human rights and offers a new voice in debates about representation, racialization, migration, and spirituality. *Romancing Human Rights* demonstrates how Burmese women break out of prisons -- both real and discursive -- by writing themselves into being. Ho assembles an eclectic archive that includes George Orwell, Rita Moreno, Rambo, Nobel Laureate and parliamentarian Aung San Suu Kyi, and critically acclaimed authors Ma Ma Lay and Wendy Law-Yone. Her close readings of politicized performances by women in Burma, the Burmese diaspora, and the United States illuminate their contributions as authors, cultural mediators, and practitioner-citizens.


The cover of *Romancing Human Rights* features Chaw Ei Thein, a painter and conceptual/performance artist whose work candidly portrays socio-political conflict and explores human rights and censorship. After being jailed and exiled, Chaw Ei Thein was awarded political asylum in the US in 2009. She is considered one of the most important contemporary artists to emerge from the Southeast Asian country which some continue to call Burma and has exhibited and lectured extensively in and outside of Myanmar. Ho’s book cover features Chaw Ei Thein’s 2010 performance “Living Monument” (photo by Thein Min) and the back cover features her 2004 performance “We are Burma in Tokyo” (above, right). Recently, Chaw Ei Thein’s “Camouflage Series” was featured as part of Asia Week New York 2015.

Ho has also published related essays on Burma, gender, and contemporary literature in *The Routledge Companion to Asian American and Pacific Islander Literature* (ed. Rachel Lee, 2014) and *Signs Journal* (Spring 2015, 40.3).

LEFT: UCLA Professor David K. Yoo, co-editor of UHP’s Intersections series, with Professor Ho and her book.

CENTER: Chaw Ei Thein’s sculpture *Bodhi and Bells* (2015), with her painting *What a Wonderful World #5* displayed in background, at the exhibit "My Country" at Shalini Ganendra Fine Art in NYC.
New Faculty Book: Not Gay

Jane Ward’s new book Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men will be in print in July 2015 from NYU Press. Not Gay is part of the distinguished NYU Press Sexual Cultures series, home to pathbreaking books in queer studies. Before publication, the book has already received the attention of numerous media outlets, including Newsweek, Business Insider, Raw Story, and The Conversion. Taking sex between straight white men as its point of departure, Not Gay offers a new way to think about heterosexuality—not as the opposite or absence of homosexuality, but as its own unique mode of engaging homosexual sex, a mode characterized by pretense, disidentification and heteronormative investments. Although the U.S. media has recently been abuzz with commentary about sexual fluidity, most accounts have focused on “girls who kiss girls” for the pleasure of male spectators, or men of color “on the down low” who are presumed to be gay and in the closet. By contrast, Ward’s book examines how straight white men—the dominant culture’s most normalized and idealized figures—fit in, and sit outside of, narratives about sexual fluidity. Not Gay follows straight white men’s homosexual encounters across numerous sites—from biker gangs and public bathrooms to college fraternities and the United States military—illustrating the unique ways that whiteness and masculinity converge to circumvent the cultural surveillance applied to men of color.

Faculty News

Sherine Hafez’s current book project focuses on the role of women in the Egyptian revolution. Based on interviews with 40 activists, the book investigates how women’s bodies become spaces of contestation through which battles over authenticity, cultural dominance, and political control are fought. A new chapter by Hafez discussing women in the Muslim Brotherhood will appear in the volume Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Cultures (July 2015, ed. Gul Ozyegin). Professor Hafez continues to teach new classes on the recent political transformations in Egypt and the Arab world. Her CHASS Connect class, “Arab Uprising: Blood, Bodies and Dissent,” ended with a celebration of students’ portfolios and a talk by activist and professor, Atef Said (see above). The course will be offered through GSST in Winter 2015.

Earlier this year, Hafez was invited to give a keynote in Holland at the Netherlands Interuniversity School for Islamic Studies (NISIS) where she discussed her fieldwork in Egypt working with women’s Islamic organizations. At Rice University, she spoke about women’s activism in the Arab world at a conference on the Arab Spring sponsored by the James Baker Institute for Public Policy. Hafez’s work at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), as president of the Association for Middle East Anthropology, also involved her in various other projects, working with students in Middle East studies as well as organizational committee work.
Jade Sasser is currently working on her first book, Making Sexual Stewards: Population, Climate Activism, and Social Justice in the New Millennium, which explores the role of environmentalism in movements for women’s reproductive health and rights. Based on extensive interviews and participant observation, the book traces the shifting framings of population control, reproductive rights, choice, and social justice, in an era of widespread anxiety over global climate change. A chapter from the book will be published in the Routledge International Handbook on Gender and Environment (forthcoming, 2016).

In December, Professor Sasser plans to attend the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP21) in Paris, and will bring along two students to help conduct research on gender and technology transfer in East and Southern Africa. Sasser will teach a new course, "Gender and Climate Change" in the 2016-17 academic year, in addition to her current courses, "Sustainability, Gender, and Development in the Global South," "Women, Feminism, and Society in Global Perspective," and "Feminist Research Methodologies."

Chikako Takeshita conducts her research in feminist science and technology studies. Her first book, The Global Biopolitics of the IUD: How Scientists Construct Contraceptive Users and Women’s Bodies (MIT, 2012) traces the development of the intrauterine device (IUD) over 50 years (1960s-2000s). In 2014, the book received several positive reviews. She was also asked to write an article on the biopolitics of the IUD for the French journal Travail, Genre et Sociétés. The essay demonstrates how, by using or rejecting the IUD, women in the global South have mitigated anti-natal government policies, eluded husband’s demands for more children, and bargained with healthcare providers in order to protected their physical health and regulate reproduction in ways that suit them. Takeshita is currently working on three new research projects that critique the technocratic model of childbirth. "Her Cesarean: Pictures and Stories of Women’s Embodied Experience" showcases drawings and testimonies by women who have had surgical childbirth. This research will generate a broader understanding of how childbirth experiences affect women’s sense of motherhood. "Home Births in the Media" investigates the counter-narratives provided in the pro-homebirth documentary The Business of Being Born and the BBC historical drama Call the Midwife. Takeshita's essay will offer a feminist analysis of alternative representations of childbirth in the media. Finally, "Motherprogeny: A Symbiotic Model of Pregnancy and Childbearing" draws on recent scientific findings on immunology and the human microbiome to imagine an alternative feminist ontology of the pregnant body. Instead of thinking about the mother and fetus as inherently separate beings with conflicting interests, Takeshita urges that they be seen as symbionts or being in a symbiotic relationship that extends to the post-natal period.

In 2014-15, Professor Takeshita also worked on the curriculum and proposal for the new B.S major in Sustainability Studies. She also participated in three campus-wide faculty collaborations: the California Agriculture and Food Enterprise (CAFÉ); Narratives in Tandem (an NEH-funded workshop on faculty development in health humanities); and the Science Studies Hour. Takeshita was a Spring 2015 resident fellow at the Center for Ideas and Society along with Professors Dana Simmons (History), Juliet McMullin (Anthropology), Sherryl Vint (English), Norm Elstrand (Botany & Plant Sciences), and David Lo (Medical School). The group studied the meaning of “the broader impacts of science” and developed an NEH grant proposal to generate more UCR collaboration between faculty in the humanities/social sciences and in the sciences/engineering. Prof. Takeshita is also serving on the California Open Education Resource Council, a statewide initiative to increase the number and adoption of high-quality free or low-cost textbooks in order to lower the cost of higher education.

Outgoing Chair, Marguerite Waller, has presented papers this year at several conferences: The Pacific Ancient and Modern Languages Association (PAMLA), the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS), the California Interdisciplinary Consortium of Italian Studies (CICIS), and the Cultural Studies Association (CSA). She has been chosen to edit the next issue of the open-access on-line journal California Italian Studies, which will focus on “Moving Images.” She has also published articles on immigrant protest, migration and sovereignty, and feminist Italian political satirist Sabina Guzzanti.
Mis amoríos con las soldaderas
My Love Affairs with Soldaderas

By Alicia Arrizón*

My fascination with the fearless soldaderas of the Mexican Revolution began in my teens. Although at that time I didn’t know how vital the participation of women in the war was, I often sang the corridos (ballads) that honored them. “La Adelita”, one of the most famous corridos depicting a woman who participated in the revolution, is my favorite and I knew it by heart. The tone-deaf quality of my singing didn’t matter—as my family could attest—it was as though I was channeling the courage and soul of La Adelita, the protagonist in the ballad, as I sang it out loud in the desert of Arizona:

En lo alto de la abrupta serranía
acampado se encontraba un regimiento
y una joven que valiente los seguía
locamente enamorada del sargento.

Popular entre la tropa era Adelita
la mujer que el sargento idolatraba
y además de ser valiente era bonita
que hasta el mismo Coronel la respetaba.

In the heights of a steep mountainous range
a regiment was encamped
and a young woman bravely follows them
madly in love with the sergeant

Popular among the troop was Adelita
the woman that the sergeant idolized
and besides being brave she was pretty
that even the Colonel respected her. 1

Inspired by La Adelita’s song, I would buy calendars and posters portraying beautiful soldaderas wearing colorful and revealing clothes. Most captivating to me were the cartridge belts that almost always hung prominently across the soldaderas’ chest; some carrying a gun or a Mouser rifle on one shoulder. These depictions influenced my way of looking and thinking about them, imagining their heroism. I wanted to be brave like them. I remember dressing up as a soldadera for a Halloween party once when I was a college freshman. No one knew who I was dressed as. People thought I was a female bandit. One or two jokingly asked if I was a female “frito bandito.” No! I would say, proclaiming: “I am la Adelita.” I really was.

In the early 1990s when I began writing the Latina Performance book, mis amoríos con soldaderas was reawakened after reading Soldadera, a 1938 play by Mexican American author Josefina Niggli. While Niggli’s play explores the heroic roles of women soldiers in the revolution, she illustrates the personal and ideological motivations that made them active participants. She represents Adelita, the main character, as a hero who sacrifices her life for the revolutionary cause. For Niggli, Adelita holds the spirit of the revolution. She is not a camp follower who followed her man to war, as the many version of the Adelita ballad would say. She embodies the revolution. I agree with author Elena Poniatowska who has explained in her book Las Soldaderas (2006), that women’s participation in the revolution was fundamental, that they were the makers of the Mexican Revolution—“they kept it alive and fertile, like the earth” (16).

Although famous corridos such as La Adelita, La Valentina and La Cucaracha idealized soldaderas, their experiences were more complex, tragic and profound than the romantic interpretations provided in these ballads. Most of the soldaderas who joined voluntarily the front lines of the revolution were mestizas or indigenous women. Sometimes they went into combat carrying their children on their backs, inside a rebozo (long woven scarf). Some soldaderas were teachers who left the classroom to join or support the troops. They risked their lives and left their families to take part in the

revolution. Regardless of their social status, the soldaderas did whatever was needed—they fought, foraged for food, cooked, nursed the wounded and performed many other essential services. The many roles they performed illustrate how these women were inevitably the ones who played the major role in the revolution.

One of the most startling situations of the revolution, given how we are taught to think of war (with men on the front, and women at home) is the fact that sometimes these women went into combat carrying their children on their backs, inside a rebozo. In Nao Bustamante’s 2015 exhibition Soldadera, a majestic rebozo made of Kevlar is draped high on a wall (below) — it is scaled up so that it can be wrapped and folded over and over again, to form a perfect shield.

The narrative of soldaderas, which became synonymous with Las Adelitas, lives on. The revolutionary character of soldaderas is embodied in Dolores Huerta, Rigoberta Menchú and Gloria Anzaldúa. In Mexico and the U.S. today, the name Adelita has become an inspiration and a symbol for any woman who fights for her rights and social change. She is the symbol foregrounding a model for representing the subject of history and popular consciousness. While she conveys a self-conscious performative space of gender and power relations, her narrative is caught in-between the margins of nationalistic and patriarchal histories, constantly moving back and forth between the two. As a border woman, La Adelita es mi otro yo. She is Nao Bustamante.

La Adelita or the soldaderas who participated in the Mexican Revolution, bear witness to the subject of feminism in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Her revolutionary spirit will remain alive inspiring the imagination, creativity and activism of Mexican women, Chicanas and Latinas. As Bustamante’s 2015 show demonstrates, the act of revisiting the revolutionary Adelita/soldadera is a reminder that we are trapped in history, and history is trapped in us (to think of James Baldwin in Notes of a Native Son, 1955). Her ground-breaking performance art has continually articulated a revolutionary aesthetics that seeks to unveil history and social change. In Soldadera, Bustamante re-imagines the narrative of soldaderas and their unbound history in conversation with new audiences and new technologies.

* A version of this essay was included in KCET’s website Artbound featuring articles written by UCR faculty and students that were inspired by Nao Bustamante’s Soldadera exhibition, curated by UCR Professor Jennifer Doyle (English).

**Spotlight on Activism**

**Toni Pasion**

After taking WMST 183 "Feminist Politics of Food" in winter 2015, senior and activist-scholar Toni Pasion cultivated the Food Justice plot in the UCR Community Garden as part of her WMST 198G internship. This work and an April gathering honoring Mauna Kea represent two of Toni’s passions and how she combines her feminist studies and practice: bringing together theory with action.

Two GSST plots are part of UCR’s Community Garden: Women’s Medicine and Food Justice. Because much of the region, from South Central LA to the edge of Riverside, is a food desert, R’Garden was conceptualized to aid in eliminating this situation, especially for students and the local community. According to Community Garden Coordinator Fortino Morales, the Gender and Sexuality Studies Department has been instrumental in the operation and growth of the R’Garden since it was first proposed and established.

Toni initially approached the Food Justice plot "from a perspective of cultural reconnection. I acknowledged it as planting on Cahuilla land and followed my cultural protocol for planting. To me, the opportunity to revitalize cultural reconnection through food and and the ecosystem is also food justice."

She explains, "I’ve learned that part of the beauty of being involved in the garden and community is that there are no political, social, economic barriers between people. It all comes down to whether you get your hands dirty or not. The physical work speaks for itself."

Toni urges others to join in this work: "I HIGHLY recommend involvement with the R’Garden for any and everyone. There’s so much potential for great interdisciplinary work between GSST and the R’Garden. I’ve also been inspired by Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement. I see the symbolism of planting our food as self-providence."

As co-founder of the UCR group Oceania Dance, Toni also orchestrated a community solidarity action on campus to honor the land and political
protests in Hawai‘i. The gathering, which took place outside of the Arts Building, followed indigenous choreographer Rulan Tangen’s workshop geared towards activating the human body by traversing through three realms of seed growth: above, middle (ground), and below. Toni explains, “This refined our purposes for the gathering in spiritual and physical realms that would follow.”

Mauna Kea and the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) constitute what Toni calls “an experience with racial inequality in my time.” Mauna Kea, located on Big Island in Hawai‘i, is the highest point in the Pacific Basin and the highest island-mountain in the world. This “sacred landscape” is constantly sought by academics and corporations for astronomical research. Currently, the TMT is in the process of being built. However, Native Hawaiians and those in solidarity with them continue to intervene in this construction through protests, social media campaigns, and relentless organizing.

Toni explains that the event was designed to honor Mauna Kea as it is, without the attacks of the TMT. “Our dialogue manifested the themes of protection, what we must protect the mountains against, migrations, connections between people, lands, and cultures -- solidarity. We used music, dance, and spoken word as tools to surpass barriers between people and spaces, and as vessels to connect to spiritual and physical spaces.”

The gathering started with prayer and an introduction to help attendees understand Mauna Kea and TMT. Prayers were said in ‘olelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language), with brief introductions and translations given in English. Then there was a reading of Native Hawaiian writer Emalani Case’s blog “A Voice for Mauna Kea,” a hula dance and ‘oli by Oceania Dance co-founders Deanna Kalali‘i Sun and Toni Pasion, and words from Dancing Earth advocate Liz. Director of Native American Student Programs Josh Gonzalez and his drum group provided songs and music, then Tangen spoke. All attending signed a banner declaring “UCR WITH MAUNA KEA,” and the gathering was commemorated with a photo featuring a mountain formation staged by Rulan. (see below)

Toni writes, “My intention was for everyone present to be truly active in the gathering (whether it be hearing, speaking, moving), so the introductions and translations were intended to be inclusive towards all who were present. Signatures on the banner included statements of solidarity in different languages. The staged picture (below) represents the mountain. The heartbeat is symbolized by the drum, and the four corners/directions are symbolized by the red cloth. This banner is an actual document of solidarity between diverse cultures here at UCR. This gathering has many subjective interpretations that are all distinct to how it applies to each person’s life. To me, this utilized intersectionality towards advocacy by focusing on core values from our cultures. These cultural values manifested in our connections between people of a wide range of identities.”

Want to Help in R’Garden?

Email: genderstudiesucr@gmail.com

Interested in majoring or minoring in Gender & Sexuality Studies or in Sustainability Studies?

Contact Student Advisor Cassee Barba
UCR Multidisciplinary Advising Center (3rd Floor, INTS 3111)
Phone: 951-827-1802
cassee.barba@ucr.edu

4.29.15: Toni Pasion, in blue and gold, stands in the center of the “mountain formation" honoring Mauna Kea at UCR. Attendees included: Brianna Skellie, a Hawaiian hula practitioner & Dance MFA candidate who brought her class, Jacqueline Shea Murphy, chair of the Dance department, NASP director Josh Gonzalez and his drum group, Oceania Dance co-founder Deanna Kalali‘i Sun, and indigenous choreographer Rulan Tangen. Photo by Kimberly Norris Guererro.
Elle del Campo (Women’s Studies, 2013)

I have been working at the Getty Research Institute for over a year now in a contracted, part-time position, and I am overjoyed to share that I have recently been appointed a full-time position in the Circulation Department. This new position consists of continuing my work in Collection Maintenance while also taking on Circulation duties. What I do in the Getty Research Institute now is something that was unknown to me a year ago. A whole new world opened up to me, and it continues to be exciting to take part in a small facet of conservation.

In my position in Collection Maintenance, I process books and periodicals from the newly acquired Harald Szeemann Collection for both General Collections and Special Collections. This entails being able to evaluate a book’s anatomy in order to decide what repairs, if any, are necessary, as well as which tools should be used for those repairs. On a daily basis, I utilize a number of archival supplies, including mylar, corrugated boards, card stock, a guillotine, polyvinyl acetate, and heated spatulas. I also use archival tools to perform tasks such as spine reattachment, separating pages of water damaged items, and creating custom four-flap enclosures (or “housing”) for fragile items.

For the other half of my position, in Circulation duties, I will be responsible for pulling requested books from the secured vaults and charging them out to patrons. I will help staff the Circulation desk to answer any questions that patrons may have, and I’ll also be selecting new, incoming books and displaying them on course reserve shelves for museum and library staff.

In the future, I plan to enroll in a Master’s program for Conservation. I want to combine my drive for social justice & feminist politics with my passion for books in order to help conserve queer history, Central American history, and marginalized histories in general.

Kassundra "Kassy" Peterson (Women’s Studies & Psychology, 2013)

Hi everyone, I am missing the mindsets and community of the UCR Gender and Sexuality Studies department. As a teacher, I have had the opportunity through Teach for America to support students to think in a more inclusive manner. After two years of teaching, I have gained lots of insight to the inequalities urban youth face, and I am looking to continue to grow and learn as an educator.

I just finished up my Master’s degree in Urban Education at the University of Pennsylvania. Life has led me to making amazing connections with my school and the community I serve. I am at a crossroad in my life where I am searching for my own way to mobilize groups and build up silenced groups. I am forever grateful for the support and nurturing I received from the department, and I hope to see many more empowered feminists leave their mark on the world!

Kassy Peterson (2013, right) wraps up her second year of teaching at Alcorn Elementary School in South Philadelphia while completing graduate work at University of Pennsylvania. In June, Grandma Kitty (left) celebrated Kassy’s Master’s degree in Urban Education.
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