

# women's & gender studies

www.womensstudies.unt.edu

Fall 2016 Newsletter

## A Note from Professor Alicia Re Cruz, Interim Director



It is an honor to share with you that I will continue with the temporary leadership position in the WGST program for the 2016-17 academic year. After 12 years of heroic program development under Dr. Sandra Spencer, her retirement in February 2016 came with the offer to take her place as Interim Director of the program. Spring 2016 presented me with the opportunity to learn about this community of dedicated undergraduate/ graduate students and extraordinary faculty and staff.

As some of you know, I am a professor in the Anthropology Department and an affiliate faculty member of WGST. I teach undergraduate courses such as Theory, Migrants and Refugees, Latin America, Mesoamerica, Maya Studies, and graduate courses such as Theory and Praxis, and Preparation to Research Thesis. Most of my professional work focuses on the human dimension of displacement across borders. Gender has proven to be one of the many very productive critical lenses that characterize my applied anthropological approach, which is always guided by the interconnection of race, class, and ethnicity. Framed by advocacy and social justice, most of my current work agendas are products of the collaboration with local NGOs serving the immigrant community, particularly with VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) cases, human trafficking programs, and assisting with asylum petitions by unaccompanied minors and women in immigration detention centers. I have also adventured in numerous interdisciplinary arenas, researching the repercussions of migration in education policies in both Europe and the U.S. (<http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/integracion/en>); the cultural dimension of autism treatment programs, in collaboration with Dr. Ala'i Rosales (Behavioral Analysis - UNT); and with support from the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and in collaboration with Dr. Jain (Anthropology/Philosophy) and Dr. James (Philosophy), we recently co-organized an International Workshop on Rural Sustainability at UNT, with community leaders and NGO members from India, Nepal, Guatemala, Mexico, Colombia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Tunisia (<http://cas.unt.edu/ruralsustainability>).

The Women's & Gender Studies Program has witnessed many changes over the last few months. I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Jennifer Aglio. She and I share "the same age" in the program since we came on board during the same period of time. Her tremendous contributions as WGST Program Coordinator have kept us all on track and have provided unwavering support to students and faculty. I also want to welcome to the WGST community Jocelyn Castillo, our newest Student Assistant. Jocelyn is very dexterous with social media and will be our "Media Mediator," in charge of bringing you our news and events.

Please come visit us on the 4th floor of the GAB. Stop by to talk about your academic/research interests; I would be honored to discuss with you ways/strategies to conceptualize and design interdisciplinary projects or whatever is on your mind. You can also find us on Facebook, or check out our website for news and upcoming events. Give us your feedback on strategies to better get you the information you need in a user-friendly and timely manner.

Sending everyone wishes for a peaceful, creative, insightful and healthy new 2016-17 academic year!

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OF NORTH TEXAS

# Faculty Spotlight

## Kristin Alder



Kristin Alder received her B.A. in English and her M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Women's Studies from the University of North Texas. She is currently working on her Ph.D. in Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies at Texas Woman's University. She is also working on a second MA in English. Her areas of specialization include feminist/womanist/indigenous epistemologies; Anzaldúan literature and theory; speculative realisms; post-genomic gender transgressions; feminist science studies; women of colors speculative fiction; and women, peace, and security. Kristin has also served as the United Nations representative for the U.S. section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Kristin will be delivering papers at the El Mundo Zurdo conference for the study of Gloria Anzaldúa in San Antonio, TX; the Midwest Popular Culture Association conference in Chicago, IL; the National Women's Studies Association conference in Montreal, Canada; and the Mesageiros das Estrelas conference in Lisbon, Portugal.

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## Özlem Altıok, Ph.D.

Özlem Altıok is a full time lecturer holding a joint appointment with Women's and Gender Studies and International Studies at the University of North Texas. Prior to UNT, she taught at the University of Wisconsin – Madison where she received her Ph.D. in sociology. Dr. Altıok holds a master's degree in public administration from Texas A&M, and a bachelor's degree in international relations from Istanbul Bilgi University. Her research and teaching interests include gender, politics and religion; international development; environmental and community sociology; and social movements. In addition to introductory courses, she has been teaching graduate and undergraduate courses at UNT since 2010. Dr. Altıok is a member of Sociologists for Women in Society, the Middle Eastern Studies Association, and EŞİTİZ, a gender equality watch group in Turkey. Her articles have appeared in *Contexts*, *ZMagazine* and [www.opendemocracy.org](http://www.opendemocracy.org).



# Faculty Spotlight

## Maia Cudhea

Maia Cudhea received her B.A. from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2003, and her M.S. from the University of North Texas in 2007 (both in Sociology). She has been teaching at UNT since 2007 (including courses such as Race Class Gender & Ethnicity, Sociology of Sexuality, Gender & Society, Social Problems, & Social Stratification), and in the Women's & Gender Studies Program since 2011. Maia is currently the faculty advisor for the UNT Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA). She also works for UNT's Athletic Department as the Academic Support Coordinator, organizing tutoring and academic coaching services for more than 350 young student-athletes.



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## Inge Groen



Inge Groen received her B.S. in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Amsterdam in 2014 and her M.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Women's & Gender Studies in 2016. She is the former president of Triota, the Women's and Gender Studies Honor Society, a recipient of the WGST Scholarship, and the Dr. Betty Berkeley Scholarship. Inge has worked for the WGST program as a teaching assistant and a teaching fellow, and currently is an adjunct instructor. Her research and activist interests include combating human trafficking and advocating for policy changes for women's reproductive health and rights.

# Grad Student Spotlight

## Emiliana Lopez



Emiliana will soon complete a M.S. in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of North Texas. She graduated summa cum laude from the University of North Texas with a B.A. in International Studies with a concentration in International Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and a minor in French. Throughout her Master's, Emiliana has had the privilege to volunteer with Catholic Charities in conjunction with Anthropology Master's student Ryan Kober in a project for providing resources to asylum seekers from Central America, primarily women. Emiliana is passionate about the Central American refugee and migrant crisis, so when she was offered the chance to help Kober with her thesis, she saw it as a great opportunity.

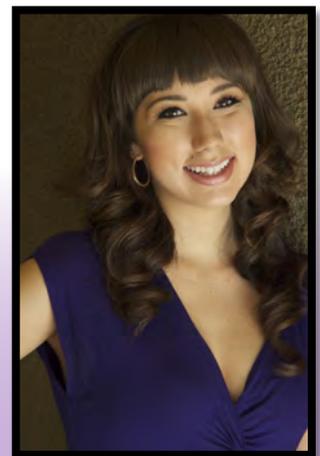
Emiliana Lopez is currently the U.S. Fund for UNICEF Community Engagement Fellow in Dallas, Texas. Her role is to serve as a grassroots and national spokesperson for children and bring together networks of faith-based communities, schools, universities, volunteers, advocates, elected leaders, and others to unite on behalf of children. Leveraging U.S. Fund for UNICEF's education, advocacy and fundraising initiatives, she works to create transformational change in the lives of children around the world, empowering people to act locally. UNICEF is the world's largest humanitarian organization for children, working in over 190 different countries to save lives and put children first.

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## Jenna Yorke-Slader

Jenna spent this summer interning at CIWA (Calgary Immigrant Women's Association), which she considers an invaluable experience. CIWA is comprised of several diverse departments encompassing a vast variety of programs which prioritize the success and well-being of the clients. She worked most closely with the clients enrolled in Employment Services programs which equip women with the tools to smoothly and successfully integrate into the Canadian workplace. Jenna says that one of the most beneficial aspects of interning at CIWA was the opportunity to integrate her graduate degree studies and her research at CIWA.

Her research focused on the possible expansion and implementation of diversity policies to include low literacy women as it pertains to development. Over the course of her time at CIWA, Jenna gained an in depth and hands on understanding of the inner workings of a non-profit organization, CIWA's unique programming, and the vast spectrum of women they serve. She says she is grateful to have had the privilege to work with and contribute to a leading immigration association in Canada.



# Past Events



## Unpacking Gender: The Syrian Refugee Crisis

The Syrian woman refugee is at the center of the largest forced displacement crisis in the world, yet she is statistically invisible.

Perhaps it is time for us to listen to her story.

Wednesday  
7:00p.m. **11.18.15** ENV 130



The UNT Women's & Gender Studies Program and CAMSCI invite you to attend a presentation by **Rima Abunasser**. Dr. Abunasser holds a Ph.D. in English Literature and Theory, specializing in 18th-century British Literature, Transnational Literature, and Women and Gender Studies. She teaches courses on contemporary Arabic literature, British literature, and Transnational women's writing at Texas Christian University.

For more information: [www.unt.edu](http://www.unt.edu) or 940.565.1298



**THE INTERSECTIONS OF Art & Activism:**  
REFLECTIONS BY A QUEER WOMAN OF COLOR POET  
// a talk with artist/ivist Edyka CHLOMÉ

Thursday  
**APRIL 14 @ 7:00pm**  
Gateway 43/47

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## Black Women in the Ivory Tower Symposium

Register at:  
[BWI.Symposium.2016](http://BWI.Symposium.2016)

Keynote Speaker:  
**Dr. Donna Ford**  
Vanderbilt University

"Can We Have It All:  
Achieving Success and Well-being  
in the Academy"

Friday April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS  
GATEWAY CENTER

12:00 PM – 3:30 PM  
Lunch served at 12:00 PM



## Where do we go now?

A Panel Discussion on the Humanitarian Crisis of Refugees

Wednesday, November 11  
3:00pm-4:30pm  
Willis Library Forum

Join us for a short documentary screening followed by a panel discussion with

**Ozlem Altuk**, Lecturer  
International Studies and Women's & Gender Studies  
**Tania Khalaf**, Associate Professor  
Department of Media Arts  
**Nada Shabout**, Professor  
Art History  
**Nancy Stockdale**, Associate Professor  
History

For more information: [www.unt.edu](http://www.unt.edu) or 940.565.2098



The Department of History presents

**Reassessing Sex & Pleasure:**  
A Global History of Sexology from Bombay, 1930s-1950s

4:30pm Tuesday  
**3.22.16** GAB 104

Dr. Sanguni Akhanna is an Associate Professor in the Department of History and Women's and Gender Studies Program at Northern Arizona University. Her research interests are in the fields of women/gender histories with an emphasis on histories and politics of reproductive rights and sexualities. She is currently working on her book-length project on the history of sexology in India, locating it within a larger global context.

For more information: [www.unt.edu](http://www.unt.edu) or 940.565.5120



4PM HILTON  
HALL 111C

NO MÁS BEBÉS

**N**O MÁS BEBÉS tells the story of a small group of Mexican immigrant women who sought justice after they were coerced into sterilization while giving birth at an L.A. County Hospital.



4PM STUDENT  
UNION

INDIA'S DAUGHTER

**I**NDIA'S DAUGHTER OFFERS an exclusive look into the brutal gang rape of a 23-year old woman in Delhi that examines the human stories behind the incident and the protests for political change it inspired.



4PM THE FORUM  
HALLS 140

A BRAVE HEART

THE LIZZIE VELASQUEZ STORY

**T**HE INSPIRING JOURNEY of 26-year-old, 58 pound, Lizzie Velasquez, who suffers from a rare medical condition, from cyber-bullying victim to anti-bullying activist.

# Upcoming Events

- Fem Flicks Film Series
- Fall 2016 Open House
- *Melissa's Choice* (for ticket info, please contact the Dept. of Dance & Theatre)
- Talk by Dr. Dionne P. Stephens, Associate Prof. of Psychology at Florida International University

## Who we are...

Dr. Alicia Re Cruz, Interim Program Director  
Jennifer Aglio, Program Coordinator  
Jocelyn Castillo, Student Assistant

**Phone:** 940-565-2098

P.O. Box 305097

Denton, TX 76203-5097

## What we do...

The Women's & Gender Studies Program at UNT seeks to provide undergraduate and graduate students with the highest quality educational opportunities to study women's achievements, roles and experiences; to reflect critically on cultural definitions of gender; and to examine various theoretical approaches to the study of women, feminism, and gender. Accordingly, the Women's & Gender Studies Program aims to foster understanding of the diversity of women's lives, by promoting innovative teaching and scholarship about the ways in which race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and age impact female experience. Students in Women's & Gender Studies may interact with more than 30 members of the Women's & Gender Studies affiliated faculty who regularly teach courses examining gender roles, activities, and experiences throughout history and across cultures. These interactions expand understanding of gender differences, cultural diversity, and social changes while strengthening critical thinking and communication skills.