

women's & gender studies

womensstudies.unt.edu

Fall 2017 Newsletter

A Note from Professor Alicia Re Cruz, Program Director



The 2016-17 academic cycle was very productive for WGST. We co-sponsored numerous events and lectures alongside different departments and programs, including the always-inspiring collaboration with the Multicultural Center (Damian Torres) and the Media Library (Erin Miller) on the Fem Flicks Film Series. We organized a panel of local activists and NGO representatives who engaged our students in a discussion on positions and responses to current policy changes.

A series of events towards the end of the spring semester indicated the end of a transitional chapter for WGST, and I was given the opportunity to become the director of WGST. The experience of already working with such an outstanding community of faculty and students was the major motivator in my decision to accept the position. During her tenure, Sandi Spencer compiled a "little but powerful" team of faculty willing to use their extraordinary skills for the common good of WGST, recruited affiliated faculty who provide an interdisciplinary selection of electives, hired Jenn Aglio as Program Coordinator, and worked on her last gift to the program – the proposal for a newly approved MA. As such, I have inherited a vibrant program, a dedicated faculty, a supportive network of affiliates, and Jenn, whose professionalism and skills are the metaphorical oil that keeps the administrative machinery of our office moving smoothly.

Summer at the WGST office was just as busy. We hired Haley Brown, a student assistant who worked on a WGST history timeline project. (Watch our webpage for more about this!) We also began the task of updating materials related to our MA program. I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to our WGST Advisory Committee whose dedication, collaborative spirit, and commitment represents a major light on the pathway of our program.

In closing, let me emphasize that we in WGST strongly believe in equal access to education for all students regardless of their actual or perceived gender, immigration status, race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, nationality, religion, age or dis/ability. All of us in the Women's and Gender Studies program are committed to inclusion and non-discrimination. This approach sustains our pedagogy and ethics of care, and underlies all of our efforts to promote our students' growth and learning in an environment in which they can thrive, free from threats and harassment.

All students -- all of you -- are welcome in Women's and Gender Studies.



CONGRATULATIONS to Dr. Özlem Altıok for her recent promotion to Senior Lecturer!!

Dr. Altıok holds a joint appointment in Women's & Gender Studies, and International Studies at UNT. This semester, she will be traveling to Kansas to speak at

The Land Institute's Annual Prairie Festival, and to the University of Southern Maine to deliver a public talk based on the book she is currently writing.

Inside this Issue:

'17-'18 Student Ambassadors	2
Undergrad Spotlight	3-4
Faculty Spotlight	5
Faculty Affiliate Highlights	6-8
Fem Flicks	9
Program Info	10

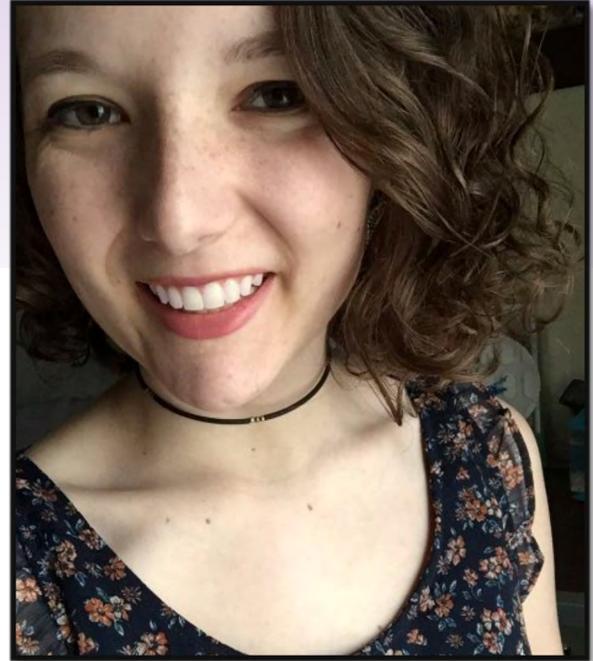
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2017-2018 Student Ambassadors

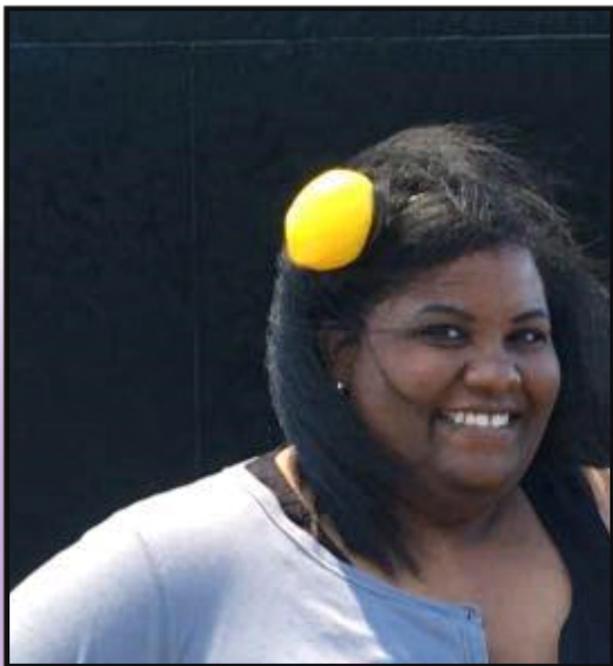
Alex Helm

Alex Helm is a public relations student double-minoring in History and Women's & Gender Studies. She became involved in social activism in high school and continued that interest throughout her college career. Currently, she focuses her studies on women's, gender and sexuality histories. She plans to use her degree to teach, and has goals to become a writer and publish work that inspires feminists and social activists of the next generation.



Ashley Whitaker

As a non-traditional student, Ashley Whitaker attended Tarrant County College part time while working in the finance industry full time. Wanting to get her Bachelor's degree before she turns 40, she decided to sell her house and attend UNT full time. She's



always had an interest in politics and reproductive justice, so majoring in Political Science and minoring in Women's and Gender Studies was an easy academic choice. Ashley has volunteered for Battleground Texas, working on the Wendy Davis gubernatorial campaign, and she currently volunteers for TEA Fund, a local abortion fund. Her goal is to eventually work for an organization such as Planned Parenthood, NOW, or the Center for Reproductive Rights. And as a lover of all things Beyoncé, she doesn't allow any slandering of her name in her presence.

Undergrad Spotlight

UNT Honors Day Recipient: Eric Duran, Outstanding WGST Scholar Award

Nominated by: Kristin Alder

Eric is a proven exemplary student not only in his women's and gender studies courses but additionally in all his courses at the University of North Texas. As his *Introduction to Women's Studies and Feminist Foundations: El Mundo Zurdo* instructor in the spring semester of 2015 and fall semester of 2016, I was continually impressed not only by his scholastic aptitude and strong work ethic, but also by his strength of character and his ability to lead diverse groups through his own well-developed sense of values.

I must make note of Eric's exceptional academic performance in both of my classes. Out of 40+ students, Eric maintained one of the highest grade averages through not only consistent and excellent academic performance, but by never bypassing the opportunity to complete extra credit assignments.

Further, throughout the semester, Eric confirmed his ability to interact with students of varying age levels and cultural backgrounds and displayed an unflinching ability to lead others. When placed within a group of culturally different students for an end-of-semester group project, Eric demonstrated the ability to unite his group through a continued focus upon commonalities and purpose. When group members were called upon to grade each other's contributions, every member of his group reflected upon Eric's organizational skills, focus, passion, and leadership ability as essential to the group's overall success. Moreover, Eric has proven to be an exemplary member of the UNT community as well as tutor, and plays an active role in UNT's GLAD organization.

Overall, I feel like he exemplifies what it is to be an honor student in our women's and gender studies program.



Eric Duran (Left) meeting Lt. Dan Choi at a University of North Texas Lecture

Undergrad Spotlight

UNT Honors Day Recipient: Autumn Tyler, Outstanding WGST Activist Award

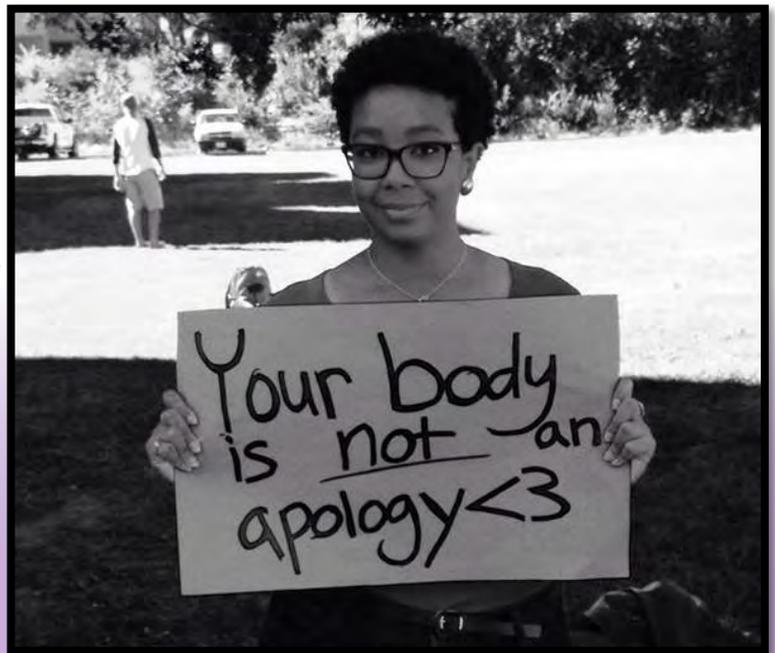
Nominated by: Maia Cudhea

Not only is Autumn an outstanding student, she's been involved in on-campus and off-campus organizing efforts. She served as the Public Relations chair (Jan. 2015 – May 2015) and then Co-President (Aug. 2015 – May 2016) of UNT's Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance. Her work included promoting social justice initiatives among UNT students through social media, flyers, and tabling on campus; sustaining student membership and involvement in local URGE chapter; organizing regular events for local URGE chapter; representing the group at conferences and annual lobbying opportunities (in Austin & Washington D.C.); helping to fundraise thousands of dollars to benefit DFW women's shelters; organizing a successful advocacy project at the annual Take Back the Night (Beneath the Sheets project); speaking as a panelist at various weekly events, including "Black Women Matter" (November 2016), "Queer and Trans People of Color" (March 2016), and "The Intersection of Race and Mental Health" (January 2016).

Autumn also volunteered with the Emerald Eagle Scholars community, where her work included – assisting with Denton's Relay for Life (American Cancer Society fundraiser); assembling Christmas packages for low income families in Denton; and mentoring new freshman students (meeting with them throughout the academic year to see how they were transitioning into college and assist them with accessing any resources they needed).

Autumn Tyler

Even when she's not specifically "volunteering," she's still almost always tying her work back to community support. In her paid job on campus (working as a Sociology tutor with UNT student-athletes since July of 2016), she still strives to "give back" to the community. In her work to develop her photojournalism portfolio, she captured powerful images at the July 2016 Black Lives Matter protests (where the peaceful protest closed with the violent shootings that would rock the nation).



Through her actions, Autumn illustrates what it is to be an honor student in our women's and gender studies program.

Faculty Spotlight

One anthropologist's professional trajectory

By: Haley Brown

On May 3, 2017, Women's and Gender Studies Program Director Dr. Alicia Re Cruz gave a presentation at UNT on the Square entitled, "About Barrios and Milpas: The Story of an Anthropologist with an Accent" concerning her personal experience growing up in Madrid during the tail end of the regime of dictator Francisco Franco. Dr. Re Cruz's personal



Alicia Re Cruz

experiences growing up in the *corralas* (a type of collective housing) of Madrid led her to pursue a career in anthropology. Her personal path led her to field work in the *milpas* (corn fields) of Chan Kom, a Maya peasant community in the Yucatan Peninsula near Cancun. In 1992, Dr. Re Cruz came to UNT as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology.



She was immediately interested in finding the Latino community in Denton, but when she asked

others about where this immigrant population lived, soon realized how invisible they were. Shortly after, Dr. Re Cruz discovered a small population of Latino individuals living in the Phoenix Apartments, a Housing Authority complex one mile beyond the railroad tracks facing the Denton County Jail. Dr. Re Cruz quickly noted the similarities between the Latino community in Denton and the *barrios* and *corralas* of her Spanish hometown: whether it was the housing situation, the social and cultural challenges, or the immigrants' important economic contributions. She became fascinated by the interweaving impact that a sense of community had on both populations, and continued to document their similarities. Dr. Re Cruz became an active member of the Denton Latino community, and even taught English to many of the women she worked with at the Phoenix Apartments.



The last chapter of her work relates to her volunteering with NGOs to help Central American unaccompanied minors and women with their asylum applications. In her own terms, Dr. Re Cruz considers her work "emergency anthro-

pology" because it is not bound by traditional methods of data gathering; her work requires heart, instinct and compassion. Today Dr. Re Cruz continues her work as a Professor of Anthropology and Program Director of the Wom-



Affiliated Faculty Highlights

Anthropology class conducts needs assessment of **Women's & Gender Studies Program**

As a course requirement for Dr. Jamie Johnson's ANTH 2200 Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective course, 22 undergraduate students conducted an ethnographic Needs Assessment for the University of North Texas Women and Gender Studies Program (WGST). The pilot study interviewed and surveyed graduated and currently enrolled students in order to assess and offer impressions and recommendations for future curriculum and programming.

The results showed that across the board, students were generally satisfied with the Women's and Gender Studies curriculum and programming, but indicated the need for a stronger presence and visibility of the Women's and Gender Studies Program on campus.

Regarding curriculum, students stressed the importance of additional WGST (not just WGST-affiliated) course offerings, especially those guided by feminist philosophy and cross-cultural perspectives, for the value they add across all majors and degree plans. Students noted the absence of faculty diversity, deficiencies in diversity/inclusivity in instructional materials, and an immediate, pressing need to interrupt heteronormative pedagogies. They also indicated the need to target a broader range of disciplines, as well as the need to make the Program more appealing to male students, broadly construed.

As with curriculum, participants indicated the need for a broader range of WGST programming, especially those activities which would facilitate community building and outreach both within and outside the WGST Program. Participant suggestions for additional programming included hosting "mixers" to acquaint students with faculty and department heads. Many students mentioned the tremendous benefit they received from the Gender Fair, and also suggested that WGST could host career fairs - or even faculty talks - to enhance WGST applicability to career paths, especially those in male-dominated fields.



Affiliated Faculty Highlights

We would like to introduce and welcome our new Affiliated Faculty members to the WGST community!



Dr. Ashley English, Department of Political Science

How did you become involved with the Women's & Gender Studies Program?

I reached out to Women's & Gender Studies to become an affiliated faculty member because my research interests are focused on gender, politics, and public policy.

How does any of your current research use gender as an analytical lens?

My research interests are broadly focused on how women are represented in American politics. I am currently working on a series of papers that examines how women's organizations represent American women by participating the federal rulemaking process. Those papers, which draw on theories of intersectionality, examine when and why women's organizations and individual women refer to women's intersecting identities in terms of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity, and sexual orientation, in the comments that they submit to federal agencies during the rulemaking process. In general, my findings show that women and their advocates in women's organizations most often refer to women as a broad-based and homogenous group, frequently downplaying the concerns of some of the most marginalized subgroups of women. In a second, related project, I am also examining whether and how often women's organizations advocate for single women. In that project, I find that though single women have recently been celebrated as a new and powerful voting bloc, women's organizations rarely, if ever, focus on them specifically, and instead most often focus on women in traditional families. A third project I am working on, with Dara Strolovitch and Kathryn Pearson, examines who women and people of color turn to for representation when they feel they are not being adequately represented in Congress.

Tell us a little bit about your educational background, especially anything that pertains to women or gender.

I have a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, which I received in 2016. My dissertation was titled, "Implementing Intersectionality: Creating Women's Interests in the Rulemaking Process." Prior to that, I received a Masters in Public Policy with a Concentration in Women's Studies from George Washington University in 2010 and a B.A. in Political Science from Williams College in 2004. From 2006 to 2010, I also worked at the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a Washington, DC based think tank that conducts quantitative and qualitative public policy analysis through a gendered lens.



Dr. Kate Imy, Department of History

How did you become involved with the Women's & Gender Studies Program?

I became interested in Women's and Gender Studies at UNT thanks to the recommendation of my department mentor, Nancy Stockdale.

How does any of your current research use gender as an analytical lens?

My research is interested in questions about gender and masculinity in imperial armies. My current book project examines soldiers' experiences of serving in the interracial, interfaith, and multi-linguistic British Indian Army during the turbulent twentieth century. A central component of this work considers how British and South Asian ideas of masculinity transformed within and took shape against imperial militarism. My next project examines the idea of "martial masculinity" in twentieth century Britain, South Asia, Malaya, New Zealand and Australia.

Tell us a little bit about your educational background, especially anything that pertains to women or gender.

I studied at Rutgers University under leading historians of Women and Gender including Bonnie G. Smith, Seth Koven, and Indrani Chatterjee. My first article, entitled "Queering the Martial Races: Masculinity, Sex, and Circumcision in the Twentieth-Century British Indian Army," was published in *Gender & History*. It won the Nupur Chaudhuri First article prize from the Coordinating Council for Women in History of the American Historical Association. I have also published articles on "Fascist Yogis" and the political implications of same-sex interracial desire between soldiers in northwestern India in the *Journal of British Studies and Twentieth Century British History*.

Affiliated Faculty Highlights

We would like to introduce and welcome our new Affiliated Faculty members to the WGST community!



Dr. Jamie Johnson, Department of Anthropology

The socio-cultural, material, and technological adaptations to urban environments are mutually constitutive and form the backdrop of Dr. Johnson's work. She is an urban anthropologist whose theoretical approaches and teaching interests include space and place, architecture and urban planning, D/development, organizational culture, material culture, gender and tourism. She combines anthropological investigation and pedagogy by designing projects for clients which also serve to train students in applied research, and she approaches both research and teaching with ethnographic flexibility to best understand the intimate spaces of daily life and the institutions and infrastructures that bind them together.



Dr. Irene Klaver, Department of Philosophy & Religion

Dr. Klaver is a professor of philosophy and the director of the Philosophy of Water Project. She has worked for years folding in feminist approaches in her epistemological, ontological, social-political, cultural critical, environmental scholarship. Her scholarship is informed by and comes from a continental, postmodern and social-political perspective (Barad, Bennett, Butler, Haraway, Bonnie Mann, Young, etc), which helps her to think through the varieties of entanglements of feminist thought.



Dr. Samantha Langsdale, Department of Philosophy & Religion

Dr. Langsdale's research interests include feminist philosophy, contemporary critical theory, visual culture, embodiment, religions, and women in popular culture. Her most recent article, "Disney Classics and 'Poisonous Pedagogy': The Fairytale Roots of Frozen (2013)" will appear in the journal *Animation Practice, Process and Production* in July 2016. In addition to teaching and research, she is also the Editor of an independent feminist publication called GEEKED Magazine which features content exploring comics, culture, and gender. She earned her Ph.D. from SOAS, University of London in 2014.



Dr. Adetty Perez de Miles, Department of Art Education: Visual Art Studies

Adetty Pérez de Miles earned a dual Ph.D. in Art Education and Women's Studies at The Pennsylvania State University. Prior to her appointment at UNT, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor at The Ohio State University. Pérez de Miles holds PK-12 teacher licensure in art, and specialization in secondary education. Professor Pérez Miles teaches courses in visual culture and pedagogy, secondary methods for pre-service art educators, critical pedagogy, global aesthetics, contemporary Latin American art, and critical theory. Her teaching is centered on inquiry-based approaches to learning, visual studies education, socially responsible teaching, and transnational and cultural education.

the FEM FLICKS *film series*

Fall 2017 Calendar



Marisol

Screening will be followed by a discussion led by the filmmaker, Eugene Martin

Wednesday, September 27 // 11 am // Willis Library Forum



Dukhtar

Wednesday, October 18 // 4 pm // Chilton III C



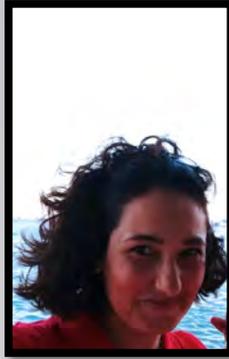
Two Spirits

Wednesday, November 15 // 4 pm // Chilton III C

Who we are...



Dr. Alicia Re Cruz,
Program Director



Dr. Özlem Altıok,
Senior Lecturer



Kristin Alder,
Adjunct Instructor



Maia Cudhea,
Adjunct Instructor



Jennifer Aglio,
Program Coordinator



Haley Brown,
Student Assistant



Jocelyn Castillo,
Student Assistant

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What we do...

The mission of the Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT promotes teaching, research, and outreach with a critical analytical focus aimed at interrogating gender-related stereotypes, especially as our identities intersect with sexuality, race, and ethnicity in a global context. Our program's interdisciplinary scholarship supports and sustains campus-wide discussions in areas including, but not limited to: global contexts, feminist approaches, women's social movements, feminist activism, and explorations of the connections among gender, class, ethnicity and race in social and cultural constructs. Students in Women's & Gender Studies may interact with more than 40 members of the Women's & Gender Studies affiliated faculty, expanding understandings of gender differences, cultural diversity, and social changes while strengthening critical thinking and communication skills.



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