

# WGSS SPOTLIGHTS

An Annual Newsletter from Stockton University's

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program

SPRING 2021

Volume I



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Learn more about  
Women's Gender &  
Sexuality Studies at  
Stockton...

click below:

[WGSS blog](#)

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# Highlights from a Challenging Year

## Vanguard: What If Black Women Have Always Led the Movement for Voting Rights?

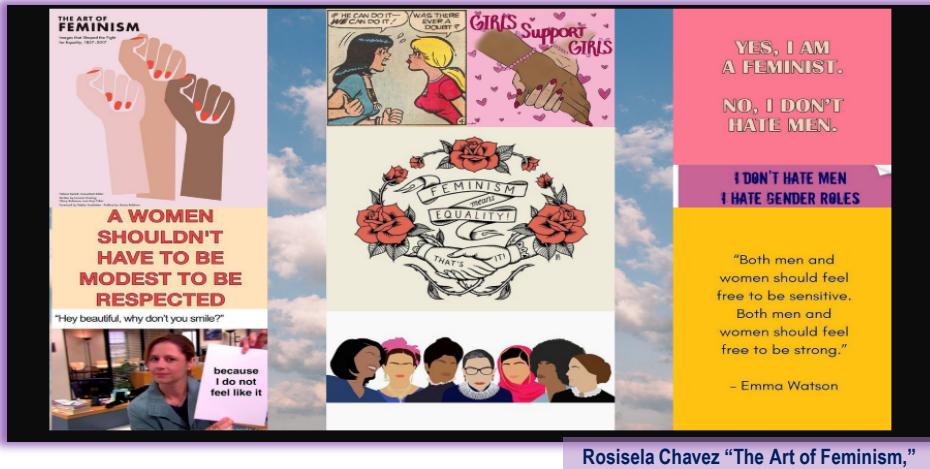
This spring, the WGSS program co-sponsored a lecture by Johns Hopkins University professor, Dr. Martha Jones.

Author of the book *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All*, Dr. Jones is a legal and cultural historian. Her work examines how Black Americans have shaped the story of American democracy.

In a timely talk that highlighted the activism of Black women, Dr. Jones argued that since the 19th century, Black women have contested voter suppression as part of a broader struggle for the rights of citizens. Her inspiring lecture touched on current politics, the politics of writing history, public history and more.

The event was well attended, with 151 people joining the ZOOM call. The lecture was followed by a more intimate (22 persons) conversation.

[View the recorded event here](#)



## 11th Annual Paul Lyons Memorial Lecture:

### Dr. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson

In Spring 2020, WGGS co-sponsored the 11th Annual Paul Lyons Memorial Lecture featuring Dr. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, a professor of English and bioethics at Emory University. Her work in critical disability studies and health humanities brings disability culture, ethics and justice to a broad range of institutions and communities. She is co-editor of *About Us: Essays from the Disability Series of The New York Times* and the author of *Staring: How We Look* and several other books. Her lecture

"*Building a World that Includes Disability*" addressed such questions as: "What would a world be like if it fully welcomed and included people with disabilities? How could we build that world to share and live in together? Why would that be a better world for all of us?" Dr. Garland-Thomson's presentation demonstrated how the new field of disability studies addresses these questions by bringing forward the history, culture, politics, aesthetics, and ethics of disability and people living with disabilities.

## Message from our WGSS Coordinator:

### Dr. Betsy Erbaugh

**Congratulations** to all WGSS students, faculty and staff on surviving a taxing year. Your colleagues and classmates deeply value your commitment to continued study and activism through the pandemic.

Your success in navigating unprecedented challenges in learning and life, at home, in the classroom, the workplace and the streets, is reflected in these pages -- from brilliant coursework and writing accomplishments to dedicated activism for social justice and innovations prompted by social distancing.

Special congrats to the students graduating with WGSS minors this year, and a hearty welcome to the new WGSS minors who have joined us.

On behalf of the WGSS faculty, we know this has been rough year and we applaud you all coming through it so well. We look forward to seeing you at graduation, in class, online, on campus, in the wider world, and at WGSS scholarly and activist gatherings in the coming year.

Overall, **thank you** all for continuing to make WGSS a vibrant hub of people, ideas, creativity and action.



## Constitution Day speaker: Dr. Julie Chi-hye Suk

This year, WGSS co-sponsored Stockton's [Constitution Day speaker](#), Dr. Julie Suk. A Professor of Sociology, Political Science, and Liberal Studies at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), Dr. Suk is an interdisciplinary legal scholar, focusing on women as constitution-makers at the intersection of law, history, sociology, and politics. She has lectured widely in the United States and Europe and is a frequent commentator in the media on legal issues affecting women, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, Vox, and CBS

News. Her upcoming book, *We the Women: The Unstoppable Mothers of the Equal Rights Amendment*, explores the ERA's past to guide its future, telling the stories of the forgotten women lawmakers and lawyers who shaped the ERA over a century. Stockton's Dr. Linda Wharton, Professor of Political Science, notes:

"Julie Chi-hye Suk, a highly-regarded author and interdisciplinary legal scholar, whose soon-to-be published book tells the story of the women in Congress who drove the Equal Rights Amendment forward in 1970-72 and the women of color in state legislatures who led the recent ratification efforts."

[View Dr. Suk's Constitution Day lecture](#)



## NJWGSC Undergraduate Research Colloquium

The New Jersey Women's and Gender Studies Consortium's 17th Annual Undergraduate Research Colloquium took place online on Friday, April 9th, 2021. It was hosted by Drew University.

Stockton's WGSS program has a strong tradition of sending students to this conference. Each university is allowed a maximum of 2 student participants.

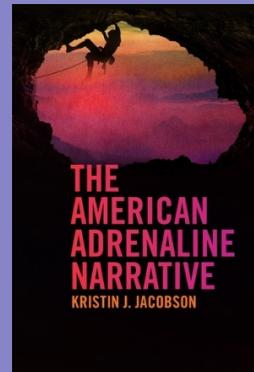
This year Stockton was represented by two Literature majors, **Nicholas Matousch**, who presented an essay "From Grandmom: The Experience and Significance of Grandmothers in Magical Realism," and **Alexa Weaver**, who presented a short story, titled "Frayed."

You can read more about the students and their work in a press release written by Diane D'Amico, Stockton's Director of News & Media Relations: <https://stockton.edu/news/2021/students-present-gender-studies-colloquium.html>

## WGSS Scholar Spotlight

### Dr. Kristin Jacobson

*Professor of American Literature*



This year, Dr. Jacobson published her latest book with University of Georgia Press. In *The American Adrenaline Narrative*, Dr. Jacobson examines extreme adventure narratives through an ecofeminist lens to "consider the nature of perilous outdoor adventure tales, their gendered biases, and how they simultaneously promote and hinder ecological sustainability."

[Learn more about this book](#)

[Listen to a short interview with Dr. Jacobson for "The Academic Minute"](#)

[Listen to a longer interview with Dr. Jacobson for "The New Books Network"](#)



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR WGSS CLASSES:

We asked the WGGS faculty to share highlights and memorable moments from their WGSS courses this year...

## Dr. Kristin Jacobson

*Professor of American Literature*

Highlights from my spring LITT 2145 "Family in American Literature" course include enlightening discussions on gender roles, sexuality, sexualized violence, and--of course--family in relation to the six novels and four plays the students read.

While not a WGSS course, LITT 4610 "Senior Seminar" has WGSS minors and themes. Several students' projects examine contemporary American climate fiction from an ecofeminist and intersectional feminist lens.

View student presentations on the [Literature Program's Facebook page](#)

## Professor Nathan Long

*Professor of Creative Writing*

In my Queer Autobiographies class, though the course was online, the class developed a strong community, sharing as much in the chat as online. It was the first time I taught this class in which students identified in all the following: queer, lesbian, gay, bisexual, poly, trans, straight, and asexual. The variety of identities really spoke to the diverse nature of sexuality and gender in the world and at Stockton and for the need for more courses that represent identities beyond straight, or even gay and lesbian.

Other highlights this year: Two students from Spring 2020 LITT Sen Seminar had their papers selected for the NJWGSC colloquium, representing Stockton.

## Dr. Sharon Musher

*Associate Professor of History*

My students in GAH 3617: Meanings of Motherhood always conduct an interview with a mother of their choosing. This year, I had the students transcribe their interviews in addition to writing an analytical essay about them. As a result, I've had an opportunity to "listen in" on their conversations more closely than in the past and have been moved by the honesty of these discussions, the quality of these exchanges, and the nature of the relationships behind them. I am grateful to have had this glimpse into my students' lives.

## Dr. Betsy Erbaugh

*Associate Professor of Sociology*

In Sociology of Gender in Fall, my students completed a Service-Learning project in which they researched anti-bullying and transgender inclusion policies in schools across the six counties of Southern New Jersey, with GLSEN-Southern New Jersey chapter as our community partner.

## Dr. Christina Morus

*Associate Professor Communication & Genocide Studies*

I taught Women & Genocide in SP21. The class was fantastic (online synchronous, 1 meeting per week). A highlight was seeing the students come alive in class discussion. As a whole, the students were really very interested in the course materials, and their insights were excellent. One memorable moment was when we studied female perpetrators. As the students came to recognize how inherent (global) gender bias shapes and defines the (in)visibility of female perpetrators, the ways that cultural gender assumptions shape and limit the perceptions of (and expectations for) people of all genders became clear. It was also wonderful to have the assistance of Rose Vermette, an MA in Holocaust and Genocide studies student who served as my TA.

## **Dr. Deborah Gussman** *Professor of Literature*

Teaching Feminist Theory online in Fall 20 was definitely challenging. However, I made two changes to the course that helped make it more dynamic and engaging:

- 1) we used [Hypothes.is](#), a web-based social annotation app, to read and comment on primary works of feminist theory together, which generated some excellent online conversations;
- 2) I switched from discussion posts to a broad menu of possibilities for responding to and reflecting on readings (including visual responses such as collage, Pinterest boards, slides, personal artwork, as well as a range of writing prompts), which students responded to with creativity and enthusiasm.



## **Dr. Joy Jones-Carmack**

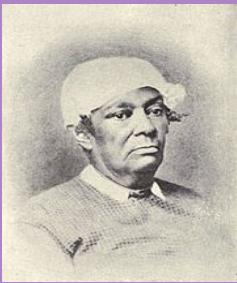
*Assistant Professor of Business Studies (Management)*

The GIS 3669 Women in Protest students hosted some amazing guest speakers this semester, including Liz Bressi-Stoppe from the Alice Paul Institute; Dr. Elaine Ingulli of NOW--Alice Paul Chapter, speaking on local activism; and Brittney Blakeney, investigator of Title IX and workplace discrimination cases for Cornell Medical Center. We also hosted activist and social justice reformer, Savanna Madamombe from Zimbabwe. Savanna's international activism has been featured on HBO's *Vice* series and NPR's *All Things Considered*.



During Savanna's presentation on Zoom, we were hacked by cybercriminals who intended to shut down our conversation on intersectionality and activism. Unfortunately, cybercriminals have taken advantage of the widespread use of video conferencing, and in March 2020, the FBI alerted the public to the rise of video conference hijacking cases, also called, "Zoom Bombing." The FBI has received multiple reports, similar to our experience, of educational lectures interrupted by pornographic images and hate speech and language. The experience was horrible, but our students refused to be shut down or silenced. We began a new meeting with several other students and faculty from Africana Studies, Communication, and Business and finished the talk and discussion. We used this as a learning opportunity. The incident is now being investigated by the Stockton Police and the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office Division of Cyber Crimes. I was impressed by the strength of our students who refused to be silenced.

\*\*\* Dr. Jones-Carmack's GIS 3669 Women in Protest will be offered again in SPRING 2022!\*\*\*



## BETSEY STOCKTON

### Who is Betsey Stockton?

Betsey Stockton (c. 1798–1865), was born into slavery in the family of Richard Stockton, and, as a free woman, became the first single American woman sent overseas as a missionary. She was later a strong advocate for and educator of Native Americans and African Americans.

### BETSEY STOCKTON AWARDS

Beginning in 2020, the WGSS program presents annual Betsey Stockton Awards for Excellence in Writing and Excellence in Feminist Activism.

The Award for Excellence in Writing is given in recognition of superior scholarship in the field of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and recognizes outstanding achievement by a student enrolled in a WGSS course.

The Feminist Activism Award is given in recognition of the vital relationship between feminist activism and scholarship in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and recognizes outstanding achievement in student activism related to gender, sexuality or feminism.

## 2020 Betsey Stockton Award Winners:

### Award for Excellence in Writing

#### Gabriella Bancheri

"Mary N. Murfree's 'The Mystery of Witch-Face Mountain'"

#### Marissa Luca

"What You Left"

#### Cassandra Rosamond

"An Intersectional Explanation of How Oppression Affects Women's Health"

#### Savannah Rush

"Gardening for Feminists "

### Award for Feminist Activism

#### Students Against Rape Culture (SARC)

Ana Beste (LITT)

Sarah Holt (LITT)

Moneeba Khan (BIOL)

Cassandra Rosamond (BIOL)

Rachel Rowan (CRIM)

Eryn Swineford (LITT)

Paige Triplett (COMM)

## 2021 Betsey Stockton Awards

## Nicholas Matousch

### 2021 Betsey Stockton Award for Writing

"From Grandmom: The Experience and Significance of Grandmothers in Magical Realism"

## Alexa Weaver

### 2021 Betsey Stockton Award for Writing

"Frayed" (short story)

Both Literature majors, Nicholas and Alexa are being awarded in honor of their respective works, both selected to represent Stockton at this year's New Jersey Women's and Gender Studies Consortium's 17th Annual Undergraduate Research Colloquium.

Nicholas's paper is a literary analysis of representations of grandmothers in magical realism. Alexa's selection is a short story. Both were completed for Prof. Nathan Long's Literature Senior Seminar.

## Samantha LeRoy

### 2021 Betsey Stockton Award for Writing

"The Politics of Public Women: A Feminist and Cultural History of the Progressive Era and Prostitution"

A History major, Samantha LeRoy won this award in honor of her senior thesis, which examines the criminalization of sex work in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Drawing on letters, memoirs, and interviews with sex workers from diverse economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds, Ms. Leroy explores why in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a range of women chose to engage in sex work and how they understood it among the limited options and survival strategies available to them. It is a chapter that draws on rich and resonant personal accounts to center the agency of women whose autonomy and intelligence progressive reformers often contested.

*Due to the impact of the pandemic on opportunities for campus activism, the WGSS faculty did not give a 2021 Betsey Stockton Award for Feminist Activism. We look forward to continuing the tradition of awarding student activism in 2021-22.*

## **Summer Internship Grants from NJWGSC**

### **\$\$\$ for Students!**

Each year, the New Jersey Women's and Gender Studies Consortium (NJWGSC) funds grants to students to help subsidize internships related to Women's and/or Gender Studies.

The awards are competitive. See the [NJWGSC Internship Grants](#) page for more details, and for 2021-2022 Application form.

## **WGSS Faculty work for LGBTQ+ inclusion:**

WGGS faculty members Dr. Deb Gussman (Professor of Literature); Dr. Ethan Levine (Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice); and Dr. Betsy Erbaugh (WGSS Coordinator) facilitated Stockton's participation in the [SHARE Study](#): a national study of intimate partner violence among college students/staff, with emphasis on LGBTQ+ experiences. Stockton was one of 15 higher education institutions to participate.

Dr. Ethan Levine and Dr. Betsy Erbaugh also worked with Stockton's Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies Center and Student Affairs to update [Stockton's Campus Pride Index](#)

## ***The Nancy Ashton Collection: A Living Legacy:***

Did you know that the [Women's, Gender and Sexuality Center](#) at Stockton has a library of feminist books you can read and borrow? Learn more about the collection and about Dr. Nancy Ashton, the late WGSS faculty member who started this collection and in whose honor it is named, in this [Stockton Story](#) from Laurie Melchionne, a Stockton senior.

### **Spotlight on Faculty Writing and Research**

#### **Professor Nathan Long**

##### ***Professor of Creative Writing***

Professor Long had 2 WGSS related stories accepted to a forthcoming issue of *Frontera Journal*: "The Doll House" (which explores domestic stagnation) and "Foreign Object" (which explores the repercussions of sexual assault).

Two others are forthcoming with Small Loves Press: "Billy Tipton Day" (which explores a transgender person's attempt at dating) and "When the Moon Closes Its Eye" (which explores queer desire between two men).

#### **Dr. Deborah Gussman**

##### ***Professor of American Literature***

The digital project Professor Gussman co-edits, the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Online Letters, received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and was included in a Mellon/NHPRC grant-funded consortium called the Primary Source Cooperative, geared towards putting the letters and personal papers of both famous and not-so-famous Americans online.

She's also co-authoring a book, with Natasha Weston (MS, LPC), focusing on interviews with women about choice, tentatively titled "What Choice Did She Have?"

## **SPOTLIGHT on Title IX**

**"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity."**

Seeking to eliminate sex-based discrimination to ensure that students of all genders have access and equality in education, Title IX legislation offers a wide range of protections from athletics and admission to housing and sexual harassment.

There have been big changes to Title IX on all fronts, along with ongoing comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of sexual violence-related policies and practices on our campus.

Several WGSS faculty have served and continue to serve nobly in efforts/task forces to bring Stockton up to speed with gender violence prevention and response.



## Spotlight on Activism

We asked the WGSS faculty to share how they are maintaining their commitment to activism in this challenging moment.

### Dr. Heather McGovern

*Professor of Writing & First-Year Studies*

Redesigning the Feminist Theory Seminar during the pandemic and a time of increased racial dialogue, and reading/learning alongside my students has been a form of activism. I also stay current with, donate to, and advocate for feminist issues by lobbying legislators, and in my activist work as a member of the Stockton community. ...I believe that the pandemic is making the

everyday racism and sexism of people's lives more visible ...I hope helps push systemic changes in areas like access to inexpensive, high-quality childcare, more generous family leave policies, and more flexible work-schedule arrangements, and I continue to advocate on those issues as well as issues related to reproductive justice and trans-rights, both particularly under attack right now.



### Dr. Joy Jones-Carmack

*Assistant Professor of Business Studies*

This year my activism included: participating in marches, including the rally to end Asian hate, letter writing campaigns, and working with NOW. I bring social justice reformers and activists to speak to classes, and I discuss micro aggressions, institutional racism, sexism, in all business courses.

### Professor Mariana Smith

*Assistant Professor of Art (Printmaking)*

In all of my visual art classes, I have consciously addressed feminist art and role of women artists in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

### Dr. Sharon Musher

*Associate Professor of History*

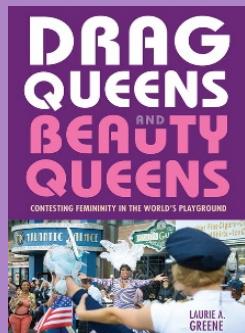
I have tried to be present for my students and be mindful of the various challenges they are facing academically and in their lives, particularly those -- like myself -- with caretaking responsibilities. I have tried to be as empathetic and flexible as possible and, when needed, to raise students' consciousness of the struggles that women, particularly women of color, have faced in the past and continue to face today.

## WGSS

## Scholar Spotlight

### Dr. Laurie Greene

*Associate Professor Anthropology*



This year, Dr. Greene published her latest book, *Drag Queens and Beauty Queens: Contesting Femininity in the World's Playground* with Rutgers University Press

"The Miss America pageant has been held in Atlantic City for the past hundred years, helping to promote the city as a tourist destination. But just a few streets away, the city hosts a smaller event that, in its own way, is equally vital to the local community: the Miss'd America drag pageant. *Drag Queens and Beauty Queens* presents a vivid ethnography of the Miss'd America pageant and the gay neighborhood from which it emerged in the early 1990s...It examines how the pageant strengthened community bonds and activism, as well as how it has changed..."

[Learn more about this book](#)

Read Stockton student [Lauren Simon's story](#) about Dr. Greene's book and activism (for *Stories of Atlantic City*)

## **Dr. Deborah Gussman**

*Professor of Literature*

Activism has been a challenge for me during the pandemic. I managed to do some election related-activities (postcard writing, fund-raising) but not as much as I would have liked. I've spent a lot more time doing what we used to call "consciousness-raising" work, related to the Black Lives Matter movement, which has inspired me to take stock of and revise many of my previous ideas about feminism, primarily through reading books and articles written by Black women and other women of color, and attending online workshops, trainings, and conversations connected to decolonizing curricula. This has led to changes, some large, some small, in my classes, as well as to shifts in my scholarly research and writing.

## **Dr. Kristin Jacobson**

*Professor of American Literature*

I mentor two students (an undergraduate at Penn State and a Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University). While small in scale, this work has offered the opportunity to support women at different stages in their education.

## **Dr. Christina Morus**

*Associate Professor Communication & Genocide Studies*

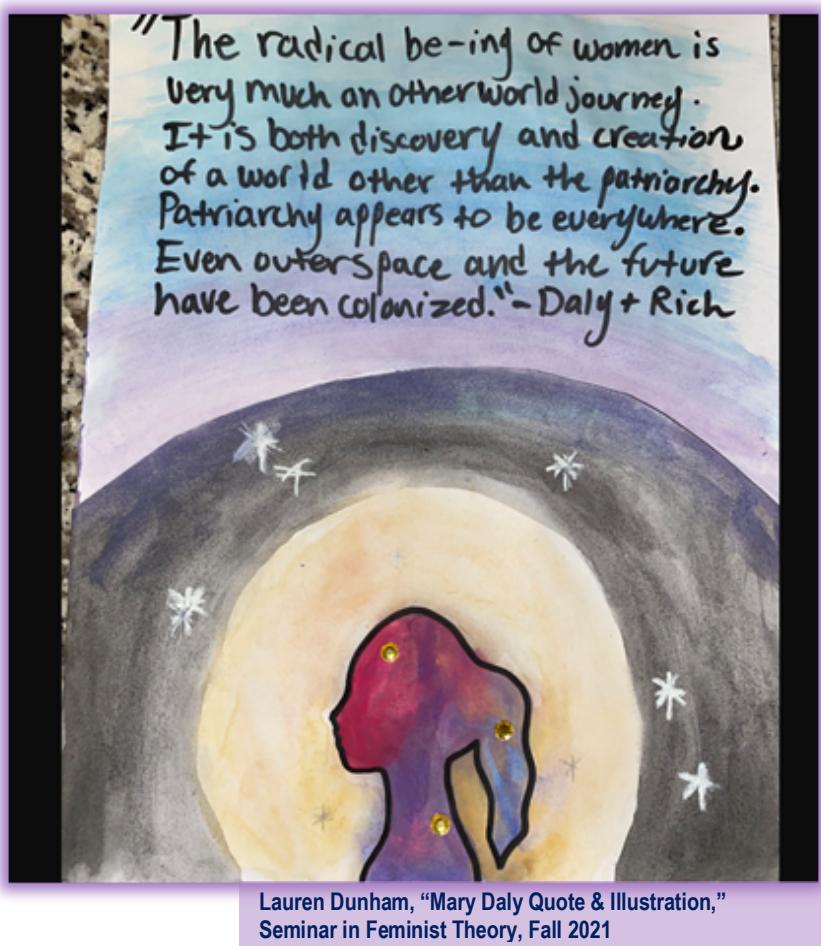
I worked with [Stories of Atlantic City](#) (SOAC) this year. Early-on in the pandemic, SOAC took-on a community organizing role, and worked to connect individuals with the services they needed most. Later we were able to expand into community connection and social needs, including an [Intergenerational Civil Rights](#) storytelling project through which we highlighted the voices and experiences of Atlantic City African-American community elders.

## **Dr. Betsy Erbaugh**

*Associate Professor of Sociology*

I have worked with my students in collaboration with GLSEN and Garden State Equality to research and support LGBTQ-inclusive policies and curriculum in NJ schools, in light of recently enacted laws requiring rights protections for trans students and LGBT-inclusive curricula and culture in schools.

Dr. Christina Jackson and I have worked with the Stockton Foundation, additional Stockton colleagues, and the NJ Governor's Office to build statewide infrastructure to address racial disparities in maternal and infant health through community engagement and statewide accountability for racial and reproductive justice.



# Spotlight on the Future

## Things to Look Forward to:

In the next academic year, WGSS will co-sponsor a scholarly conference at Stockton, in part to recognize the 70th anniversary of the Convention on Refugees, including a session on gender, sexuality, and displacement. WGSS is also in early stages of planning next year's Women in Academia conference to be held in Spring.

Additionally, WGSS Coordinator, Dr. Betsy Erbaugh, is working on a new Sexuality Studies focus option for WGSS minors. On a related note, in Spring 2022, **Dr. Luis Garcia, Assistant Professor of Health Science** will offer his "Perspectives on Sexual Orientation" course.

## Exciting WGSS courses for FALL

### Dr. Kristin Jacobson, Professor of American Literature

#### LITT 3316 Contemporary American Women Writers

(MW 6-7:50, online synchronous).

LITT 3316 will examine award-winning and groundbreaking fiction by (she/her/they/them) authors Kelli Jo Ford, Brit Bennett, Naima Coster, Celeste Ng, Susan Choi, Barbara Kingsolver, and Noelle Stevenson.

### Prof. Nathan Long Professor of Creative Writing

#### GAH 3205 QUEER AUTOBIOGRAPHIES ONLINE

THUR. 2:30PM-4:20PM

Autobiographies are queer things in and of themselves in that they ask us to learn about a - person from only that person's perspective - that is, without getting an "objective" opinion. To compound this, many "autobiographies" take on unusual forms, incorporating fiction, poetry, and theory into their work. This class addresses those factors for a group of autobiographies about people who are in some way Queer-identified (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, etc.) The class will not only explore the lessons the lives these people have to offer, but how the autobiographical form is itself a queer construction.

### Dr. Kristin Jacobson, Professor of American Literature

#### GAH 2358 Women, Gender & Sexuality online synchronous

(MW 8-9:50)

This course will focus on understanding women, gender, and sexuality through the reading of memoirs and personal essays, including *Hunger* by Roxane Gay, *A Cup of Water Under My Bed* by Daisy Hernandez, and *Sissy* by Jacob Tobia.

### Dr. Nicole Milan-Tyner, Assistant Prof. of Health Science

#### GIS 4462 African-American Women & Health Equity

T/Th 10:30 – 12:20

This course will provide students with an understanding of disparities in health and health care among African American women. Students will develop an understanding through social, cultural and historical lenses while incorporating the use of health statistics to assess the health status of African American women.

### Prof. Diana Strelczyk, GSS 3618 Sport, Media, & Gender

M 6:30 – 8:20 (AC Campus)

This course will examine how sport and media are created through critical analysis and gender theories. This course will feature historical and current media representations. Students will read, watch and discuss videos, commercials and pictures of bodies in sport.

### Dr. Shawn Donaldson Associate Professor of Sociology

#### SOCY 2115 Feminist Activism

Hybrid course W 8pm – 9:50

How are women challenging patriarchy, imperialism and cultural hegemony; organizing to reduce sexual harassment/assault, poverty, domestic violence, economic inequities; working to enhance health care and family life; confronting barriers in education, the media, religion, the criminal justice system and politics? We will focus on extraordinary women who are working/have worked in diverse social settings to empower themselves and others. This course explores barriers women face, goals and strategies for social change, and the rewards and challenges of social action.

# Our 2021 WGSS graduates

## Shaneka Gearhardt

Literature major  
Writing minor, WGSS minor

## Amanda Brady

Literature major  
History minor, WGSS minor

## Sarahjane Hehre

Literature major  
WGSS minor

## Rachel Martin

Psychology major  
WGSS minor

## Matthew Rodas

Sociology major  
WGSS minor

## Kiersten Stetser

Literature major  
WGSS minor

Congratulations 2021 WGSS grads!

We can't wait to see the rest of you in the Fall!

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[instagram.com/wgss\\_stocktonu/](https://instagram.com/wgss_stocktonu/)

[twitter.com/WGSSatSU](https://twitter.com/WGSSatSU)

## WGSS Minor Coordinator

**Dr. Betsy Erbaugh**

Associate Professor of Sociology

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