

2013 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT OF **WOMEN'S, GENDER  
AND SEXUALITY STUDIES**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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# REFLECTIONS / A Message from the Chairs

In May 2013, WGSS finished our first academic year under the semester system and we can proudly say that we met the challenge with grace, determination and professionalism despite some to-be-expected glitches along the way. Our faculty, students and staff did a superb job adjusting their teaching, research and work schedules to the new system. We are now looking ahead to exciting opportunities and developments coming our way.

We are thrilled to welcome new faculty members to our department. Assistant Professor Treva Lindsey will be teaching courses on black feminism, media representation, and African American women's history, among other exciting topics (see Professor feature on page 6.) We also welcome Assistant Professors Katherine Marino and Corinne Reczek (p. 6) who hold shared appointments between WGSS and History and Sociology, respectively. We were also excited that Assistant Professor Inés Valdez, whose work focuses on immigration, race and gender, joined the faculty of the Political Science Department. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese recently hired Assistant Professor Paloma Martínez-Cruz, a specialist in Chicana feminism who will teach classes on US Latina/o literature and culture. Assistant Professor Daniel Rivers, whose work focuses on LGBT communities in 20th-century, Native American history, the family and sexuality, and US social protest movements, joined the Department of History; and the Department of African American and African Studies recently hired Tanya Saunders whose scholarship engages postcolonial theory, race, gender and sexuality inequalities, and Afro-Latino Studies. These latter four faculty members have also joined WGSS Affiliated Graduate Faculty. The presence of these outstanding scholars at Ohio State will enrich our offerings in the broader field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies.

We are also pleased to be conducting a search this year for a new faculty member in the area of feminist political economy and globalization. We hope to hire a scholar who will conduct research and teach courses in our power, institutions and economies concentration.

The new hires represent our department's continued growth and influence at the local, national and transnational level. This dynamic is also evident in the increasing journal editorships held by our faculty members. Last year we announced the arrival of *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*; we are pleased that another two of our faculty members have taken the helm of influential academic journals. Professor Shannon Winnubst

became co-editor of *philoSOPHIA: A Journal of Continental Feminism* (SUNY Press) and Professor Mary Thomas joined the editorial collective of the journal *Society and Space: Environment and Planning D*. The flurry of editorial activity in our department has further solidified our national standing as one of the premier women's, gender and sexuality studies programs.

The arrival of new scholars and publications has been enhanced by the exciting events that we are sponsoring this year. In October, we once again hosted the renowned feminist scholar and philosopher bell hooks. hooks gave a major lecture and participated in numerous activities throughout the university. In spring 2014, we are thrilled to host Maria Lugones, feminist race and gender philosopher, Alison Kafer, author of *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, and Rosemarie Tong, a foremost figure in the field of feminist ethics and featured speaker for our biennial Elizabeth D. Gee Distinguished Lecture in Ethics.

This fall, we said goodbye to a valued member of our staff, Lexie Beer. As Program Coordinator for four years, Lexie oversaw both our undergraduate and graduate programs with dedication and professionalism, providing critical support for faculty and students. Lexie accepted a new position with the OSU Mortar Board Senior Society where she will further develop her administrative and professional skills. We are delighted that Andy Cavins, former WGSS Office Associate, was selected as Coordinator. He has been doing a fabulous job this fall, bringing in new energy and enthusiasm.

We hope that 2014 is a great year for our faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends.

Jill Bystydzienski, WGSS Chair and Guisela Latorre, WGSS Summer Acting Chair



Dr. Bystydzienski, Chair (left) and Dr. Latorre, Summer Acting Chair 2013 (right)



Graduate students participate in rallies, meet with legislators, pose at NWSA and spend time together.



## INTERSECTIONS / Graduate Student

With each new academic year, Intersections welcomes new members and celebrates the graduation and moving on of other members. This year, we have been fortunate to be able to celebrate the amazing work that WGSS graduate students do both inside and outside of the department. Intersections was founded to provide an open space for graduate students to voice concerns, foster fellowship and community, and further professional development. The organization acts as the liaison between Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies faculty and graduate students. Many of our students are mobilizing for social justice inside the academy, with leaders in OSU organizations such as the Diversity & Identity Studies at OSU (DISCO) Grad Caucus and the Multicultural Center for Embodied Aesthetics (MCCA). Outside of OSU, our students are organizing conference presentations and serving on national boards regarding diversity, inclusion, disability, and many other issues.

Although we are all graduate students in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, we are many other things, too. Many of the graduate students in OSU's program are community organizers and activists in groups such as Equality Ohio, Ohio Adoption Planning Group, Post-Adoption Contact Agreement Advisory Task Force, Adoption Network Cleveland Public Policy Committee, the Arcus Center for Global Social Justice Leadership, Praajak Development Society, Sappho for Equality, Pratyay Welfare, and Central Ohio Immigration Immigrant Justice Coalition. These organizations address social justice across a variety of issues and transnational contexts. WGSS graduate students

also provide leadership in the Ohio Reproductive Justice Task Force, Adoption Equity Ohio, and the Ohio Birthparent Group, the International Socialist Organization, and Women and Allies Rising in Resistance.

For many graduate students, political organizing is a form of their feminist praxis and commitment to social justice and social change. Graduate students in the department have been central in organizing events and even legislation to impact the lives of people at OSU and beyond. One of these events was an event organized to send solidarity postcards to Jane Doe in the wake of the threats she was receiving after the verdict of the Steubenville rape case. Haley Swenson encouraged people to sign the postcards and then delivered around 300 notes of support for her and participated in organizing the [ifightrapeculture.tumblr.com](http://ifightrapeculture.tumblr.com) campaign, where more than 100 OSU students publicly declared why it is they resist rape culture. On another front, Kate Livingston, the lead organizer and legislative strategist for the grassroots adoption reform network Adoption Equity Ohio, developed and managed the legislative campaign for HB 61 and SB 23, companion adoption reform bills introduced in the Ohio General Assembly in 2013.

All of this work, inside the academy and outside of it, is work that we see as central to the mission of Intersections. We are fortunate to have such a passionate, talented, and accomplished group of students. We look forward to more activity in 2014!

## ADDITIONS / New Graduate Students

**Sam Affholter (PhD)** earned a BA in Women's Studies from Georgia State University. A sports coach, nanny, mentor, and childcare volunteer, Sam explores new ways of cultivating relationships with kids that challenge normative body, spatial, and social dynamics. In the next 5 years, Sam will research multiple contexts of childcare from coaching to juvenile detention, commercial childcare, and childcare and activism. He hopes to teach at the University level upon completion of his degree.

**Alexandra Anastasia (MA)** earned a BA in Political Science and Women's & Gender Studies from Rutgers University where she also worked as administrative assistant at the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL). During her time at CWGL, she worked on the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign. Her research interests include queer theory, feminist theory, post-structuralist theory and feminist activism, particularly that which informs policy.

**Jonathan Branfman (PhD)** earned a BA in History from Washington University in St. Louis. His research examines the social expectations of boys and men. Like many "Men's Studies" scholars, he believes conventional models of manhood drive problems like suicide, gay-bashing and rape to violent foreign policy and the dismantlement of welfare. Outside of academia, Jon has worked in LGBT advocacy and education with the Human Rights Campaign and with Keshet, a Jewish LGBT nonprofit.

**MacRorie Dean (MA)** earned a BA in Philosophy from Denison University in '12. Before OSU, she did activist work on college campuses, in an effort to create safe spaces for campus communities to talk about and act against rape and sexual assault. She believes in activism through theater and hopes to continue on this path in her studies. MacRorie's research interests include campus rape, rape cultures, and sex positive sex-education.

**Tay Glover (MA)** graduated with honors from OSU with a double major in WGSS and Political Science, in addition to being an Undergraduate American Education Research Association fellow. Tay's research interests are postcolonial theory, postcolonial education studies, black feminist thought, black family politics, African American/US history, and LGBT issues. She currently has two publications in press.

**Nithya Rajan (MA)** earned a BA in Economics and an MA in Human Resource Management in India. Her areas of interest are migration and diaspora theories and postcolonialisms. She hopes to focus her research on South Asian immigrant women in the US who come here on restrictive visas.

**Sarah Rodriguez-Arguelles Riva (PhD)** first received two undergraduate degrees in Theoretical Physics and Anthropology in Spain. She then went on to earn two MAs, one in Humanitarian Medicine and another in Gender Studies from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain. Her research interest focuses on women's migrations, prostitution, human trafficking, bride-trade and how the capitalist system shapes choices.

**Melissa Stidams (MA)** received a BA from OSU with a dual major in Sexuality Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her research interests are digital technology, queer media studies, and popular representations of violence against women of color in the US military.

**Lauren Strand (PhD)** earned a BA from OSU in English and Women's Studies and continued in the WGSS program to pursue her MA with an interdisciplinary specialization in Disability Studies. She is now pursuing her PhD, focused on the intersections of feminist disability studies, narrative theory, popular culture analysis, media psychology, and student development theories.



Mary- Patricia Livengood Wray graduated from OSU with a major in Women's Studies before going on to Law School.

## FEATURES / Alum at Work

Mary-Patricia graduated from the then Department of Women's Studies in 2006 before she went on to the Loyola University College of Law. Her work on the 1st Amendment Implications of the Affordable Care Act was published in their Public Interest Law Journal in 2010. She now serves as Legislative and Political Director for the Louisiana Federation of Teachers.

*"My time in WGSS helped me take in legal work with a critical eye and feminist lens. WGSS taught me about how to stay centered in a world full of conflicting theory and praxis. It is my pleasure to put skills to use everyday on our members' behalf as I draft legislation, lobby, and take on high profile litigation that lands up in our state's Supreme Court."*

## HIGHLIGHTS / New WGSS Faculty

This year has brought three new very exciting faculty members to the department: Treva Lindsey, Corrine Reczek and Katherine Marino.

**Dr. Treva Lindsey** is an Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Dr. Lindsey specializes in black feminist theory, women's history, and black popular culture studies. She has published and has forthcoming publications in the *Journal of Pan-African Studies*, *SOULS*, *African and Black Diaspora*, the *Journal of African American Studies*, and *African American Review*. She is also the recipient of several awards and fellowships from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Emory University, the National Women's Studies Association, and the Center for Arts and Humanities at the University of Missouri. Dr. Lindsey's book manuscript, *Colored No More: New Negro Womanhood in the Nation's Capital*, is currently under review. Her next book project will focus on popular culture representations of contemporary African American womanhood from the late twentieth century to the present.

**Dr. Corinne Reczek** holds an Assistant Professor position in both the Sociology and the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Departments. Her research is situated in the fields of family, gender, and health. Her research focuses on articulating how gender, sexuality, and aging processes in family ties promote or deter health. Dr. Reczek currently also holds a faculty position as a program scientist at the Center for Population

Research on LGBT Health at the Fenway Institute of Health in Boston. Recently, Dr. Reczek was awarded a National Institute of Health R21 grant to study same-sex marriage and health in Massachusetts.

**Dr. Katherine Marino** has an Assistant Professor position in both the History and the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Departments. Her research and teaching interests include twentieth-century US history, the history of women, gender, and sexuality in the Americas and transnational feminism. Her article, "Transnational Pan-American Feminism: The Friendship of Bertha Lutz and Mary Wilhelmine Williams, 1926-1944" will be published in the *Journal of Women's History* in summer, 2014. Dr. Marino is currently working on a book manuscript provisionally titled "La Vanguardia Feminista: Pan-American Feminism and the Rise of International Women's Rights, 1945-1946".

Treva Lindsey, Corinne Reczek, and Katherine Marino (left to right)



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS / Faculty

**Cynthia Burack**, *Tough Love: Sexuality, Compassion, and The Christian Right* (SUNY Press, 2014).

**Jill Bystydzienski, Rebecca Wanzo, and Jenny Suchland**, Editors, *Feminist Formations*, Special issue, "Feminists Interrogate States of Emergency." 25, 2 (Summer, 2013).

**Treva Lindsey** was featured in a HuffPost Live debate to discuss Beyonce's new album and its relationship to black feminism.

**Linda Mizejewski**, "Calamity Jane and Female Masculinity in *Deadwood*." In *Dirty Words in Deadwood: Literature and the Postwestern*, edited by Melody Graulick and Nicholas S. Witchi. (U of Nebraska P, 2013): 184-207.

**Wendy Smooth** was elected president of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS). Smooth has been active with NCOBPS since her first year of graduate school. She will serve as NCOBPS president 2013 through 2015.

**Jennifer Suchland** was invited to Williams College in February 2013 to attend a round table discussion on the Russian punk band, Pussy Riot. Suchland also received a grant from the Office of International Affairs to conduct research on new "Left-East" anti-austerity movements in Eastern Europe.

**Mary Thomas** became co-editor of the journal *Society and Space- Environment and Planning D*. She has already made some important contributions to the work of the journal beyond just book reviews, including the Fictional Worlds Symposium, the open site forum Books of the Decade, and editing a virtual theme issue on "Boys Town Redux".

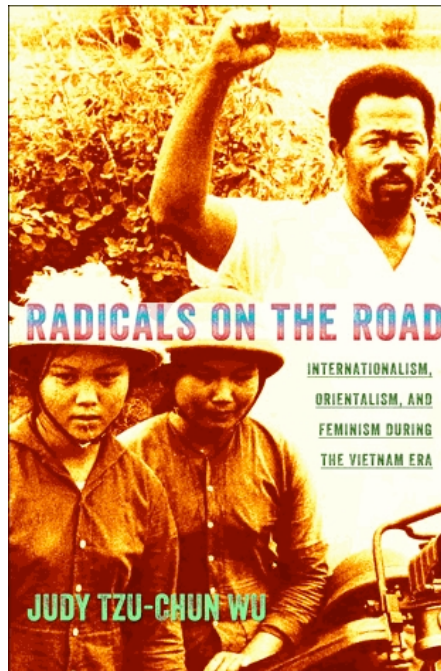
**Shannon Winnubst** became co-editor of *philoSOPHIA: A Journal of Continental Feminism* this year. She will team up with Dr. Lynne Huffer, WGSS faculty member at Emory, to edit the journal for the next five years.

Review of *Georges Bataille: Phenomenology and Phantasmatology*, Rodolphe Gasché (Stanford University Press: 2012) in *Notre Dame Philosophical Review* (April 2013)

"Georges Bataille." *Cambridge Foucault Lexicon*, eds. Leonard Lawlor and John Nale (Cambridge University Press: 2013)

**Judy Tzu-Chun Wu**, *Radicals on the Road* (Cornell University Press, 2013).

Wu was also invited to visit Japan for the Organization of American Historian-Japanese Association for American Studies (JAAS), Lecturer-in-Residence Program. While in Japan, she gave talks at Tokyo Woman's Christian University, Nanzan University, Konan University, and at the Japanese Association for American Studies Conference in Tokyo.



Dr. Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, WGSS faculty published *Radicals on the Road*, Cornell University Press, 2013

# HIGHLIGHTS / WGSS at NWSA

This year faculty and students were delighted to attend the National Women's Studies Association annual conference titled, "Negotiating Points of Encounter" in nearby Cincinnati. Those in attendance from WGSS were Sierra Austin, Jill Bystydzienski, Ally Day, Tay Glover, Cricket Keating, Lynn Itagaki, Treva Lindsey, Cathy Rakowski, Corinne Reczek, Amanda Rossie, Mytheli Sreenivas, Wendy Smooth, Jenny Suchland, Haley Swenson, Erin Tobin, Mary Thomas, Shannon Winnubst and Judy Wu. They attended a plethora of panels and workshops, as well as sponsored an exciting and stimulating roundtable conversation on recruiting women of color to the field of WGSS. Approximately 25-30 people participated in this session, including eight faculty and graduate students from OSU, as well as representatives from a variety of other institutions. Alison Kimmich, the Executive Director of NWSA was also in attendance.

The roundtable emphasized the importance of attracting women of color to the field of WGSS as well as strategies for recruitment. The discussion set the intention to reach out and create more intersectional scholarship with various ethnic studies programs while also integrating institutions that attract students of color and may not have established Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies programs.

The department plans to further refine and implement these ideas at OSU. Our hope is that other universities as well as NWSA will also prioritize the goal of recruiting more women of color to the field and develop innovative programming in order to do so. NWSA currently offers a women of color leadership institute that attracts both graduate students and faculty. Extending the pipeline to undergraduate recruitment will further enhance NWSA's ability to transform the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Faculty members Shannon Winnubst, Jill Bystydzienski and Mytheli Sreenivas speak at NWSA.



## FEATURES / Faculty in Focus

WGSS Associate Professor, Cathy Rakowski, spent a month working with colleagues at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Morogoro, Tanzania. She taught a 2-day course on participatory research methods, gave a seminar on Gender Mainstreaming, met with numerous faculty and graduate students to discuss their research proposals, and conducted research on improving the nutritional content of vegetables farmed by women and men farmers in Kilombero District. Her visit was funded by USAID's iAGRI consortium (Ohio State is the lead institution) as part of its Feed the Future Initiative.





## HORIZONS / Transnational Feminisms Summer Institute

July 7-11, 2014, the WGSS Department and *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* will be hosting a collaborative week-long summer institute on transnational feminisms. The institute is organized by and for feminist scholars who engage the transnational as a process, critique, paradigm, or characteristic of social movement in their scholarship. Graduate students as well as emerging and established scholars are welcome to explore their understanding of where the field of "transnational feminisms" is currently and where it is going. Through paper workshops and roundtable conversations, the institute hopes to capture the radical potential of a transnational feminist critique that does not reproduce the inequalities of power inherent in international relations and the global economy, and make visible alternate models for transnational social justice projects.

In addition to WGSS and *Frontiers* at OSU, institutional sponsors who have committed thus far to support this institute include Arizona State

University's Women and Gender Studies; University of Massachusetts at Amherst's Department of Women Gender and Sexuality Studies; University of California, Santa Barbara's Department of Feminist Studies; University of Indiana's School of Global and International Studies (SGIS), College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) and Department of Gender Studies; and University of Minnesota's Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies. *Frontiers* will publish a special issue on transnational feminisms to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the 1975 U.N. World Conference on Women and the 40th anniversary of the founding of *Frontiers*.



## ADDITIONS / FAREWELLS

**TESS PUGSLEY**, *Program Assistant*, joined the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies staff in November of this year. She received a BA in Women's Studies and English from Ohio State in 2011. During her undergraduate career she provided administrative support in both the WGSS and Art Departments. She is happy to be back with the faculty, students, and staff in WGSS!

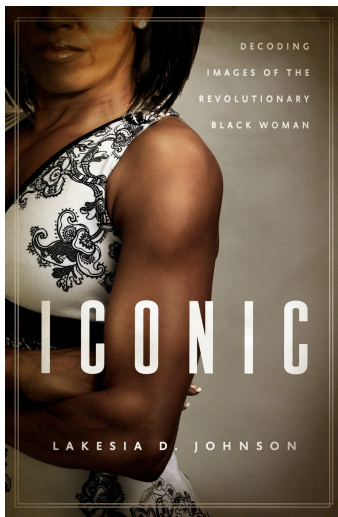
**ANDY CAVINS**, *Program Coordinator*, moved to the position from Office Associate this fall. Andy holds a BA in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies from OSU and has served the department administratively for the past four years. Andy was also a Student Associate for the Multicultural Center at OSU where he participated on

BART (Bias Assessment and Response Team) and helped organize the LGBTQ First Year Cohort program. Andy is the administrative contact for course planning, scheduling, recruitment, admissions and curriculum.

**LEXIE BEER** The department was sad to say farewell to a wonderful employee and friend of WGSS, Lexie Beer. Lexie served as Graduate and Undergraduate Program Coordinator for almost four years. Her knowledge and passion for higher education, student affairs, and WGSS was valuable and still continues to be felt throughout the department. We thank her for all of her hard work and dedication and wish her much success in her future endeavors.

Tess Pugsley, Andy Cavins and Lexie Beer (left to right).





Lakesia Johnson's book *Iconic*, WGSS sets up at NWSA, Sierra Austin discusses women of color and feminism at the YWCA, and bell hooks addresses the public.

## HIGHLIGHTS / 2013 Major Events

### Ongoing

femUNITY Film Series  
femUNITY Professional Development Series  
Intersections Research Roundtables

### February 15th

New WGSS Professor Treva Lindsey presented her work that is forthcoming in her first monograph in a talk called, "We Stand Against Jim and Jane Crow': New Negro Womanhood, Black Masculinity, and African American Gender Ideology in the the Early Twentieth Century" which explores the intellectual and cultural strivings of African American women communities in New Negro era Washington.

### February 28th

Lakesia Johnson, Assistant Professor of Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies at Grinnell College and OSU WGSS PhD graduate returned for a book reading and discussion to promote her recent publication, *Iconic: Decoding Images of the Revolutionary Black Woman*.

### September 5

WGSS Professor Mary Thomas gave a talk called "This Place Saved My Life': The Myth of the Savior Prison and Why its Appealing to Incarcerated Girls." This talk examined girls' narratives of personal redemption and change while serving time.

### October 1st to 4th

WGSS was honored once again to host bell hooks for her fourth and final visit to OSU as a Visiting Distinguished Professor. Dr. hooks gave a public lecture to an audience of over 500 called "Beyond White Supremacy". She engaged with faculty and students in a seminar specifically addressing race and sexuality as well as holding a public conversation with Sharon Davies titled "The George Zimmerman Verdict: A Conversation with bell hooks".

### October 21st

As part of the "Comparison as Method" workshop series Maria Cotera, Chicana feminist, activist, author, researcher, and professor from University of Michigan spoke on "Between the Lines": Comparison and the Poetics of Difference'

### October 30th

Sierra Austin moderated a panel at the YWCA Woman to Woman Luncheon which focused on women of color in feminism. There were more than 1,100 attendees and over \$270k was raised for YWCA programs and services!

### November 7th to 10th

WGSS faculty and students attended the annual National Women's Studies Association Conference in Cincinnati.

# UNDERGRADUATES / Future Feminist Leaders

The Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department graduated 99 students in Spring, Summer and Fall semesters in 2013; 40 of those students graduated with Honors and 8 students graduated with Research and Honors Research

Kayshla Diaz, Maria Merrill, and Joey Dillon (from left to right).



## KAYSHLA DIAZ

**Where are you from?** I am Latina, specifically Puerto Rican but born and raised in Columbus. **What are your career goals?** I went to Columbus State Community College and transferred to OSU to major in Biology. During my first advisor meeting we spoke about my career goals and it was suggested that I take a WGSS course. I loved it and immediately decided to take up a minor. As I continued my studies I ran into a women's health course and finally found how my major and minor connected. This is what drove me to my passion with WGSS and I decided to double major. My career goals are to take on my WGSS background and apply it to working as an OB/GYN. My science background allows me to be a physician but the WGSS background allows me to understand the different identities of my patients. **Who is your favorite feminist author/theorist/activist/artist?** They are all wonderful! A few that I have really loved in my feminist disability course are Anne Finger, bell hooks, Lauren Slater, and of course Audre Lorde.

## MARIA MERRILL

**Where are you from?** Youngstown, OH. **When did you know you wanted to be in WGSS?** I took WGSS 110 in the fall of 2011 and I knew almost immediately that I wanted to be part of the WGSS community at OSU. It opened my eyes to an entirely different view of everything around me and I wanted to learn as much as I could about all of it. **Who is your favorite feminist author/theorist/activist/artist?** Favorite Author/Theorists: Audre Lorde & Charlotte Perkins Gilman; Favorite Activists - Alice Paul & Eve Ensler. **What are your career goals?** I'm a double major in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Psychology, with a Sexuality Studies minor. My ultimate goal for my education is to achieve a PhD in WGSS and become a college professor or work in academia in some capacity.

## JOEY DILLON

**Where are you from?** I was born in North Babylon, NY and lived there for 8 years. I then lived in Boiling Springs, NC for 4 years and Warner Robins, GA for 7. I transferred from Georgia Southern University to OSU in 2010 when my Dad got a job in Dayton. **When did you know you wanted to be in WGSS?** I've always believed in equality for all races, genders, sexual orientations, etc. and after taking a few classes in the WGSS department that counted towards the major, I decided to take the plunge and officially add the major. **Who is your favorite feminist author/theorist/activist?** My favorite pieces involve pop culture and today's society. A piece I read in my 2300 class, "Laboring now: Current cultural constructions of pregnancy, birth and mothering" by BK Rothman was one I really enjoyed. It was about expecting mothers being forced to conform to the medical world and have an induced c-section as opposed to a home birth. As a male, it was something I never thought about and I found it really interesting. **What are your career goals?** I am a dual degree student in Communications (New Media and Communication Technology) and WGSS. I graduate in May. My dream is to work for the Women's Tennis Association.

# DEPARTMENT OF **WOMEN'S, GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES**

## **SUPPORT /** Share the Vision

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- Elizabeth D. Gee Distinguished Lecture in Ethics (313218)
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