In May 2009, Women’s and Gender Studies celebrated the 10th anniversary of the major, and we did so in style: the 2009 class was our largest ever, with 28 majors and 38 minors graduating with a B.A. in WaGS. We also advanced the first ever Terry Alexander Award, a $1,000 award to be given annually to a graduating major who has completed the Gender, Sexuality, and Public Health track. Janice Lorenzo-zana became the first recipient of the award (see inside for more information on Janice and this award). We thank the Alexander family for their support in helping us create such a generous award that reflects well our program’s approach in and commitment to furthering global health scholarship and advocacy.

Rachel Tillman  
Department of the Jacob J. Edwards Library, Stony Brook University, 2009-2010  
Presented “Language, Race, and Hospitality: the self and other of philosophy” at the 12th International Graduate Conference in Philosophy, University of Essex, May 9, 2009.
Women’s and Gender Studies Program

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Fall 2009

24 Thursday Distinguished Lecture Series
Vivien Fryd
The Trauma of Sex: the Rape Victims’ Right to Be Told
2:00PM // Humanities 1058

16 Wednesday "Other Hollywoods" Lecture Series
Cheryl Duryee
On the Margins of Hollywood
2:00PM // Java 105

21 Wednesday Affiliated Faculty Lecture
Anne O’Byrne
Excluded, Not in the Age of the Child
4:30PM // Humanities 1008

3 Tuesday Provost’s Lecture Series
Adrienne Asch
Disability and Bioethics: Can Conversions Be Resisted?
2:30PM // SAC Ballroom A

November

TERRY ALEXANDER AWARD WINNER: JANICE LORENZANA

Terry Alexander worked in the New York City public schools, was an active member of the Brownsville Community Baptist Church, and was a community activist, in particular through her involvement with the Stuy Park Lions Club in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. She was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1982. After her diagnosis, Terry, her husband, Douglas, and two daughters, Tiffany and Courtney, participated annually in the MS walk to raise awareness about the disease and money to fight it.

Terry Alexander attended the Women’s Studies graduation in May 2006 and saw Courtney receive two awards for her many accomplishments in Women’s Studies and at Stony Brook University. Sadly, shortly thereafter, Terry became very ill from complications from MS, and she died on December 7, 2006.

We hope this award will encourage students who are interested in careers in health care and/or health advocacy. In particular, we hope it will generate interest among our students in examining the complexities of caring for and treating people with chronic illnesses. We also want this award to acknowledge the importance to our students of a parents’ love, encouragement, and commitment to education and community work. Terry Alexander is a shining example of all of these things.

The first Terry Alexander Award was awarded to one of our graduating majors, Janice Lorenzana, at our Spring 2009 Graduation. Janice is one of our first students to complete the Gender, Sexuality, and Public Health track. The semester before she enrolled in our Cultures of Disability class, she contacted us with a question about whether and how one could guarantee that a sign language interpreter would be available to help a deaf person communicate with doctors and nurses when she was in the hospital after having had a stroke. It was clear that, even before she took the Disability Class, Janice already had a keen understanding of one of the main teachings of disability studies: that often what is disabling is not the impairment per se, but the lack of resources to, in this case, facilitate better communication between Americans Sign Language and speakers of English. Because of her own experience, Janice grasped well the transformative possibilities in thinking of deafness not as a disability at all, but as a linguistic or ethnic minority.

Janice also completed the health education internship with Kathleen Flynn-Bisino, associate director at the Center for Prevention and Outreach. In her report on the internship, Janice explained what had appealed to her about the internship: “I was already very interested in women’s health and I knew that education is crucial. I knew it would be an internship where I could really make a difference.”

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

JoAnna Verlezza
I am currently finishing my MSW at NYU and will be interning this year at the counseling center at CW Post. I am taking a class next semester on LGBTQ issues in the social work field and am hoping to eventually run a women/gender center on a college campus.

Charlene Obernauer
I am the Lead Organizer with Long Island Freedom Rivera
I am a 2002 alumna. I am currently working for an AIDS organization called Women in Need. I am working as an addiction counselor working with women only. I love my job! I think Professor Kelli Flores was a great influence back in Stony Brook.

INTERVIEW WITH AN ALUMNA: KATHERINE MALAGON

1. When did you graduate? What degree did you graduate with?
I graduated in Spring 2008 with a Bachelors degree in Women’s Studies.

2. What were your plans post-graduation? What are you doing now?
I am applying to programs for Physician Assistant training.

3. How are you using your Women’s Studies degree? How do you plan to use it in your future career?
As I write my essay requirement for PA school, I am integrating the knowledge obtained as a Women’s Studies major to include quotes from authors like Paul Farmer, Angela Davis, Jean-Dominique Bauby, and more. I also plan to make a strong emphasis on my fetal and maternal class (WST 401) as a gateway to my passion for health care.

4. What is your best memory from being a student in Women’s Studies?
I can’t say I have only ONE memory. I enjoyed the best. I learned an enormous amount from my fellow students and professors. Each one brought something I cherish and will always remember. It’s not only a major but a community of individuals passionate enough to invoke unforgettable memories.

October

Women’s and Gender Studies WINTER 2010

WST 101—G
Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies
Instructor: Meghan Fox
In this course, you will examine the ways in which women’s identities and experiences have been constructed by and represented through the discourses of politics, history, semiotics, science, medicine, economics, education, and literature, taking special note of the absences, silences, and gaps in these discourses. In the assigned readings, films, visual art, and ads we will focus primarily on issues of identity, gender, and sexuality, as we explore the advantages and disadvantages of the essentialist category of “women.”

WST 394—H
Health Education and Advocacy Course
Instructor: Kathleen Flynn-Bisino
This course will investigate the social, cultural, behavioral, and ethical factors affecting health and health care. The course will enable students to design effective strategies for health education/promotion and interventions. The course will provide tools for students to become their own health advocates as well as skills to advocate for the advancement of global health.

KATHERINE MALAGON

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