
FALL 2026

THE WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES NEWSLETTER



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DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Dear Feminists –

Welcome back to the fall semester – I hope everyone had a fun and feminist summer! I want to bring your attention to a few WGSS updates. First, I am thrilled that we were able to keep our wonderful Visiting Assistant Professor Lauren Savit here for this year! Lauren has been a great team player and has really helped solidify our course offerings by regularly covering Intro to WGSS, Digital Feminisms, and Sex, Gender, and Popular Culture as well as the graduate Queer Theory course. Please let's do all we can to support Lauren and continue to welcome her into our feminist community.

We are also pleased to be able to re-launch our very popular Women's History Month Symposium this coming March (and Lauren Savit will be heading up the effort!). As most of you know, the university in its great wisdom has eviscerated the discretionary budgets of most of the units in CSSH, all the while adding more real estate to its portfolio, not to mention an ever increasing bureaucracy of upper level leadership. So we are operating on... nothing really these days! Given these constraints, we are hosting an abbreviated version of our Symposium on the topic of **"Feminism, Tech Bros, and the Ethics of AI."** Yes, I know: the irony is not lost on us as Northeastern "brands" itself (again and again) as the AI university of the future. Whatever that means. But feminists gotta be feminists so we are pushing back with a half-day event focused on challenging both the gendered algorithms behind AI technology AND the oligarchic billionaire tech bros whose racist and sexist ideologies are rapidly transforming both government and civil society, not to mention the environment. Please do join us for this event on **March 18th** and keep an eye out for more details.

I end my note here with two pleas:

- 1) Speak out and support our hardworking staff throughout the College. As many are aware, staff have been treated quite poorly as of late, moved around like chess pieces with little concern for their own interests and career commitments. I hope all of our feminist faculty can demonstrate our feminist commitments by doing all we can to support staff and resist the increasingly awful conditions of labor for staff at Northeastern.
- 2) Well, of course, the midterms. Please do all you can to help elect congresspeople and governors who will protect democracy and push back against the authoritarianism that threatens to undo all the gains made in the recent decades.

In sisterhood and solidarity –
Suzanna

Welcome Back!

Two familiar faces will join WGSS for another academic year. We are grateful to have Lauren Savit and Jules Silveira rejoin the team for AY 2026-2027!

Lauren Savit

CSSH has renewed Lauren Savit's appointment as a Visiting Assistant Professor for a third year. In AY 26-27, Savit will have new responsibilities for programming, including organizing the WGSS Symposium on AI and feminist ethics. In addition, she will continue teaching Intro to WGSS; Sex, Gender, and Pop Culture; and Digital Feminisms. We are thrilled to have her back this year, sharing her expertise with our community.



Jules Silveira

Jules Silveira returns to the *Signs* team as a graduate research assistant for the journal and for Prof. Suzanna Walters. Jules is a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at Northeastern University. They earned an M.A. in political science from Northeastern, and a B.A. in political science and Portuguese from UMass Amherst. They have a strong background and interest in critical international relations and the politics of anti-transgender scapegoating. In their free time, Jules enjoys yoga, 19th century Russian literature, and hanging out with their dog, Charlie! Jules' highlight of last year was passing their comprehensive exams. This year, they are looking forward to digging into their dissertation on transnational anti-gender policy.



New Faces in WGSS

WGSS welcomes two new graduate assistants to the *Signs* team as well as a new co-op for Fall and a new executive committee member for AY 26-27.

Kasya O'Connor Grant

Kasya O'Connor Grant is a PhD candidate in world history with a focus in modern Irish history and memory studies who joins *Signs* as a graduate research assistant. Her research centers around the memorialization practices of the Irish Republican movement(s) in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Her work examines how memory is used to construct identity, sustain ideology, and advance anti-colonial, revolutionary narratives. Her background in education and public history means she is especially excited to contribute to *Signs'* **Feminist Public Intellectuals Project**, as she views the grounding of scholarship in real-world, present-day issues as a crucial, and too often overlooked, part of academic work.



Faith Maldonado

Faith Maldonado (she/her) is a third-year PhD student in the English Department and a WGSS certificate student at Northeastern University. Her research interests lie in gender and sexuality in British Empire studies, tracing the transformations of colonial and postcolonial femininity with a particular interest in 20th-century Irish literature. She is ecstatic to be joining the *Signs* team this fall, bringing an investment in the power of language and eagerness to foster dialogues across feminist traditions.



New Faces in WGSS

Gabriela Garcia

Gabriela Garcia joins the **WGSS executive committee** for AY 26-27! Garcia is an assistant professor of Marine and Environmental Sciences and Public Policy exploring the intersection between plants and people. As an ecologist, she is especially interested in how ecosystem dynamics on farms influence human decision-making, and how those decisions feed back to influence farm ecosystem dynamics. Through cross-disciplinary and collaborative research, she seeks to contribute toward an agroecological transition that preserves biodiversity and fosters socio-ecological resilience to a changing climate.



Urvi Kuchhal



Urvi Kuchhal is a third year undergraduate student studying Political Science and International Affairs. She is deeply interested in international conflict and negotiation, and the intersection between science and philosophy. In her free time, she enjoys playing the violin, basketball, and baking with her friends. She looks forward to using this co-op to learn the inner working of an academic journal, and will be working on an exciting research project on the links between space and feminism in our society.

SIGNS Updates

Make sure to check out the forthcoming issue for Autumn 2026. Here are some articles we are excited about in this issue.



Is Lesbian a Gender? Rethinking the Gender/Sexuality Divide- Mary Maxfield

Antigone's Curse: Genealogy, Politics, and Feminist Jurisprudence- Stephen Doyle Seely

"Together, We Reflect and Learn": Injury, Purity, and the Selfless Self in Progressive Political Spaces- Boka En

Toward a Black Feminist Approach to Social Reproduction Theory- Eshe Sherley

We are looking forward to the publication of the Winter 2026/27 issue! This special issue on Regret is guest-edited by Chris Bobel and Laura Green. The special issue will investigate the role regret plays in keeping patriarchal systems in place, and how such a private emotion can dictate very public and powerful decisions.

This academic year marks the final year of *Signs*' term at Northeastern University. After 12 years in CSSH, as of July 1, 2027, it will move to a new editorial home. We reflect on the many accomplishments of this editorial team, including the launch of the Feminist Public Intellectuals Project (FPIP), which has made feminism more accessible to a broad public. FPIP engages feminist theorizing with pressing political and social issues via three open-access, online-first initiatives: **Ask A Feminist**, **Short Takes**, and **Feminist Frictions**. Read on for info on the most recent installments of FPIP.

NEW ADDITIONS TO FPIP!

CHANGING GENDER SUSAN STRYKER



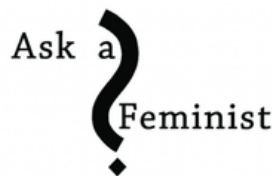
Short Takes: Provocations on Public Feminism, an open-access feature of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, offers brief comments from prominent feminists about a book that has shaped popular conversations about feminist issues. Short Takes is part of the Feminist Public Intellectuals Project.



Susan Stryker's
Changing Gender

Reviews by Riki Wilchins, Sally Hines, and Red Washburn.

**Palestinian Feminism and
Freedom, a Conversation with
Zinaida Miller and Sarah Ihmoud**



**Sitting with Regret, a
Conversation with Ann
Cvetkovich, Chris
Bobel, and Laura Green**

Listen to the conversation and subscribe to the Ask a Feminist podcast. An edited transcript of these conversations can be found on the SIGNS website.

Feminist Frictions: Key Concepts and Controversies



**Catharine A. MacKinnon,
"Exploring Transgender Law and Politics"**

Feminist Frictions: Key Concepts and Controversies features essays by prominent feminist scholars engaging a key concept or debate in which feminists of good faith have legitimate disagreements. Each essay is accompanied by an expansive multimedia digital archive that includes podcasts, videos, and cartoons, as well as more traditional books and articles, that speak to the concept in question. Feminist Frictions essays are published in print as well as on the *Signs* website.

Tip of the Feminist Cap

WGSS tips its cap to these feminist community members on their recent accomplishments. Join us in congratulating them on these achievements!

Laura Green

Professor Laura Green (English, WGSS) will take a well-deserved sabbatical in AY 26-27 after a celebrated tenure as Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Experiential Learning in CSSH. Enjoy, Laura!



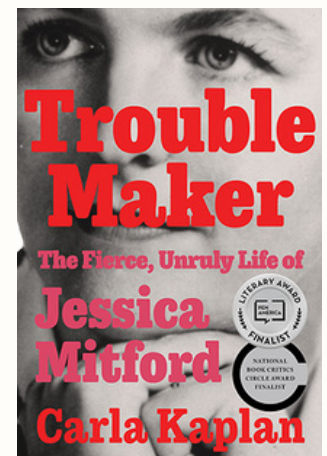
Halima Haruna



Halima Haruna (Signs RA '25-'26) was awarded the 2026-27 **Margaret Vining and Bart Hacker Fellowship in Women's Military History**. She will spend six months in residence at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, conducting research on her dissertation about African Americans and disability rights in the post-Civil War era.

Carla Kaplan

Kaplan's book *Troublemaker* has received the **Shorenstein Center Goldsmith award** and was also a finalist for both the **PEN American** and **National Book Critics Circle Awards in biography**. Congratulations, Carla!



Tip of the Feminist Cap

Libby Adler



Professor Libby Addler's new book "Governing the Terrain Called Beauty: The Queerness of Political Economy in Cuba and the United States" explores a fascinating analysis of a democratic U.S. vs a socialist Cuba to see how they differ in their treatment of the LGBTQ community

Michael Ann DeVito



Michael Ann DeVito and her students collaborated on publishing several articles in CHI 2026, the top venue in Human/Computer Interaction. These include: a first-of-its-kind study led by grad candidate Kelly Wang, focused on asexual and aromantic user needs ("How would I know what I would want from or with them?': Supporting A-Spec Approaches to Developing Relationships Through Online Platforms"); the first-ever study of the damage done by constant forced platform migration to the wellbeing and community health of transfeminine users, led by senior grad candidate Erika Melder ("The Pit Beneath the Town Square": How Digital Solastalgia Affects Platform Migration and Community Structures of Transfeminine Users); and a deep dive into the concept of Internet Aesthetics, how BIPOC users use content about these aesthetics as identity-making tools, and how platforms like TikTok make that harder by engaging in computationally-mediated microaggressions ("I can take what I want and adapt as needed": BIPOC Identity Making and Resistance Through Internet Aesthetics on TikTok).

AY 2026-2027 Programming

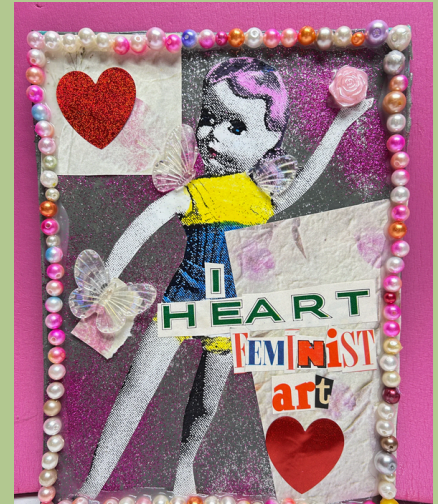
WGSS Fall Welcome: Feminist Crafternoon

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

3:00-5:00 PM

270 Holmes Hall (WGSS Conference Room)

This fall, join WGSS for a Feminist Crafternoon. Feminism and craft have always been intertwined, from fiber arts to RiotGrrl DIY 'zines. WGSS professors Lauren Savit and Gloria Sutton will gather with students in the WGSS Conference Room (270 Holmes Hall) to learn about the WGSS program and our courses and to connect with other feminists on campus over crafts. Professor Savit will lead a group activity in 'zine-making. We invite you to bring your own projects (fiber arts, collage, drawing, whatever!) or come to use WGSS's craft supplies to create something new while sharing snacks and drinks in community.



WGSS Women's History Month Symposium: Feminism, Tech Bros, and the Ethics of AI

THURSDAY, MARCH 18

9:00 am-2:00 pm

Cabral Center



This year's WGSS Women's History Month Symposium confronts the new and often terrifying specter of artificial intelligence in an increasingly authoritarian moment. A feminist analysis and intervention is needed to challenge the growing class of tech bros who create and profit from these tools. In this symposium, we engage in provocative conversations to demonstrate why generative AI is a pressing issue for feminists, particularly in a political context in which gender equity is under extreme attack. The symposium will convene a group of interdisciplinary scholars and industry experts, including Mary Gray and Catherine D'Ignazio, to contend with the challenges AI poses to feminists and perhaps even more importantly, the opposition/critical insights feminists pose to AI. In addition to panel discussions, the symposium will feature a lunchtime call to action, where panelists will facilitate a conversation with students to create a 10-point plan for implementing Feminist AI at universities.

Spring 2027 Courses

WMNS 1103. Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Professor Lauren Savit

MWR 10:30-11:35

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Societies/Institutions

An interdisciplinary course introducing key themes in gender and sexuality studies. Offers students an opportunity to learn core concepts that inform our understanding of how gender and sexuality are socially constructed and are experienced in everyday life. Drawing on women's studies, queer studies, masculinity studies, and allied areas, the course analyzes gender, sexuality, and other dimensions of identity; explores critical issues of gender, sex, and power; and studies gendered/sexed identities in both national and transnational contexts. Topics include the gendered conceptions of love, sexuality, and violence; biological arguments about gender and sexuality; the social construction of sexuality and gender; intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality; masculinities and femininities; theories of sexual difference; gender and the state; and gender and popular culture.



WMNS 1105. Introduction to Trans Studies

Instructor TBD

MWR 1:35-2:40

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Societies/Institution

Introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of transgender studies by focusing on the emergence of the field, key concepts, and pivotal debates.

WMNS/HIST/SOCL 2303: Gender & Reproductive Justice

Professor Margot Abels

TF 1:35-3:15

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Societies/Institutions

Introduces the social, legal, and economic barriers to accessing reproductive healthcare domestically and internationally. Draws on various theoretical and analytic tools including critical race theory, critical legal theory, sociology of science, human rights, feminist theory, and a range of public health methods. Access to reproductive health services, including abortion, is one of the most contested political, social, cultural, and religious issues today. Covers domestic, regional, and international legal and regulatory frameworks on sexual reproductive health.



WMNS/AFCS 2325: Black Feminist Studies

Professor Régine Jean-Charles

MR 11:45-1:25

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Societies/Institutions

Invites students to study the history and contemporary landscape of Black feminist scholarship. Covers a range of disciplines and historical periods to introduce students to important texts and theoretical developments in this vast and interdisciplinary field.

WMNS/HIST 2373: Gender and Sexuality in World History

Instructor TBD

WF 11:45-1:25

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Interpreting Culture

Introduces key concepts in the fields of gender and identity studies as they apply to world history since about 1800. Offers students an opportunity to understand the critical significance of gender, sex, sexuality, and identity to world events and how these contentious subjects influence the contemporary world. Surveys a series of major movements in geopolitics, labor, economics, culture, and society in order to analyze how individual and group identities, as well as mass assumptions about behavior and performance, have shaped these events. Gender, sex, and sexuality are integral to class discussions of work, welfare, art, culture, violence, war, and activism.



WMNS/ENGL/AFCS 2455: American Women Writers

Professor Carla Kaplan

MW 2:50-4:30

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Interpreting Culture

Surveys the diversity of American women's writing to ask what it means to describe writers as disparate as Phillis Wheatley, Edith Wharton, Toni Morrison, and Alison Bechdel as part of the same "tradition." With attention to all genres of American women's writing, introduces issues of genre and gender; literary identification; canons; the politics of recuperation; silence and masquerade; gender and sexuality; intersectionality; sexual and literary politics, compulsory heterosexuality, and more.

Spring 2027 Courses

WMNS/MSCR 2505: Digital Feminisms

Professor Lauren Savit

MR 11:45-1:25

NUpath: Creative Express/Innov, Interpreting Culture

Explores the unique ways that feminist activism and theory are impacted by the increasing digital nature of our world. From hashtags to Tumblr, feminists are using digital tools and platforms to aid in the pursuit of social justice. Offers students an opportunity to develop a timeline that traces feminists' engagement with the Internet, new media, and technological innovations from the late seventies to the present. Examines the strengths and challenges that the digital world creates for feminist engagement.



WMNS/HIST/AFCS 3305: Beyond the Binary: Race, Sex, and Science

Instructor TBD

TF 9:50-11:30

NUpath: Difference/Diversity, Societies/Institutions

Considers how gender, race, and sexuality have been treated in science, focusing primarily on the 19th and 20th centuries. Examines the history of ideas about gender, race, and sexuality as reflected in fields such as biology, psychology, endocrinology, and neuroscience. Discusses contraceptive and reproductive technologies, pharmaceutical trials, the gendering of scientific professions, and recent studies that use algorithmic predictions of sex or sexual orientation. Uses close reading techniques and discussions to advance student expertise.



WMNS/POLS/PHIL 3500: Sexuality, Gender, and the Law

Professor Libby Adler

MW 2:50-4:30

NUpath: Ethical Reasoning, Societies/Institutions

Examines the legal regulation of gender and sexuality. Investigates concrete legal cases to study the history of constitutional interpretation and the current status of rights for women and sexual minorities. Focuses on important theoretical issues emerging in the writings of diverse feminist and queer legal scholars. Addresses debates over the value of conventional equality approaches in legal doctrine; equality vs. difference perspectives; ways in which legal language constructs gender and sexuality; the incorporation of sexuality and gender in ideologies of law; and the intersections of gender, sexuality, and race in legal doctrine and legal theory.



WMNS/HIST/SOCL 5240: Feminist Resistance

Professor Suzanna Walters

T 11:45-1:25, R 2:50-4:30

NUpath: Societies/Institutions

Engages students in the study of a variety of forms of feminist resistance in recent history, emphasizing the United States in the context of crosscultural examples. Examines key feminist texts and manifestos and studies feminist activism in coalition with other social movements. Students identify and analyze unique features of gender-based activism in itself and in its intersections with other social movements, including movements and activism focused on race, class, sexuality, and physical ability.



WMNS 6100: Theorizing Gender & Sexuality

Professor Carla Kaplan

T 3:25-6:45

Seeks to challenge and expand our understanding of the relationship between biological sex; gendered identities; and sexual "preferences," practices, and life ways. This interdisciplinary course offers debates around sex, gender, sexuality, and the body that push beyond binary models reliant on a simple "nature/culture" distinction. Focuses on dynamic and variable aspects of sexuality, sex, and gender within and across cultures, representational forms, and historical periods, analyzing the circumstances in which they undergo significant challenge or transformation. Uses particular paradigmatic "case studies" to push hard at the boundaries of sex and gender and to dialogue around contesting conceptualizations of "the body," "sex," and "gender," particularly as they circulate in specific discourses of feminism, queer theory, and poststructuralism; ethnic studies; critical race theory; and cultural studies.



Plan ahead and save space in your spring schedule for these exciting interdisciplinary courses! WGSS classes are a great complement to any field of study.