Women's Studies Faculty Interests 1994

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Robin Bartlett (Economics/Women's Studies): I have been teaching Women in the Labor Force since 1974. Originally, my research interest focused on the determinants of race and gender differences in wages and labor supply. Presently, my research focuses on economic education; in particular, how to integrate race and gender issues into the content, methodology, and pedagogy of introductory economics courses and the major. I also teach Intermediate Macroeconomics and publish a monthly newsletter on the current economic situation.

John F. Boitano (Modern Languages): My primary research and teaching interests are 16th, 17th, and 18th century French literature. I am currently working on a manuscript entitled "The Polemics of Libertine Conversion in Pascal's 'Penseés': A Dialectics of Rational and Occult Libertine Beliefs." At Denison, I teach a variety of courses which are directly related to Women's Studies, e.g., French 311: Introduction to French Literature Part I--A Survey of French Literature from the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century, in which we read the work of several prominent and feminist French writers (Marie deFrance, Christine dePisan, Louise Lubbé, and Mme DeLafayette). In French Area Studies (French 315), which I shall teach for the first time this spring, we shall discuss, examine and read about the unique contribution of French feminism to a more just and equal society in contemporary France. In all of the literature courses I teach, I make a deliberate effort to read and to discuss texts written by French women writers.

Eloise Buker (Women's Studies/ Political Science): My research interests are in the area of political theory with an emphasis on contemporary political theory that includes poststructuralism, postmodernism, hermeneutics and feminist theory. My published work includes analyses of cross-cultural issues with focus on narrative as a way of understanding culture, leadership, semiotics, and Foucault. I am currently working on a book which is a rhetorical analysis of different schools of feminist thought and is directed toward asking questions about the political implications and policies of these theories. I have taught courses in the area of political theory, feminist theory, the women's movement, media and politics, literature and politics, and social science methods.

Suzanne Condray (Communications): I have taught Gender, Race and the Media as well as a Freshman Studies course on Race and Gender in Film and Literature. In addition, I teach Communication Law, Media and the Presidency, and Media Writing. I am presently writing, directing and producing a videodocumentary on Victoria Claffin Woodhull, who, among other things, ran for the U.S. Presidency in 1872. I am also writing an article on the suffragists’ perception of Woodhull’s credibility as conveyed in their correspondence, and a piece on network television coverage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Rita Snyder, Jim Freeman and I recently completed an analysis of African-American advertising images in magazines with general and African-American readerships.
Amanda Gable (English): I write fiction and have just recently completed my first collection of stories, Go Get A Girlfriend and Other Stories. In terms of research, a colleague and I are doing an oral history of the feminist bookstore in Atlanta and the Lesbian-Feminist Community in Atlanta from 1972 to the present. I also write on contemporary American women’s metafictional narrations and lesbian fiction. My teaching interests include creative writing (perhaps a new course specifically for women), women’s autobiography, the history of contemporary feminist institutions such as bookstores and presses, contemporary women’s literature, and lesbian fiction.

Karen Graves (Education/Women’s Studies). My primary research interests focus on the history of public secondary schooling in the United States, specifically, my dissertation (and continued work) targets the shift to a differentiated curriculum which occurred around 1900 and the impact this had on women’s schooling. Related areas of interest include the feminization of teaching and current educational policy. I teach the American Educational System, Critical Issues in American Education, and The Learner and The Teacher (in addition to Ed.410/Ed.415 for student teachers). Each of these incorporates gender issues, but they are not women’s studies courses.

Kay Koeninger (Art): I currently teach art history surveys. I am attempting to find effective ways to make feminist art history a central portion of the course. I have done this in the past by using a general textbook and supplementing it with outside articles. My research interests include Native American women as artists and women as artists in the nineteenth century. I recently wrote an article on early studio potters in California that emphasized the contributions of women during the period 1930-1950.

Bernardita Llanos M. (Modern Languages/Women’s Studies): My research interest deals with two literary and historiographic periods in Spanish America. I study discourses produced during the colony (particularly sixteenth and eighteenth centuries) and women’s literature of the twentieth century. Two of my recent articles dealing with women’s colonial and contemporary literary production have been accepted for publication. Last spring I taught a seminar on Latin American Women Writers that was offered in Spanish. In the future I would like to teach this class in translation in the Honors Program. Also I would like to develop a course on Latin American Women (focusing on social movements, feminism and political involvement in their societies). This summer I will begin to research the relationship of Latin American feminism and social movements within an interdisciplinary scope.

Lisa Ransdell (Women’s Programs/Women’s Studies): At Denison I have taught the following Women’s Studies-related courses: Sexual Inequality, The U.S. Women’s Movement, Women’s Health Issues, and Feminist Perspectives on Sexuality (Spring ’94). My research interests include women’s health issues, including postpartum depression (my dissertation topic) and the politics of women’s health (something I speak on); the sex-gender system, including essentialist-constructionist debates on gender and sexual identity, and homophobia (I do a public lecture called “Deconstructing Homophobia: Gender Benders and Sexual Conundrums”). I also have articles out on lesbianism and feminism and feminist theory in sociology.
Yi-Ling Ru (Chinese/Women’s Studies): Research interests include comparative studies of Chinese women authors with Chinese-American women authors; Chinese women writers, specifically Chinese feminism; gender study in connection with a matrifocal society in China (Maso). I have taught "Love, Sexuality, and Images of Women in Chinese Literature" three times. I would like to develop a course on the works by Chinese and Chinese-American women writers.

Sandra Runzo (English/Women’s Studies): Most succinctly (and perhaps obscurely) stated, my research has been preoccupied with problems of sexual identity and epistemology. My favored cultural documents are poems of 19th and 20th century American women lyricists (most prominently Emily Dickinson, Adrienne Rich, Elizabeth Bishop, Angelina Weld Grimke, thus far). Recently, I have been puzzling over the possible imbrications of race and homoeroticism, and find myself accumulating books of poems by little known women poets of the Harlem Renaissance. Where will this lead? I adore Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, to whom I owe a great intellectual debt. I regularly teach courses in American literature and occasionally in modern British literature. In my fall semester seminar on the "Body," I learned a lot about the power and trauma of AIDS literature.

Anne Shaver (English) has published on the early 17th century writer Mary Wroth, and is working on Margaret Cavendish, who published during the Interregnum and the Restoration. She has taught a course in editing early women writers that was cross-listed with Women’s Studies and will offer a course in lesbian literature in the fall of 1994. Even though she does not get to teach actual Women’s Studies courses very often, she tries to examine all that she does teach with the conviction that women matter and that gender makes a major difference in the experience of reality.

Michael Snyder (Dean of Religious Life): My doctoral thesis was on AIDS Education in higher education. My interests are in feminist theology, the elimination of sexual discrimination based on gender or orientation, social ethics, and men’s liberation from gender-based social and personal stereotypes.

Joy Sperling (Art Department): My teaching includes nineteenth and twentieth century American and European art and the History of Photography. My methodology involves a constant questioning of the origins and institutional construction of the artistic canon, and as such women’s issues are an ever present part of all my classes. Students work on individually designed research papers so there is always ample opportunity to focus on women’s issues in any of my classes. I have taught a number of seminars on political, postmodern, and activist art. I plan to teach a seminar on Women in American Art 1970 to the Present (Spring 1995). Most of my work deals with artists in America who work(ed) outside the mainstream. My research in the nineteenth century focuses on Art Unions — the first institutionalized form of middle-class patronage for American artists (including women and African-Americans). In the nineteenth century I have worked on the efforts of a number of American artists to break into the European modernist avant garde; on activist artists of the 1990s who still felt the need to shock and offend the artistic mainstream; and most recently on the Guerrilla Girls and WAC (Women’s Action Coalition)--both radical women’s artistic/action groups.
**Tim Taylor** (Music): My research interests are diverse but basically unified by my approach, which combines different strains of cultural theory. Broadly speaking, my work covers contemporary music in general, and certain musics in particular—African-American music, pop and rock, experimental "art" music, and Irish traditional music. Examining the roles of women is one of the principal ways with which I work with these musics. I recently published a paper on Pauline Oliveros (b. 1932), a contemporary lesbian composer who was among the first composers to inform her works with concepts from radical feminism and cultural feminism. Two future projects also concern women musicians: one will focus on the "classic" blues singers of the 1920s—all women—and their singing styles and representations of self, compared with the "rural" blues singers of the 1920s and 30s—all men. Another project will be a study of radical music in America, and a central figure to be considered will be Joan Baez. A course I would like to develop for next year at Denison will be on gender and music and will focus on the ways that western European music has constructed "art" music in ways that tended to exclude women and ethnic minorities until this century. This course will also have a strong cross-cultural component, examining musics from around the world and women's roles in those musics.

**Roxane Teboul-Boitano** (Modern Languages): My teaching and research interests include 16th and 20th century French Literature. I am currently writing my Ph.D. dissertation on François Rabelais in which I shall devote a chapter to this author's consideration and portrayal of women.

**Mary Tuominen** (Sociology/Anthropology/Women's Studies): In my current research I explore the transformation of women's caregiving labor from household to commodity production. My most recent work links both applied and theoretical research in an economic and political analysis of child care work. Through interviews with culturally diverse child care workers, I investigate the ways in which social, economic, racial/ethnic and political structures interact to create a labor pool of low-waged child care workers in both the formal and underground economy. An additional research project addresses women's grassroots political activism in the U.S., focusing on women's organizing of shelters for battered women and children in the early 1970s. My more general research and teaching interests (both applied and theoretical) include political economy, gender and work, gender and the welfare state and social change/social movements. Prior to teaching, my work ranged from community organizing with low-income advocacy programs to serving as budget assistant to the Governor for human services in Washington State. My community-based experience continues to inform both my teaching and research.

**Sandy Yorka** (Physics/Astronomy): My research has been primarily on Red Giant Stars, and my teaching includes Astronomy, Interdisciplinary Approaches to Teaching Science, and Science Education, focusing particularly on education of elementary age children and adults.