



WELCOME FROM THE HEAD, ELAINE POWER



Greetings Women's Studies and Gender Studies Alumni!

I hope you are finding ways to navigate these challenging times.

I'm Elaine Power and I took over as Head of Gender Studies on 1 January 2020, after Samantha King's 4.5 years of exceptional leadership. Following the Gender Studies tradition of appointing Heads who are not core faculty, my home base is the School of Kinesiology & Health Studies, though I've been cross-appointed to Women's/Gender Studies for most of my 16 years at Queen's. Perhaps some of you took HLTH 101, The Social Determinants of Health, which I taught from 2004-2018. In my research, I use qualitative methods to understand experiences of eating and feeding others, especially in relation to class, race and gender. I have become an advocate of a basic income guarantee for all Canadians as a way to end the public health crisis of food insecurity. I'm currently working on a research project, funded by a Queen's Covid-19 Rapid Response grant, entitled [No One Left Behind: Income Security for the 21st Century](#), interviewing people who are not eligible for federal income assistance, with the goal of informing more inclusive income security policy for Canada. I'm also collaborating on a fun "knowledge translation" project, creating a book for younger readers about why food banks don't address food insecurity.

This is an exciting time in Gender Studies. We have said "thank you for your outstanding service" to long-time staff members Kathy Baer and Terrie Easter Sheen. With great pleasure, we recently welcomed new staff members Mel Côté and Denita Arthurs. We eagerly anticipate the launch of the Black Studies minor, which will be housed in Gender Studies, an initiative made possible by the tremendous leadership of Katherine McKittrick. At this moment, when COVID-19 has laid bare and exacerbated existing social inequities, Gender Studies faculty, students and staff are at the forefront of work to challenge injustice, including anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and other forms of racism; homophobia; transphobia; (hetero)sexism; ableism; and other manifestations of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy—and create a more just, free, inclusive, creative, nourishing and beautiful world.

The launch of the Black Studies minor in September 2021 will coincide with the 35th anniversary of the first offering of a Women's Studies course, IDIS 200. The bold women who fought to establish Women's Studies at Queen's—against sometimes "peevish and vitriolic" opposition—are now mostly retired. With the capable assistance of historians Nancy Butler and Margaret Little, we have set out to do interviews with some of the founding faculty members, and with long-time staff member Terrie Easter Sheen. We will put the transcripts and other important documents in the Queen's Archives, accessible to anyone doing research on the history of the Department. Pam Dickey Young (Religious Studies), one of the founding faculty members of Women's Studies, remembers one male faculty member from the Department of English who repeatedly spoke against



the establishment of Women’s Studies because, in his opinion, it was not a “proper” field of study, and universities should not waste their time on what would surely be a “flash in the pan”.

With the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion now firmly established in the Faculty of Arts and Science, and the University more broadly, we can say decisively that Women’s Studies was no “flash in the pan.” Gender Studies students, faculty, and staff have worked tirelessly alongside many others at Queen’s to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion are central to our work as a University.

Thank you for carrying the seeds of Women’s/Gender Studies out into your lives, workplaces and communities, and all that you do, in big and small ways, for collective liberation and social justice.

I hope that you enjoy the rest of this newsletter and that you will be in touch! We want to hear from you, keep in touch, and create a stronger community of Women’s/Gender Studies alumni.

Please take good care.

Elaine

IN THIS ISSUE...

<i>Welcome from the Head</i>	1	<i>Alumni Spotlight</i>	
		Tasia Alexopolous	8
		Nael Bhanji	8
<i>Department News</i>		Kelly Cole	9
BA Minor/General in Black Studies	3	Taylor Cenac	10
Terrie Easter Sheen Graduate Award	3	Mel Côté	10
A new look for Gender Studies	4		
Journal of Critical Race Inquiry	4	<i>Donation/Giving Opportunities</i>	11
Gender neutral accessible washroom	4		
		<i>Upcoming Events</i>	12
<i>Staff & Faculty Updates</i>		<i>Contact us</i>	12
Farewells and Welcomes	5		
Katherine McKittrick	6	<i>Department Directory</i>	13
Karen Lawford	6		
Heather Castleden	6		
burcu baba	7		
Co-authored paper with students	7		



DEPARTMENT NEWS

Introduction of a BA Minor/General in Black Studies – Fall 2021

Housed and administered in Gender Studies, yet with an interdisciplinary reach that will be open to departments, programs, and faculties across the university, the new BA in Black Studies will serve to educate the Queen's community about the histories and contemporary struggles of African and Black diasporic communities. The BA in Black Studies will be a site of collaborative learning; it will be inter-departmental, interdisciplinary, inter-faculty, multi-disciplinary, with some initiatives, such as speaker series, open to all members of the Queen's University community and the wider Kingston community.

The BA General/Minor in Black Studies will introduce students to Black scholarly, activist, and creative worlds. Courses will focus on Black literatures, Black and African histories and politics, Black geographies, Black popular culture, Black sound studies and technologies, Caribbean literatures, black activism, and black-indigenous alliances. Students will be introduced to key concepts and methodologies that animate the field of Black Studies and also have opportunities to engage theory- or activist-based practicums, internships, cultural production, and research assistantships.

[Read more about the Black Studies program](#)

[Make a donation to support Black Studies at Queen's](#)

Announcing the Terrie Easter Sheen Graduate Award



When we think of the Department of Gender Studies (previously the Department of Women's Studies) at Queen's, the first person we think of is Terrie Easter Sheen. For 35 years, Terrie was the central pillar of the department, supporting its growth from a single course to a full and lively department. During her time at Queen's, Terrie was the consistent welcoming face of Gender Studies, and has profoundly impacted students, staff, faculty and visitors to the Department.

In honor of her June 2020 retirement, we are delighted to announce a named graduate award in Terrie's name.

[Read more about the Terrie Easter Sheen Graduate Award](#)

[Make a donation](#)



A new look for the Department of Gender Studies

The new Department of Gender Studies graphic element is a symbol of our mission, as articulated in the [Gender Studies Department Strategic Plan \(2019-22\)](#).

Colored stripes are arranged in stylistic reference to LGBTQ+ pride flags, with the six colors coming from the Queen's University coat of arms. The circle represents inclusion, togetherness, and that all of us – students, staff, faculty, administration – have a role in enacting the department's mission. The Queen's Q centred on this background reminds us that our work begins here on campus.



Want to represent Gender Studies in your community?

[Send us an email](#) and we will mail you a free Gender Studies decal!

Journal of Critical Race Inquiry

In 2020 the Journal of Critical Race Inquiry (JCRI) graduated from an annual to a biannual publication schedule.

The [spring 2020 issue](#) of JCRI features articles by Monetta Bailey on racialized immigrant youth experiences in the Extra-judicial Sanctions program in Calgary, by Jina Fast on anti-Black racism in penetrative trauma research, and by Bas Dikman on "white innocence" and "everyday racism" in contemporary Dutch society, as well as book reviews of David Eng and Shinhee Han's *Racial Melancholia*, *Racial Dissociation: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans* by Christopher Bennett, and of Aren Aizura's *Mobile Subjects: Transnational Imaginaries of Gender Reassignment* by Jacob Barry.

The fall 2020 issue, on "[Whiteness in an era of White Rage](#)," guest edited by Katerina Deliovsky and Tamari Kitossa, is due out later this October.

Gender neutral accessible washroom

In November 2019, the Department of Gender Studies celebrated the opening of the new gender neutral accessible washroom in Mackintosh-Corry Hall, D wing, South end. This washroom is easily accessible via the wheelchair ramp at the Mackintosh-Corry entrance closest to Watson Hall and by taking the elevator up to the 5th floor.





STAFF & FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Farewell to...



Kathy Baer
Undergraduate Assistant
Kathy retired in January 2020



Terrie Easter Sheen
Graduate Assistant & Assistant to the Head
Terrie retired in June 2020



Samantha King
Head
Sammi's term as Head ended in January 2020

Welcome to...



Mel Côté
Undergraduate Assistant
Mel started in May 2020



Denita Arthurs
Department Manager & Graduate Program Administrator
Denita started in July 2020



Elaine Power
Head
Elaine's term as Head runs from January 2020 to June 2023



Heather Castleden
Graduate Chair
Heather started in August 2020



Katherine McKittrick inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences



Professor **Katherine McKittrick** has been inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences as an International Honorary Member in social sciences. The prestigious honour recognizes Katherine’s research contributions, which are in areas of black studies, anti-colonial studies, cultural geographies, and gender studies.

“To learn I was being honoured alongside wonderfully smart colleagues such as Alondra Nelson, Maydianne Andrade, and E. Patrick Johnson, as well as former inductees Paul Gilroy, Toni Morrison, and Robin D.G. Kelley has me whirling a little. These scholars are brilliant and generous and to be in their company is an incredible feeling.”

[Read the article](#)

Karen Lawford received the Indspire Laureate Award (Health)



Assistant Professor **Karen Lawford** has received the highest honour the Indigenous community bestows upon its own achievers – the Indspire Laureate Award. These awards recognize Indigenous professionals and youth who demonstrate outstanding career achievement. The award recognizes Karen’s commitment and contributions to Indigenous-centred maternity services.

“I became a midwife to provide the gold standard of maternity care to First Nations families who live on reserves...I am committed to working in a reciprocal, ethical, and responsive manner for the benefit of all our communities.”

[Read the article](#)

Heather Castleden receives Fulbright Visiting Research Chair



Gender Studies Graduate Chair **Heather Castleden**, who is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography & Planning, was awarded a Fulbright Visiting Research Chair at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa to engage with Native Hawaiians about their leadership in renewable energy projects.

“I am delighted to receive the Fulbright Fellowship and its swag, a toque, but happy to say that I won’t be needing it where I’m going! On a serious note, I’m looking forward to spending time with, and learning from, Native Hawaiians about their leadership in sustainability on the Islands.”

[Read the article](#)



burcu baba awarded the Ban Righ Foundation Mentorship Award



[Read the article](#)

Term Adjunct Assistant Professor [burcu baba](#) has received the Ban Righ’s Mentorship Award which recognizes a Queen’s female-identifying faculty member who demonstrates mentorship and knowledge-sharing, and has been inspirational to a student or students. This award celebrates burcu’s efforts to facilitate a culture of compassion and inclusivity for all, especially marginalized groups on campus.

“I did not know that I was nominated for the award. It was such a nice surprise in the middle of the pandemic Summer! I am honoured and humbled to share it with Prof Beverley Mullings. She is one of the most brilliant and inspiring faculty members on campus. What an amazing way to be acknowledged. Thank you for sharing my joy!”

Dr. Beverley Mullings, former Gender Studies Department Head, is the co-recipient of this award.

Gender Studies students co-author paper with Karen Lawford



[Read the paper](#)

Students from the Winter 2020 GNDS 480 course “Special Topics in Gender Studies: Kinship & Indigenous Relations” have published a paper with Assistant Professor Dr. Karen Lawford. The article, “Indigenous relationality and kinship and the professionalization of maternity care” was published in the first issue of the new open-access [Turtle Island Journal of Indigenous Health](#).

Congratulations to the following students and alumni:

Erika Campbell, GNDS MA 2020
Alyssa Austin, SOCY MA student
Esmé Ariss, GNDS student
Maddison Bax-Campbell, GNDS BA 2020
Sophia Auton, GNDS minor student
Emily Carkner, GNDS BAH 2020

Gabriela Cruz, GNDS BAH student
Abby Hawes, GNDS BAH 2020
Kayla O’Brien, SXGD Certificate 2020
Nardin Rizk, GNDS minor 2020
Emily Toop, GNDS BAH 2020
Landon Brickenden, GNDS BAH student



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Tasia Alexopolous

WMNS BAH 2007, LGBT Certificate 2007, GNDS PhD 2020

My name is Tasia Alexopoulos and I completed my PhD in GNDS this summer (2020).

The highlight of my time in GNDS was working with so many amazing faculty & staff members. The opportunity to take a class with Dr. McKittrick after so many years (I completed my undergraduate at Queen's over a decade ago) was such a unique and priceless experience.

Since completing my PhD, I have continued my work as the Social Media Coordinator/Spokesperson for the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, teaching trauma-informed abortion support workshops, and volunteering.

Tasia is the first graduate from the Gender Studies PhD program, which launched in 2017.



Nael Bjanji

WMNS BAH 2008, SXGD Certificate 2008

I have many fond memories of my time at Queen's. As a co-chair of the Department Student Committee, I especially enjoyed organizing the much-anticipated end-of-term brunches for our amazing professors. It was always a wonderfully informal way to end a year of hard work while also allowing for the careful perfection of one's omelette-making skills!

When I began my undergraduate degree at Queen's, I took a course in Gender Studies as a random elective. Fast-forward a few years later, and I left Queen's with a BAH in Gender Studies, a newly-discovered passion for theory, and the certainty that I wanted to inspire students the way that my Gender Studies profs had inspired me. Oh, and I can make a mean omelette!

I am currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies at Trent University where I teach and write about critical race theory and trans studies.





Kelly Cole

WMNS BAH 2010, SXGD Certificate 2010

When you grow up as a small-town girl on social assistance, often big dreams and goals are dismissed as too lofty. I refused to accept this and made the bold choice to attend Queen's – becoming the first person in my family to graduate from post-secondary education. My home quickly became the department of Women's Studies, which would become Gender Studies during my time as co-chair of student council.



My studies equipped me with the language to address how inequitable society is to marginalized people; how my poverty, my status as a woman and my skin colour fit into a longstanding historically racialized system. I am grateful for the support, guidance and relationships built in the Mac-Corry office that continue to inspire my professional and personal paths.

It has been ten years since I danced (literally) across that convocation stage. Since then I have worked to inspire young girls, created a housing-first shelter for youth, ran for mayor (twice!), and advocated for other's rights in a variety of roles. I appeared in a CBC documentary and later found myself able to thank Malala Yousafzai face to face. To top it all off, Warren Buffett asked me for a picture.

I am a sparkly, chatty, outgoing woman – all the while sitting in the trauma of my life. My challenges make my voice louder, my thoughts kinder, and my arguments more nuanced.

Don't ever be afraid of being you.

You matter and you are loved.

Take bold risks.

Be inspired by your own journey.

For me, the horizon holds law school before age 50 and who knows what else. What I know for sure is that this department and the colourful characters that crossed my path along the way have changed my life.

Thanks always to Dr. Katherine McKittrick, Dr. Jane Tolmie, Terrie Easter Sheen, Dr. Margaret Little, Bev Baines and so many others for leaving an indelible mark on my journey.

With hope for a brighter future for equity,
Kelly Jean Cole



Taylor Cenac

GNDS MA 2020

Hi, I’m Taylor Cenac. I recently completed my Master of Arts in Gender Studies at Queen’s in September 2020.



My research and community work centers how radical loving and caring spaces are fundamental to dreaming toward queer futures. For my MA research I looked at Black feminist pedagogies using Audre Lorde’s theory of erotic power as a moving metaphysics. I also relied on work by Carole Boyce Davies, M. Jacqui Alexander and NourbeSe Philip to help me articulate the moving desire to find oneself through caring community work. I worked under Dr. Katherine McKittrick to demonstrate how Black women’s loving practices become pedagogies that teach us how to live and grow.

I love connecting with people and sharing our dreams for the future, and this need to connect and network with other BIPOC folks has allowed me to grow in unanticipated ways. I am currently completing a diploma to become a registered social service worker at St. Lawrence College. Social service work is about building strong communities of care that seek social justice for those most marginalized among us. I believe youth are central to doing this work because young people dream queer and radical dreams, and this is the vision of community that I seek to cultivate. Kingston was a very new place for me; I am indebted to the faculty, staff and students at Queen’s and to the young troupes at Roots and Wings with whom I found community.

Mel Côté

GNDS BAH 2016

I returned to Queen’s in 2014 to finish my undergraduate degree in Gender Studies as a mature student. Faculty and staff in GNDS were instrumental in easing the transition back to formal studies after several years away from the university. My classes in Gender Studies helped to contextualize my unease with some of the practices I was observing in my career in the non-profit sector and gave me the language to critically engage with the injustices I was witnessing and experiencing in my life.



Since completing my degree in 2016 I have spent time working in non-profit management, funding and grant oversight, and university administration. I also enjoy volunteering with the Ban Righ Foundation for Women’s Continuing Education and Reelout Queer Film Festival as a member of their Boards of Directors. I am delighted to be returning to Gender Studies again as the Undergraduate Assistant.



DONATION/GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Terrie Easter Sheen Graduate Award



Donations will establish a graduate award for Gender Studies graduate students.

[Give Now](#)

Support Black Studies



Sandra Brewster, Untitled (Smiths), mixed media on wood, 48x60in., 2011

Donations will support the development of the Black Studies program, and provide financial assistance to Black Studies students.

[Contact Us](#)

Gender Studies Gift Fund



Donations are used at the discretion of the Head for department needs and strategic projects.

[Give Now](#)

Other funds



Poole Award in Women's and Gender Studies
Kathleen A. Herman Prize in Gender Studies
Sue Hendler Graduate Scholarship/Fellowship

[Give Now](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

The Department of Gender Studies hosts a monthly Gender Matters Speaker Series during the academic year. All community members are welcome to attend these [Zoom events](#) (Password 92ZwFN)

Gender Matters Speaker Series – October 2020	
Topic	Indigenous Studies/Gender Studies: Reflections on Teaching Methodologies
Speakers	Liz Brulé , Department of Gender Studies Isabelle St-Amand , Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Date and time	1-2pm October 21, 2020

Gender Matters Speaker Series – November 2020	
Topic	Migration and Diaspora: Research at the Intersection of Religion and the Law
Speakers	Ashwini Vasanthakumar , Faculty of Law M. Shobhana Xavier , School of Religion
Date and time	1-2pm November 18, 2020

CONTACT US

We are always happy to hear from you – let us know what you have been up to!

Department of Gender Studies

Alumni engagement committee

Terrie Easter Sheen, Margaret Little, Denita Arthurs

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