Dear FC Feminist Communities,

I write to you as the new director of the FCWSRC, grateful for the connections, relationships, and possibilities the Center has nurtured for three decades and profoundly aware of what it can mean to have access to spaces where our struggles to work within and transform our institutions become intimately and locally collective. Relationships matter. The privatization of wealth and care wrought by settler sexuality often leaves us isolated and under-resourced. Around the proverbial table, sharing what we can, we are wiser and more powerful. What can happen at the Center’s big, old table is the reason I stepped up to direct. It has been a place to slow down, think together, check each other, organize, strategize, argue, hold space, and imagine accountability. A reprieve from insisting that there is work to do, and a chance to get down to it.
I believe in feminism as a site of struggle and feminist scholarship as a critical-creative project of undoing and/as worldmaking. When feminists make space to fight with and for one another, we are building things. The contributions of Black feminist theorizing to the movement to defund the police and reallocate those resources, for example, highlights the importance of how we narrativize. If all research is storytelling and we are a community of researchers and we know the stakes of how we story our worlds are often literally life and death, we have work to keep doing. Not only our individual work, but the citational, pedagogical, and always political work of advancing the insights of transformational scholarship. This often means challenging narratives that make certain outcomes seem inevitable and others unrealistic within our institutions.

If you are reading this letter, you likely already know that the FCWSRC has been defunded for the 2020-2021 academic year. Moments of financial crisis in higher education are of course ripe for pushing through institutional decisions that impact marginalized scholarship and scholars, staff, and students and would in other moments be indefensible. Many feminist and other critical activist-scholars have pointed out that the crisis of Covid-19, the pretense for closing the Center, is more than biological. The scale of this crisis and its unequal distribution of harms - especially in the US - is the result of gendered racial capitalism and the eugenic logics that undergird the differential valuation of lives in this country. Rather than ceding that the damage of a crisis largely created by anti-feminist, racist, capitalist decision making can be mitigated by more of the same, we are called now to insist on fundamentally rethinking the priorities of our societies and, from our vantage point in the academy, our colleges and universities. The spaces we have created over decades for the critical work of making sense of where we are and imagining otherwise are being gutted of resources and their stewards asked to participate in the violence of pretending that we're all in this together.

Whatever measures we take in a given instance, we must make strange the administrative narrative that would have us continue to pretend that crises in the fiscal sustainability of higher education can be addressed through austerity measures that defund programs, centers, and services we need.

"WHEN FEMINISTS MAKE SPACE TO FIGHT WITH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER, WE ARE BUILDING THINGS."
Critical university studies have provided us ample resources to understand the bloated administrative budgets the labor of staff and faculty and debt of students supports. This is not a time to “come together” and accept the stripping away of hard-won resources in the interest of a “greater good” that has never included those most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in our institutions. To say that we stand in solidarity with those protesting structural racism and the ongoing history of anti-Black structural violence in the US while quietly accepting a narrative that naturalizes the dismantling of infrastructures that support activist scholarship at our institutions is unconscionable. Feminist research has taught us better.

The Five College area is an historic hub for feminist research and activism and has played its part over decades in helping define both beyond our local community. The stakes of defining feminist work as transformational and actively challenging its cooptation as handmaiden to liberalism and white supremacy are high. Over the months since I received the news of the Center’s defunding, I have been in conversations about how to proceed with previous directors, faculty representatives on the steering committee, and other comrades and mentors in the Valley who share this conviction. I’m sure it’s no surprise to you, fellow feminists, that the question of whether and how to respond and program this year is a site of contest, without simple sides or easy answers. Context is everything, and the context in which we find ourselves is one of largely unprecedented challenges and possibilities. As we grapple with anger, disappointment, and concerns about the nature of the Center’s ongoing relationship to the consortium, it is clear that insofar as the FCWSRC is the networks we’ve been building to support the reworlding work of feminist research, the Center is far from closed.

I hope you’ll join us at the virtual table for our first town hall meeting on September 11th at 4pm.

In solidarity,

Angie
Reflections
by Pamela Stone

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the last week of a semester fraught with complications, and the end of over 14-years of employment at Hampshire College, I sit down to reflect on the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center (FCWSRC) and the role it has played for me this past academic year. While my decision to apply to the Center was the result of tenuous employment for this academic year, the heart of my application was the desire to connect with people, to have an academic home, and to have a community of scholars to share space, ideas, celebrations, and complications. What I found exceeded my expectations. I found people whose research areas were different from my own and yet their scholarship often intersected with mine. I found people at different stages in their careers. I found intersections of old ideas, new ideas, and new ways to consider my own work. I found a space to share, to think out loud. I found the opportunity for me to support junior and senior scholars, to offer my thoughts and insights on their explorations.

Throughout this year, when I have been asked about the FCWSRC, I find myself describing it a “feminist think tank”, a community of thinkers who are tackling different problems, global and local, personal and public, across identities, but in service to a humanistic and inclusive feminist discourse. I find myself smiling, as I vision our times together this year, over food (thank you Bea), a cup of tea, or an occasional glass of wine (in a plastic cup). I think about the many write-onsites when everyone is so focused on their computer screens typing away until the alarm rings, and then the conversations begins again, until the next 20 minutes. I smile when I consider the moments, which have all been, social, productive, friendly, open and sincere.

At the end of this academic year, as we have all had to social distance, ending our time at the FCWSRC sooner than each of us would have wanted, I have been heartened by our couple zoom-meetings (the new normal). I want to thank everyone for their generous spirits, the sharing of their time, and for the community I have been so honored to be a part of. I look forward to hearing about the dissertations completed, books and articles published, chapters written, and social activism, all constructed, nurtured, polished, produced, and completed by this community of scholars. I have been so fortunate to work with this over the past year. As we emerge from this “big pause” I hold hope that as we continue forward, each of our journeys are better for the time we have spent with each other at the FCWSRC. I know for me this is true.
The Center as Family

Korka Sall

As a graduate student in English at UMass Amherst and a parent—I have two beautiful girls (6-year-old and a 1-year-old)—the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center (FCWSRC) has impacted my academic life positively. I started in September 2019 as a Research Associate when my youngest was 4 months old. The first day I set foot at the Center with my baby girl, I felt welcome and at home. Meeting with my Associate colleagues was a dream come true. My dreams, struggles, thoughts about feminism have been challenged, enriched, and questioned as I listened to my colleagues, presented my work, shared my opinions and gave and received feedback. The community built around food and cathartic moments under the leadership of Jennifer Hamilton is strong. My passion for Women’s Studies is rooted in my academic research on negritude feminisms which unveils the work of black women writers from the African Diaspora. As a West African woman scholar focusing on literature from the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa, I am invested in re-centering women’s contributions to the negritude movement.

My scholarship is crafted to defy and challenge patriarchal masculinity that overlooks black women’s writings and the FCWSRC offers me the possibility to do so. I use teaching as a vehicle to share my feminist research and choose texts written by black women to bring their work more into light with my students. With my experience as a Research Associate at the Five College Women's Studies Research Center, I am immersed in the current debates on Women's Studies as I grow as an educator and a scholar invested in Women's Studies. As a Research Associate, I have achieved the most in my academic life this academic year due to the support that the Center offers. Last October, I co-organized the UMass English department's 2019 symposium for graduate students on Methods, which brought together young scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences around the discussion on research methodologies in Black Studies, Queer Studies, and Postcolonial Studies. When I participated in the workshop “What is Feminist Research?” co-organized by the FCWSRC and the Mount Holyoke College Gender Studies department, I shared my experience of growing up in Senegal. My mother, whom I consider a feminist, did not attend formal school but she taught us that it is up to us, her children, to fight gender barriers and not believe in gender norms. She also taught us that there is no limit in this life, that we can achieve everything we want in life, if we work for it. I try to give my daughters the same life lessons that will be helpful for them.

On December 2019, I gave my first public talk at the FCWSRC on my dissertation project “Negritude Feminisms: An African perspective. Rethinking Gender with Black Female Francophone Writers and Activist from Senegal and Martinique.” That experience was so helpful in getting me prepared for my dissertation defense on March 6. The public was welcoming, the questions inspiring, the conversation insightful, and the dinner delicious! Thank you, Bea! I am ready to turn my dissertation into a book to bring into light the work of Annette Mbaye d’Erneville, Aminata Sow Fall from Senegal and Suzanne Césaire and Paulette Nardal from Martinique as negritude feminist writers and activists. Unfortunately, the spring semester was cut short due to the global coronavirus pandemic. We were still able to have our meetings virtually and to check in with one another about how we were all holding up during these unprecedented times. I am currently working on turning one of my dissertation chapters into a journal article for Meridians.

Now, thanks to the FCWSRC, I am more prepared for my life after graduate school as a parent and a scholar to impact the world positively, to go back to Senegal and be part of a community that fights gender inequality and educates people about the importance of giving voice to women and girls. I am glad to raise my kids as African feminists who question gender barriers, gender norms, and social inequalities wherever they find themselves.
Christine Benvenuto
2001-2002

My first play, Lock Down was produced last spring as part of the Boston Theater Marathon, and I had an essay about Elizabeth George Speare's *The Sign of the Beaver* appear recently in the Christian Science Monitor. During the winter I began work on a new play during designated writing time at the Five College Women's Studies Research Center, and I'm grateful to this year's associates for creating these writing sessions and opening them up to past associates like me.

Clara Bradbury-Rance
2013-2014

I'm delighted to announce a couple of publications that may be of interest to members: Bradbury-Rance, Clara, *Lesbian Cinema after Queer Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), translated into Spanish as El Cine Lésbico después de la Teoría Queer (Mexico City, Osifragos, 2019). I gave an interview about the book here:
https://www.lambdaliterary.org/interviews/07/11/clara-bradbury-rance-interview/

Bradbury-Rance, Clara, editor, *Feminist Pedagogies* (Special Issue), *MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture*, 5, 2020
https://maifeminism.com/issues/issue-5-feminist-pedagogies/

Julie de Chantal
2016-2018

I just completed my second year as an assistant professor of History at Georgia Southern University. I recently published an article in the Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth. My cohort helped me with the early drafts of this article. Jennifer probably remembers it. The link to the article is here https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/42244 (the journal is accessible without any fee due to the pandemic). My article is entitled "'Extra! Extra!' Boston Regulates Child Labor on the Streets, 1880-1895."

My research team won a grant from the Organization of American Historians - National Park Service Collaboration scheme. It is a grant to conduct a special study on the presence of African Americans at Fort Pulaski Georgia. I am the principal investigator on the grant.

I am working on my manuscript called *Just Ordinary Mothers: Black Women's Grassroots Organizing in Boston, from the Vote to the Busing Crisis* and on an article on Alice McKane, a black physician who lived in Savannah, Monrovia (Liberia), and Boston.

Sonja Dolinsek
2015-2016

I would like to share the following publication:
Laura Doyle  
1991-1992

I have a new book forthcoming from Duke University Press in Fall 2020, titled *Inter-imperiality: Vying Empires, Gendered Labors, and the Literary Arts of Alliance*. The book develops an intersectional, interdisciplinary, and long-historical analysis of world politics. Rooted in close historical study, it argues that current conditions of struggle and alliance have been shaped over centuries by the dynamics of dissent in a world of vying empires and gendered stratifications, a world in which the manipulation of languages has served both domination and resistance.

I was in the first cohort of FCWSRC scholars, which invaluably supported my completion of my first book, *Bordering on the Body: The Racial Matrix of Modern Fiction and Culture* (Oxford UP 1994).

Kristin Du Mez  
2003-2004

My new book was released in June and given the upheaval of the publishing industry right now, I’d love the chance to promote it within FCWSRC circles. It’s called *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation* (Liveright, 2020). It’s a study that situates white evangelical masculinity and militarism as key to understanding evangelical politics over the past half century or so. Although it’s a scholarly work, I’m publishing with a trade press so it is a very accessible (and lively) read.

Cheryl. Fish  
2003-2004

I am happy to say my book of poems, *Crater & Tower* (Duck Lake Books, 2020), has just been published. I am supposed to be reading in the Straw Dog Hill Towns poetry series in October in Ashfield, MA. We’ll see if that becomes a virtual event. The book is available on Amazon, B&N online, and elsewhere. [https://www.amazon.com/s?k=9781943900435&i=stripbooks&linkCode=ps](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=9781943900435&i=stripbooks&linkCode=ps)

Lisa Fontes  
2006-2007

I am happy to contribute the publication of a Spanish language version of my latest book, *Invisible Chains* (The Guilford Press, 2015). I am also part of a Worldwide University Network (WUN) grant along with colleagues in the UK and Ghana, investigating Women’s Mental Health and Domestic Violence.
Teresa Gonzales  
2017-2018

Since my time at the center in 2017-2018, I've been awarded internal grant money to begin two new projects and I've just submitted my book manuscript to NYU press for publication in Spring 2021.  
In this piece, I demonstrate how Black and Chicana women strategically use aesthetic and discursive frames to disrupt negative narratives of their often-vilified communities and women's activism.  

As a historic entry-point for Mexican immigration, Chicago is home to the largest Mexican-immigrant and Mexican-American community in the Midwest. Latinas/os/xs in general are the fast-growing population, yet they are also racially marginalized within politics and urban redevelopment. This is most evident in areas with a long history of environmental abuses. This chapter highlights Chicana activists’ use of culturally-relevant organizing tactics, what I term Chicana environmentalism, to address environmental racism and transform abandoned and blighted spaces within Mexican immigrant communities.

Lakshmi Goparaju  
1997-1998

I recently received a promotion as Associate Professor (Research) at Georgetown University.

Naomi Graetz  
1992-1993

I was a fellow in 1993. Since then I've published five books. I retired from teaching in 2009 and now teach bible classes as a volunteer in my local community in Omer, Israel. At the moment I am teaching on Zoom and enjoy not having to leave home. Two of my books are available for free reading online. The first, which is Silence is Deadly: Judaism Confronts Wifebeating (1998) and the latest one, Forty Years of Being A Feminist Jew in Israel: A Book of Essays and Reflections (2019).

Author of:

- The Rabbi’s Wife Plays at Murder (2004)
- Unlocking the Garden: A Feminist Jewish Look at the Bible, Midrash and God (2004)
- Silence is Deadly: Judaism Confronts Wifebeating (1998)

available on [https://www.academia.edu/35931877/Silence_is_Deadly_Judaism_Confronts_Wifebeating](https://www.academia.edu/35931877/Silence_is_Deadly_Judaism_Confronts_Wifebeating)
**Crystal M. Hayes**  
2018-2019

I have new publications and I blog for Ms. Magazine. I am in the final stages of writing and defending my dissertation as well. Please see below:


**Gail Griffin**  
1993-1994

In 2008, Gail Griffin published *The Events of October: Murder-Suicide on a Small Campus* (Wayne State University Press), a study of a student femicide-suicide at Kalamazoo College, where she taught for 36 years. Her poetry, articles, and essays have been widely published, and before she retired in 2013, she had won both the College’s faculty awards—for teaching and for scholarship/creative work—along with its Lux Esto award for extraordinary contributions to the campus. Since retirement Gail has been working on literary nonfiction and poetry, and in 2020 she published a memoir entitled *Grief’s Country: A Memoir in Pieces* (Wayne State University Press, 2020), about surviving the sudden death of her husband.

**Hilary Hinds**  
1999-2000

I published a book last year, called *A Cultural History of Twin Beds.* It looks at the rise and fall of couples choosing to sleep in separate-but-proximate beds in the 19th and 20th centuries, and locates the origins of this practice in concerns about health and its endurance in ideas about just what constituted a ‘modern’ marriage. The book is published by Bloomsbury and is available at no cost (as well as in print copy, of course) as an Open Access title at [https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/a-cultural-history-of-twin-beds/](https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/a-cultural-history-of-twin-beds/)

**Ynestra King**  
2018-2020

Here are some of my accomplishments:

- Guest speaker in classes at CUNY, Umass and Columbia University
- Keynote Talk for Peace and Justice Studies Association annual meeting,
- Research Grant, Peace and Justice Studies Association,
- Research Grant, Barbara Deming Memorial Fund

Of course, most of my work has involved reading, trips to the Schlesinger Library at Harvard for research, and writing.
Maggie Nanney  
2018-2019
Maggie successfully defended their dissertation, "Open Gates, Broken Promises: Inclusion Policies and Transgender Student Experiences in Gender-Selective Colleges" last April. Maggie looks forward to revising their dissertation into a book manuscript, which they feel confident after workshopping how to draft a book proposal with the help of their fellow associates from the center.

Shagufta Nasreen  
2018-2019
I was a Research Associate in 2018. After coming back to my host institution in Pakistan I applied for the post of Associate Professor but the process has been delayed due to administrative processes especially after the pandemic COVID 19.

A project near completion is titled “Stabilizing between work and Family: Professional Mothers Struggle to Achieve Success”, sponsored in March 2019, by Research Facility Center, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Karachi, Pakistan. I will share it with you after completion.

A new project I anticipate starting shortly is "Emerging trends of non-traditional female employment: a case study of Karachi, Pakistan". In the past few years, women have become prominent in many fields in Pakistan which were considered relatively unacceptable for women. In March 2017, the start of the taxi service of women drivers in Karachi followed by a three-wheeler taxi (locally called rickshaw) service in Punjab created job opportunities for women which were unimaginable for women in Pakistan. Therefore, to explore the changes that these emerging new jobs will bring in women's lives and change their position in society, the expected outcomes in terms of availability and accessibility of these jobs, possible challenges for women, and its impact on their productive and reproductive roles need critical observations. The project is in its inception stage.

Mary Njeri Kinyanjui  
2019-2020
Book Chapters

Articles in Magazines and Newspaper
- Lessons for the Post Coronavirus Economy from the Informal Economy. African Executive April 2020
- The Effect of Coronavirus on the Poor in Africa. ISPI Dossier April 2020
- How COVID-19 Pademic will affect Informal Workers: Insights from Kenya. The Conversation, April, 2019
Dr. Tobe Levin Freifrau von Gleichen
2004-2005
Following my semester at FCWSRC in 2004, I returned to the US in 2006 as a visiting scholar at Brandeis and Harvard. The latter affiliation as Associate of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research under Henry Louis Gates, Jr. continues. At Brandeis I became a trustee of the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, completing a first three-year term (2017-2019) and renewing for another three. In 2009 I founded UnCUT/VOICES Press to publish books on female genital mutilation against which I had been working since 1977. From 2014 – 2016 I was a Visiting Fellow at Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford and am presently a Visiting Professor at King's College, University of London, planning a major virtual symposium on FGM to take place in October.

Sarah Marusek
2007-2008
I am now a full tenured Professor of Public Law at the University of Hawai'i Hilo
https://hilo.hawaii.edu/faculty/marusek/.

Sasha Mullally
2015-2016
Since my time as an Associate in 2015, I've been promoted to Full Professor, and I have a book coming out this Fall, Foreign Practices: Physician Immigration and the History of Canadian Medicare (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020).
https://www.amazon.ca/Foreign-Practices-Immigrant-Canadian-Medicare/dp/0228003725

Patricia Montoya
2017-2020
I have been promoting my short film Cuando La Rumorosa Calla / When La Rumorosa Quiets (17min, in Spanish with English Subtitles, Mexico, 2020)
Since the lockdown the film showed for first time online at AIVFF Cannes (Artists in Visual Art Film Festival, Cannes) where it won the award for public vote.
Since then, the film has been selected to several film festivals and has won and has been nominated for several film awards.
For information please feel to contact me at patrimontoya@gmail.com
or follow us at @cuandolarumorosacallatheshort or http://patriciamontoya.space

Nell Lake
2019-2020
- received an American Dissertation Fellowship for 2020-2021, from the American Association of University Women
- contributed story for public radio on "Five Hundred Years of Women's Work"
- published essay on Cognoscenti about Nurses and Covid-19
Shailja Patel
2019-2020

New Work:
1) World premiere of new spoken word performance, "Uncover," on climate justice, for UC Berkeley's Poetry for the People Earth Day celebration, commissioned by UC Berkeley's Creative Discovery Grant, April 22, 2020

Critical attention:

Activism:
Founding member of The Feminist Foreign Policy Project, a new think tank grounded in anti-imperialist feminist praxis. https://www.codepink.org/feminist_foreign_policy_think_tank

Media:

SKaymarion Raymond
1998-1999

The seeds of a Valley feminist history project I worked on while I was at the Center have bloomed into a blog about this area's queer, by any other names, history. Find it at fromwickedtowedded.com. As well I have been working with archivist Anne Moore to donate and process my papers to the UMass Special Collections and Archives. Those pertinent to the Valley's revolutionary 1970s will be available to researchers soon.

Korka Sall
2019-2020

Defended her dissertation!
Topic: Negritude Feminisms: Francophone Black Women Writers and Activists in France, Martinique and Senegal from the 1920s to 1980s

Nina Scott
2008-2009

I am retired faculty from UMass (Spanish and Portuguese). I collaborated on a project just published by Penn State UP in their Latin American Originals series (#15). For this volume I translated a 1786 treatise issued by the Archbishop of Guatemala which gave instructions to priests to remove and baptize fetuses from newly-expired pregnant mothers.
Carolyn Shread
2008-2009

Sinith Sittirak
2006-2007
Since my time as a Research Associate in 2006-7, I returned to New Zealand to continue my PhD thesis which I completed in 2014. I am now at Thammasat University in Bangkok supervising MA and PhD students’ theses in the area of Women’s Studies and Archives Studies as well as instructing a BA course entitled Gender and Southeast Asian Studies. I published a book last spring entitled *My ‘Wrigh[t/E] and My Land’: A Postcolonial Feminist Study on Grassroots Archives and Autobiography (1937-2004)* (publisher is Social Equality Promotion Foundation). Please feel free to contact me directly at sinith2010@yahoo.com to purchase either for your class or for your own pleasure.

Laurel Smith-Doerr
2019-2020
Publications


The Organizations, Occupations, and Work section of the American Sociological Assoc invited Smith-Doerr and coauthors to publish a blog summarizing their article that appeared in the American Journal of Sociology. The link to the February 2020 blog article is here: [http://www.wipsociology.org/2020/02/25/for-gender-pay-gaps-organizations-matter/](http://www.wipsociology.org/2020/02/25/for-gender-pay-gaps-organizations-matter/)

Dominguez-Villegas, Rodrigo; Smith-Doerr, Laurel; Renski, Henry; and Sekarasih, Laras (2020) "Labor Unions and Equal Pay for Faculty: A Longitudinal Study of Gender Pay Gaps in a Unionized Institutional Context," *Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy*: Vol. 11, Article 2. Available at: [https://thekeep.eiu.edu/jcba/vol11/iss1/2](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/jcba/vol11/iss1/2)


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**Susan Elizabeth Sweeney**

1996-1997

I am the Murray Professor of Arts and Humanities at the College of the Holy Cross, where I teach American literature and creative writing. My most recent books are *Hand Me Down* (2013), a collection of poems, and *Nabokov and the Question of Morality: Aesthetics, Metaphysics, and the Ethics of Fiction* (2016), a co-edited volume. In 2018 I received the Gargano Award for an outstanding essay on Edgar Allan Poe, and in 2019 I received the Distinguished Scholar Award from Holy Cross for an exceptional record of research throughout my career.