

# Southwest Institute for Research On Women



## REGIONAL NEWSLETTER SPRING 2013

Covering gender & women's studies & research institutes in Arizona, New Mexico, Northwest Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Nevada, Wyoming and Utah

## Southwest Gender and Women's Studies Regional Meeting Held at the University of Arizona

This year the Gender and Women's Studies Southwest Regional Meeting was held at the University of Arizona (UA) January 25-26, 2013. The meeting covered several themes, with an emphasis on networking and collaboration across colleges, disciplines, and departments. The meeting included representatives from 15 colleges and research institutes located in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Wyoming and Utah. Attendees shared specific challenges and highlights from the past year as well as discussed issues facing gender and women's studies as a discipline. The keynote presentation featured two scholars from UA who focus their work on the U.S./ Mexico



border. William Simmons gave a talk titled, "Sexual Violence against Migrant Women and Children in Arizona," which used a theoretical lens to reframe the discussion of migrant sexual violence from an event to a condition of border crossing. Anna Ochoa O'Leary followed, presenting her research on violence against women and children before, during, and after crossing the border. The meeting closed with a discussion of topics that spanned campuses including class and instructor assessment, how to build regional research centers, and ongoing communication throughout the year between departments about statistics,

coordination, and strategies for recruitment. Of particular interest this year was the relationship between women's resource centers on campus and gender and women's studies departments as well as the larger concern of civic and community engagement. While women's resource centers and gender and women's studies departments may have distinct goals, there is an overarching mission that can be used to unite the two in a meaningful relationship beyond funding. Attendees also shared strategies and advice concerning fostering social justice principles among students and faculty.

*Kelly Sharron, SIROW Graduate Research Assistant-GWS Ph.D. Student*



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The Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW), established in 1979, is a regional research and resource institute within the Gender and Women's Studies Department at the University of Arizona. The SIROW region includes Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, and Northwestern Mexico.

More information available online: <http://sirow.arizona.edu>

## SIROW Mission:

To develop, conduct, and disseminate collaborative research and education/outreach projects with regard to the diverse groups of women and children in the southwestern U.S. and northwestern Mexico.

## SIROW Goals:

To develop collaborative feminist research focusing on southwestern problems or populations of interest to scholars in the SIROW region.

To identify and disseminate research on women, children, and gender differences.

To provide advocacy for women and children by linking researchers with community organizations and policy makers.

To support equality for women in the workforce and conduct research on women and gender in the work environment.

To carry out participatory action research on a wide range of health, legal, and educational issues.

To support graduate, undergraduate, and K-12 education for women and children.

To examine women's contribution to literature, the arts, and southwest heritage.

NOTE: The opinions expressed within this publication do not necessarily reflect the positions of SIROW or individual personnel. However, as a research and academic institution SIROW strongly supports the right of students, researchers and faculty to express their positions through academic products and public expression.

## Southwest Institute for Research on Women

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## NAU Launches New Queer Studies Minor

A minor in Queer Studies is now available through the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Northern Arizona University and will be visible in the undergraduate catalog by Fall 2013! This minor builds on the LGBTQIA Residential Learning Community—also known as Q & A—that was launched in Fall 2012.

The new minor consists of 18 credit hours. Core classes include: *Introduction to Queer Studies* (WGS 250) and *Queer Theory* (WGS 333). Electives include: *Queer Literature and Film* (WGS 382), *Queering the Schools* (ECI 432) and *Advanced Readings in Queer Studies* (WGS 470)—as well as interdisciplinary courses such as *Sociology of Sexuality* (SOC 316) and *Race, Gender and the Media* (COM 301). The minor develops critical consciousness and enhances knowledge that can be applied to students' home major. The minor can also be combined with a second minor to create a major through the University College. For more information please contact the NAU Women's and Gender Studies office at (928) 523-3300.

### Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy: Working with the Wounaan

The indomitable Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, retired from the University of Arizona's Gender & Women's Studies in Spring 2011, but she remains as active as ever.

Kennedy founded one of the first women's studies departments at the State University of New York (SUNY)-Buffalo in 1971. Perhaps more importantly, in "Kindling in the Groves of Academe," she and her colleagues wrote about their experience, sparking the proliferation of women's studies departments across the country. Kennedy's book "Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold" (co-authored by Madeline Davis) was a groundbreaking oral history project of working-class lesbians.



While Kennedy will continue to be involved in the department, she decided that official retirement would give her the opportunity to spend more time with family, friends, and her partner Bobbi Prebis. She is also working on two major projects that demand her attention: a book about Julia Boyer Reinstein (stay turned to future issues of the GWS newsletter for more information) and a return to her 1964-1966 fieldwork with the Wounaan, an indigenous nation in northwest South America.

(Continued on page 4)



Find us under "Southwest Institute for Research on Women"

**Scholar Profile**  
**Colleen Denney, University of Wyoming**



Colleen Denney, PhD is currently Director and Professor of the Gender and Women's Studies Program at the University of Wyoming (UW). As a feminist art historian, her work focuses on representations of women in Victorian and Edwardian culture—what they tell us and what they disguise, about women's

lived experiences during this timeframe. Her most recent book is *Women, Portraiture and the Crisis of Identity: My Lady Scandalous Reconsidered* (Ashgate 2009), which examines the lives of four prominent women through key painted portraits. It is her focus on two women in particular, Lady Dilke and Dame Millicent Garrett Fawcett, that has propelled her further into an exploration of the visual culture of women's suffrage in England, the Continent, and beyond.

As a result of the fascination Denney has with these women, next year she will embark on several new journeys, into the visual culture of women's activism through a Seibold Professorship she received through the College of Arts and Sciences at UW. This will allow her to complete a book on women's suffrage in London and Paris, titled *Raise Your Banner High!*, as well as to complete a novel set both in late Victorian period England and the present day that focuses on a 19th-century woman physician who is also an activist.

Denney's work on women's activism has often taken her beyond the scholarly desk into the community, organizing, as part of a class on the history of women's activism, a Take Back the Night march that reenacted key visuals from historic suffrage marches.

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**New Women's Advancement and Research Center,  
University of Wyoming**

Colleen Denney, PhD, Director and Professor, Gender and Women's Studies Program, University of Wyoming (UW), is working with colleagues and a board to establish a Women's Advancement and Research Center (WARC) at UW.

Along with Trena Anastasia, PhD, a social scientist who is Adjunct in the GWS Program and works with the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center on the UW campus, and Donna Brown, PhD, Associate Dean in the College of Agriculture, they have received support from the Office of Research and Economic Development to visit centers and institutes around the country in order to help them formulate a plan of action and a vision. They are pleased that one of the Associate Provosts, Nicole Ballenger, someone with clear insight into the need for such a center, has joined them as a member of their Executive Committee.

The initial focus will be on aiding women in STEM fields but they will expand to address the needs of woman academics at all levels and in all disciplines.

The mission is to promote, develop and retain academic women at all levels, university wide across all disciplines while supporting research on, for and about women's issues, with an emphasis on rural and indigenous women in Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain region.

The program looks forward to addressing an area of need, focusing on issues of rural and indigenous women in the region. The hope is to be a regional center for woman scholars and gender scholars, who could pair with key scholars at the University of Wyoming and in the SIROW network on such projects.

The center will contribute to the advancement of women in Wyoming, the nation, and the world by combining research and scholarly pursuits focused on the expansion of female representation and leadership at all levels and in all areas of the university community. Of great and immediate concern is the need to address the low representation of tenured woman professors in the STEM disciplines, which has been identified as key in meeting regional and national inequities.

The Provost has included this center as a possible partner for all disciplines in the new UW University Plan (scheduled to begin implementation in Fall 2014).

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy: Working with the Wounaan, Continued from page 2)*

Kennedy explains that there are three things driving her current work with the Wounaan, which is funded by the National Science Foundation through Summer 2013. She wants to give her original research— films, noted and recorded stories, and her dissertation—back to the Wounaan now that this return does not exacerbate the colonization of their land and livelihood.

Kennedy is committed to collaborative research, a remarkable quality that has set apart her career, and in that spirit wants to undertake cultural recovery research with the Wounaan and another US collaborator, Dr. Julia Valezquez-Runk. She notes that there have been many challenges working together, but that all of the collaborators have persisted and have decided to apply for supplemental funding to bring five Wounaan to Arizona to attend the American Indian Language Development Institute.

Last but not least, Kennedy explains that the major impetus for her work is the desire to understand the international situation for indigenous peoples and to be able to participate in decolonial efforts by educating people in the U.S. about, for instance, ongoing struggles over land rights. Kennedy screened her film, “Wounaan: A People of the Rainforest” on March 27, 2012 to a large audience in the Gender & Women’s Studies conference room at the University of Arizona. Kennedy discussed her 1960s research with the Wounaan in more detail, including how her experiences in women’s studies and American Indian studies changed some of the interpretations she had of her time in Colombia with the Wounaan. She additionally mentioned the Wounaan’s largely positive reactions to the screening of the film in Panama. Kennedy is currently fundraising to get the remaining two ethnographic films from this research digitized and translated into Spanish. *Erin Durban-Albrecht, UA GWS Ph.D. Candidate*

*(Women’s Advancement and Research Center, University of Wyoming, continued from page 3)*

The plan has received much support across the university, particularly from administrators who have witnessed continued problems with trying to retain woman faculty and train woman students.

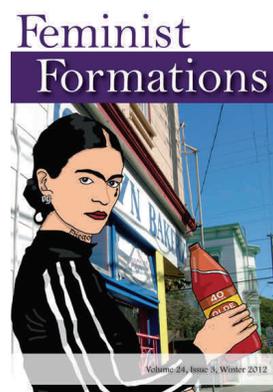
The three goals of the center include:

- Establishing a supportive environment
- Developing avenues and opportunities for woman scholars and gender scholars
- Addressing the lack of research around issues facing rural and indigenous women in Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain region

The first task will be to create a database of woman scholars and gender scholars on the UW campus so that they can begin to address their three goals through identification of those scholars and groups who will be key players.

Colleen Denney is eager to include the voices of SIROW colleagues in this process. If you have ideas about issues surrounding funding and logistics, please contact her at: [CDenney@uwyo.edu](mailto:CDenney@uwyo.edu).

### Feminist Formations: Winter, 2012



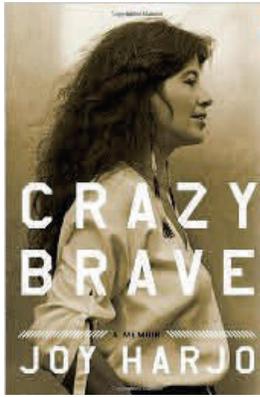
From cover to cover, this issue of Feminist Formations is filled with articles that take fresh approaches to important problems, poetry that is at once fierce and loving and that speaks to the ever-present

effects of settler colonialism in the United States, and a cluster of articles called “Crossing Boundaries: A Tribute to Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy.” Across the material in this issue, many generative connections can be made, including that between the indigenous language preservation projects of Kennedy and our featured poet, Natalie Diaz.

*Sandra Soto, Associate Professor, UA GWS, Editor Feminist Formations.*

For more information:

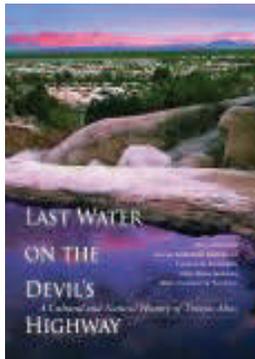
## Publications from the Southwest



### **Crazy Brave**

By Joy Harjo  
W.W. Horton & Co.

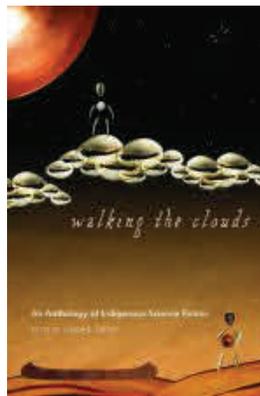
In this transcendent memoir, grounded in tribal myth and ancestry, music and poetry, Joy Harjo, one of our leading Native American voices, details her journey to becoming a poet. Narrating the complexities of betrayal and love, *Crazy Brave* is a memoir about family and the breaking apart necessary in finding a voice. Harjo's tale of a hardscrabble youth, young adulthood, and transformation into an award-winning poet and musician is haunting, unique, and visionary.



### **Last Water on the Devil's Highway: A Cultural and Natural History of Tinajas Altas**

By Bill Broyles, Gayle Harrison Hartmann, Thomas E. Sheridan, Gary Paul Nabhan and Mary Charlotte Thurtle  
University of Arizona Press

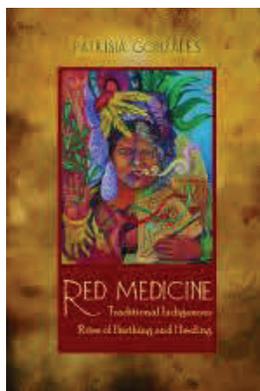
The Devil's Highway—El Camino del Diablo—crosses hundreds of miles and thousands of years of Arizona and Southwest history. Now an expert cast of authors describes, narrates, and explains the human and natural history of this special place in a thorough and readable account. Addressing the latest archaeological and historical findings, they reveal why Tinajas Altas was so important and how it related to other waterholes in the arid borderlands. Readers can feel like pioneers, following in the footsteps of early Native Americans, Spanish priests and soldiers, gold seekers and borderland explorers, tourists, and scholars.



### **Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction**

Edited by Grace L Dillon  
University of Arizona Press

In this first-ever anthology of Indigenous science fiction Grace Dillon collects some of the finest examples of the craft with contributions by Native American, First Nations, Aboriginal Australian and New Zealand Maori authors. The collection includes seminal authors such as Gerald Vizenor, historically important contributions often categorized as "magical realism" by authors like Leslie Marmon Silko and Sherman Alexie, and authors more recognizable to science fiction fans like William Sanders and Stephen Graham Jones. Dillon's engaging introduction situates the pieces in the larger context of science fiction and its conventions.



### **Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing**

By Patrisia Gonzales  
University of Arizona Press

The book explores Indigenous medicine across North America, with a special emphasis on how Indigenous knowledge has endured and persisted among peoples with a legacy to Mexico. Gonzales combines her lived experience in *Red Medicine* as an herbalist and traditional birth attendant with in-depth research into oral traditions, storytelling, and the meanings of symbols to uncover how Indigenous knowledge endures over time.



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