Dear faculty and staff members,

Dear students,

It has only been three weeks since we returned to campus, but judging from the wide array of interdisciplinary events involving scholars and activists, it seems like we have been here for much longer. Frances Klatzel gave a lecture on her work with the excluded in Nepal; Larry Hamberlin gave a riveting lecture with musical accompaniment on ragtime songs about Salomé and Orientalism.

We are also working with various student groups on campus to address issues such as sexual and domestic violence, body image, human rights, and eco-feminism. Please check our website for a constantly updated list of events.

And while you are at it, also make your voice heard. The College has convened the Status of Women Taskforce, which is now gathering information. Its blog can be found at: https://cat.middlebury.edu/forms/tsw/response.html.

Have a great semester!
Karin Hanta
Director of Chellis House

Karen Acheson (’04.5) is teaching English as a Second Language as a New York City Teaching Fellow at Lehman High School in the Bronx, NY. Karen also coaches the boys’ track at the school. In addition, she is writing her master’s thesis on xenophobia and bilingual education for the CUNY Lehman Education Program.

Eliza Adler (’04.5) is teaching children with learning disabilities in grades K-8 at the Mary McDowell Center for Learning in Brooklyn, NY. Her classes include movement, music, literacy and rock climbing. Eliza is currently applying to master’s programs in social work at Boston University.

Carlos Beato (’07) is pursuing a Masters of Arts in Spanish Literature with an education track at Lehman College. He is also teaching Spanish literature to 9th graders at the Academy for Language and Technology in New York City. Thanks to his experience in RID-DIM, he is also teaching dance.

Assia Elgouacem (’06) was recently promoted to the position of Talent Search Officer for LEDA (Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America), a non-profit organization committed to developing the leadership of exceptional public high school juniors from socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds that are under-represented at the country’s leading colleges. She frequently travels to rural areas to recruit for the program. Assia is also investigating options to pursue a PhD in international development.

While working 80 hour weeks as a financial analyst at Goldman Sachs, Lauren Curatolo (’06) dreams about being back in thesis land, pulling all-nighters in Chellis House while hooked up to a coffee IV. She was promoted to her second year and is learning how the financial world operates. Lauren has also become a mentor for a high school student in the LEDA program and is attempting to mold the mind of a future leader.
**WAGS Faculty Achievements**

**Catherine Combelles** (Biology) has been awarded a three-year research grant from the National Institutes of Health through the AREA program (Academic Research Enhancement Award) for a project entitled “Oxidative Stress and Oocyte Development.” This research will involve at least 9 undergraduate students. The results of these studies will improve our basic understanding of factors that may influence the quality of female gametes or oocytes, thereby providing critical foundations for the improvement of female reproductive health.

**Heidi Grasswick** (Philosophy) presented a paper entitled “Knowing Moral Agents: Epistemic Dependency and the Moral Realm” at the Society for Analytical Feminism session on Moral Epistemology at the Pacific APA Meetings in San Francisco in April 2007. Heidi presented this paper again at the 2007 FEAST (Feminist Ethics and Social Theory) conference in Florida at the end of September.

**Linda White** (WAGS/East Asian Studies) gave a paper at the Gendering Asia Conference in Akureyri, Iceland in June 2007 with scholars from Europe and Asia who are working on gender issues in China and Japan as well as other parts of Asia. Her paper, “Economies of Desperation: The Logic of Murdering Wives in Western Tokyo,” was one of only two papers dealing with Japanese women. In it, Linda addressed some of the current dilemmas faced by overeducated and underemployed married women in urban Japan.

---

**A New Face in Chellis House:**

**Meet our New Coordinator Naomi Neff**

Naomi Neff joined Middlebury College in August and now lends administrative support to both the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and the Math Department. Naomi graduated from Colby Sawyer College in 1984 and worked as an Outreach Coordinator for the summer sessions at the Environmental Law Center at Vermont Law School for five years.

Naomi recently moved from Sharon, Vermont to East Middlebury. She is married and, together with her husband, has six children, three girls in college and three boys living at home. She also takes care of her 90-year old father-in-law, who lives in her house. In her free time, Naomi likes to play shuffleboard and horseshoes and to watch her children play sports.

---

**WAGS Students at the National Conference of College Women Student Leaders**

In June of 2007, WAGS majors **Caro-lyn Birsky** (’10), **Ari Gimbel** (’09) and **Ashley Panichelli** (’10) attended the National Conference of College Women Student Leaders in Washington, D.C. For the past twenty years, this conference has been organized by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to give female students an opportunity to build leadership, advocacy, networking, and financial management skills.

Our students attended workshops on sexual assault on campus; money management; personal training directed towards women’s physical needs; and creative visualization. Keynote speaker Zainab Salbi, founder of Woman for Woman International, talked about how she set up an organization that provides interpersonal, economic, and educational support to women emerging from conflict zones and post-conflict environments. Ex-marine Courtney Lynch, co-founder of Lead Star, a consulting firm that empowers and inspires women to be strong leaders, shared her vision of “leading from the front,” i.e. meeting and exceeding the standards you ask of others. In her lecture, Lynch highlighted the value of making timely decisions; taking responsibility before placing blame; and responding without overreacting.

If you would like to find out more about the conference, join us for a student talk on Tuesday, October 16 at 12:15 p.m. at Chellis House.
Spotlight on **Linda White** (WAGS/East Asian Studies)

Since her arrival at Middlebury College, Professor Linda White has been an active member of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, helping to organize events and, more importantly, mentoring students. Trained as a cultural anthropologist, she currently holds an appointment in East Asian Studies and WAGS. Professor White has lived in Japan for six years.

**Professor White, how did you become interested in Japanese feminism?**

By the time I decided to go to graduate school and study Japanese feminism, I was motivated by a very strong sense that women’s activism in Japan and, I would say, women’s strengths in Japan, generally, had been totally underestimated in media and even in academic studies of Japan. There seemed to be a gap between the representation of Japanese women and gender relations in Japan and the reality I had observed in women’s organizations and in daily life. I felt we needed more investigation of what was going on at the grassroots level, and that more research and analysis would help to change the representations.

**What research are you currently working on?**

I am looking at the ways that gender plays a role in the debate surrounding organ transplants and brain death in Japan. I am particularly interested in the quality of care; who makes decisions at the moment of death; and how people die and who takes care of the dying and dead. These issues are tied to historical gender roles in this society, where women have traditionally been responsible for the care of the sick and elderly. Some feminist activists in Japan today are trying to bring gender into the public debate over brain death and organ transplants to resist the medicalization of the end-of-life experience. These issues raise larger questions about male domination of the medical establishment and discourses on the body, as well as transnational organ markets in an unequal global economy.

**What has been the most influential experience throughout the course of your research?**

It happened very early in my career as an anthropologist. I completed a life history of an elderly Japanese woman who had lived through the Second World War and has been a friend of many years. She had an extraordinary perspective on twentieth-century Japanese history and society, but she was also a gifted narrator who, in an odd way, taught me as much about ethnographic research as my graduate course work. This experience was fundamental to my decision to carry out research on Japanese women and feminism.

**What do you do when you’re not teaching or doing research?**

I started practicing aikido, a Japanese martial art, years ago in Tokyo. While I was in graduate school and when my children were young I did not practice very often except when I was in Japan. We’re fortunate to have a great dojo in Middlebury so I’ve started doing aikido again here. I also love food and cooking.

Interview by Morgane Veronique Richardson
Fall Events

Saturday, October 6
“Land Mine/Map of the World.”
Solo dance performance by Leyya Tawil, Artist in Residence
In her performance, Leyya Tawil addresses the role of contemporary dance in creating and breaking illusions about Middle Eastern women and culture.
Center for the Arts Dance Theatre, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 9
“Cut: Teens and Self Injury.”
Film screening with director Wendy Schneider. Q&A to follow screening.
A documentary on teenagers who inflict various forms of injury on themselves.
Warner Hemicycle, 12:15 p.m.
Second Screening: Gamut Room, 5 p.m.

Thursday, October 11
“Sex Signals.”
Blending a unique combination of improvisational comedy, education and audience participation, “Sex Signals” provides a provocative, in-your-face look at issues surrounding dating, sex and date rape on college campuses.
Dana Auditorium, 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Monday, October 15
Lecture by Michael Boudreau and Ana Narvaez.
They will speak about a group of women in a poor urban neighborhood of Managua who are organizing health and education projects.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Tuesday, October 16
“Some Leaders Were Born Women.”
Student presentation by Carolyn Birsky (’10), Ari Gimbel (’09) and Ashley Panichelli (’09) on their participation in the student leadership conference of the American Association of University Women.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Sunday, October 14
“I Always Do My Collars Fist: A Film about Ironing”
Film screening of a documentary by Conni Castille and Allison Bohl. Their film explores the meaning of ironing in a community in Southwest Louisiana. Q&A with filmmakers to follow screening. This program is held in conjunction with the Vermont Folklife Center.
Ilsley Public Library, 2 p.m.

Friday, October 26
“Sociality of Neoliberalism: Affect, Family, and Japanese Youth.”
Lecture by Professor Anne Allison, Department of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University
R. A. Jones Lecture Room, 12:15 p.m.

Tuesday, October 30
“The Women of Maximum Cities.”
Seniors Maddie Oatman (’08) and Morgane Richardson (’08) speak about their study abroad experience in India.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Wednesday, October 31
“The Other Flag.”
Poet Gary Margolis (Counseling Center/English Dept.) will read from his new manuscript of poetry, which speaks to women’s and men’s lives and the relational flags that are waved between them.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Saturday, November 3
Musical performance by YAYA.
Founded in 2002, YAYA honors the vibrant musical heritage represented in Puerto Rican bomba and Dominican slave traditions, through live performances, workshops, and female-led creative ciphers.
McCullough Social Space, 8:45 p.m.

Tuesday, November 6
“Sports and Masculinity.”
Lecture by Professor Michael Kimmel, Department of Sociology, State University of New York, Stony Brook.
MBH 216, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 7
“From Home to Home Again: Advocacy for Homeless Children in Richmond, VA”
Student presentation by Rayna Rogowsky (’09) on her summer-time volunteer work.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, November 10 & 11
Gender Identity Workshop with artist Janice Perry.
Fall Events

Monday, November 12
“Women & Solitude: The History of Being Alone.”
Life of the Mind talk by Antonia Losano (English Dept.)
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Thursday, November 15
“New Literacy Programs for Women in Rural Morocco.”
Student presentation by Tracy Young ('08) on her study-abroad experience.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Tuesday, November 13
“Once Upon A Quinceañera.”
Author Julia Alvarez reads from her new work about 15-year-old Latina girls and incorporates a slideshow presentation.
Warner, Hemicycle, 5 p.m.

Saturday, November 17
Sister-to-Sister Summit
One-day event for 7th & 8th grade girls from Addison County.
Kirk Alumni Center, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 27
“The NEW New Deal: Student Ideas into Action.”
Student talk by Hallie Fox ('09) on her participation in the Hyde Park Summer Conference of the Roosevelt Institution.
Chellis House Lounge, 12:15 p.m.

Wednesday, November 28
“Who Wants to Be A Porn Star? Sex and Violence in Today’s Pornography Industry.”
Chellis House Director Karin Hanta gives a critical analysis of the sexist and racist images used in today’s pornography industry and their harmful effects on society.
Library 201, 4:30 p.m.

Monday, December 3
“City Symphonies and Constructivist Courseware: Mining Modernism for Digital Innovation.”
Lecture by Professor Marsha Kinder, departments of film and comparative literature, University of Southern California
R. A. Jones Conference Room, 12:15 pm.

CORE - Creating Opportunities and Resources for the Excluded

A Brief Review of
Frances Klatzel's Lecture on Sherpa Culture and Social Injustice on Sept. 17

When development aid organizations set up shop in countries such as Nepal, you would think that they help the bottom rungs of society. “Not so,” says Frances Klatzel, founder of the Canadian non-profit organization “CORE International - Creating Opportunities and Resources for the Excluded.” Having lived in Nepal for the past 18 years, the former biologist can speak with authority on the subject. According to Klatzel, widows, migrants, and indigenous groups fall through the cracks when it comes to receiving development aid. The former are often chased out of their in-laws’ homes when their husbands die and are often not welcomed back into their natal families. They are not allowed to remarry, either. Census statistics suggest that ninety percent of all children whose mothers are widows drop out of school.

That is why Klatzel founded CORE eighteen months ago. The organization focuses on developing partnerships with Nepalese groups that work directly with these excluded populations. Working in conjunction with local organizations and civic leaders, CORE helps address the self-identified needs of excluded people. As a first step, the NGO is focusing on literacy and micro-credit projects, which include addressing the issue of gender and social inclusion. Through their activities with groups such as Women for Human Rights, CORE supports scholarships for education or vocational training for the widows and their children to become self-sufficient. In addition, fifteen women are receiving support to start income generating activities in a range of occupations including tailoring, shop keeping, goat rearing, mushroom farming, candle making, and driving.

The organization also developed an out-of-school learning project for child porters, who help mountain climbers in the Himalaya region carry their equipment. The education is modified to fit their needs and time schedule. The organization also supports an out-of-school learning program for poor urban children so they can reenter the government school system while simultaneously holding a job. For more information, visit CORE’s Web site at www.core-international.org.
The May celebration of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and Chellis House is a time-honored tradition. Every year on Mother’s Day, students, faculty, and staff gather in the Chellis backyard to celebrate the nominees of the Feminist of the Year Award. This year, a total of 26 outstanding members of our community were nominated for working on issues related to women and gender on this campus. They were: Karen Guttentag and Stacey Thebodo in the staff category; Laurie Essig, Cheryl Faraone, Erin Koch, Ann Mari May, Carol Rifelj, Catharine Wright in the faculty category; and Ethiopia Al-Mahdi, Christine Bachman, Sabra Davison, Chrissy Etienne, Hallie Fox, Kolbe Franklin, Aaron Gensler, Aki Ito, Jessamy Klapper, Liz Lyon, Zohra Safi, Ian Sanders-Fleming, Emily Theriault, Angelica Towne, Tamara Vatnick, Carol Wilson, Htar Htar Yu, and Chengcheng Xu in the student category. Given the impressive achievements of the nominees, the Board decided to distinguish more than one winner this year.

**Laurie Essig** (Sociology/Anthropology Dept./WAGS Program) and **Ann Mari May** (formerly Economics Dept., now University of Nebraska) shared the awards for Faculty Feminist of the Year. Laurie’s contributions throughout her first year at Middlebury College have greatly helped expand the terms of feminist debate by forcing us to confront whiteness and heteronormativity. By making her voice heard about crucial issues such as homophobia on this campus, she consistently tries to change the way the college functions for the better. Visiting professor **Ann Mari May** was lauded for teaching her students to look at economic issues through a gendered lens. Ann Mari was also able to secure a grant from the Leadership and Training Institute of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). Working with the Roosevelt Institution members, she helped organize a three-day symposium “Breaking down the Barriers: Women in the Workforce,” to identify ways to reduce the wage gap in the United States.

Assistant Director of Off-Campus Studies **Stacey Thebodo** garnered the award in the staff category. Stacey was instrumental in helping Middlebury College receive a “Breast Feeding Friendly” rating from the Vermont Department of Health. The support of breastfeeding in the workplace is crucial for working mothers, as they try to balance the needs of their baby and family with their own needs and the demands of the workplace.

**Christine Bachman** (‘09.5) was honored for giving public talks about her experience growing up with a gay parent. By identifying as queer, she constantly disrupts categories of sexual identification.

**Hallie Fox** (‘09) was honored for her outstanding efforts for setting up a policy center for women and gen-
nder within Middlebury’s Roosevelt Institution, a student-run think tank. While helping organize the “Women in the Workforce” symposium, Hallie was able to draw on the resources of the Roosevelt center and the AAUW Leadership and Training Institute. In addition, Hallie was a driving force behind the Sister-to-Sister mentoring program for middle school girls from Addison County this year.

The third winner, Aaron Gensler (‘09), was honored for her contributions as president of the student group Feminist Action at Middlebury. Among many FAM-led events, she organized “LoveFest” to raise awareness about sexual and domestic violence. Aaron also stages guerrilla art exhibits on gender issues.

The broad array of achievements and nominations impressively demonstrates the many facets of feminist activism in today’s world.

It’s a Chellebration!
Many visitors gather at Chellis House for the WAGS May Picnic: Members of the group Women for Global Peace (top left); Carlos Beato reading a mother’s day poem he wrote (top right); the Mischords singing (right); WAGS major Aifuwa Ehigiator (below); singer Elizabeth Goffe with Farhan Ahmed (left).

Interested in Supporting Teenage Girls in Middleschool?

Join Sister-to-Sister!

What is it?  A volunteer program that brings together middle school girls with Middlebury College student mentors and campus supervisors.

Events We Host:
- Day-long summit of workshops, November 17, 2007
- Monthly meetings to discover strengths, build trust, and develop supporting relationships

For more information, contact Karin Hanta, khanta@middlebury.edu, phone: 443-5937

Middlebury Faculty and staff members are welcome to register their daughters!
WAGS Students’
Summer Activities

During the summer, WAGS major Rayna Rogowsky ('09) volunteered at Home Again, a non-profit organization that operates six homeless services in Richmond, Virginia. Rayna obtained the internship through the Shepherd Poverty Alliance, which in turn works in close relationship with Middlebury College’s Alliance for Civic Engagement. She helped run the emergency shelter for women and children and worked as the child advocate.

Rayna will speak about her volunteer work at Chellis House on Wednesday, November 7 at 12:15 p.m.

Mahsa Jafarian ('09) worked at Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center and School in Colchester, VT, a lockdown detention facility for juvenile delinquents. Mahsa worked on both the advocacy/legal side and the treatment/intervention side. Most of the time, she was on the residential wing of the facility with adolescent boys who have a history of aggressive behaviors.

Baylie Roth ('09) worked with high school students in Chicago on an urban gardening project called Green Youth Farm. She taught students how to grow, cook, and sell organic food, while giving them an intense (but fun) hands-on job opportunity during the summer.

Ashley Panichelli ('10) worked as an analytical lab assistant at a biomedical research and development company and assisted with research on anti-bacterials.

Aifuwa Ehigiator ('08) worked at Bloomberg Tradebook, an institutional electronic trading platform and received an offer to return next year. He is also helping his friend Lemar Clarke with his “Nothing but Nets” initiative to help raise money to buy mosquito nets for families in Africa where malaria kills the most.

Christine Bachman ('09.5) worked as a summer research assistant for Professor Sujata Moorti. She spent most of her time at Chellis House reading articles from the Indian women’s magazine Manushi, learning all about the most pressing issues women faced in India between 1986 and 1991.

In August, Christine went to Provincetown, Mass. to volunteer as staff for COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) at Family Week. Christine led workshops for a group of 75 middle schoolers struggling with issues such as coming out in school; how to handle bullying and homophobia from classmates and teachers.

The Elm Street Partnership

Over the summer, Emily Gustavson ('07.5) and Christine Bachman ('09.5) volunteered at the Elm Street Boarding House in Middlebury, a transitional home for young parents, primarily mothers. The Middlebury College - Elm Street Partnership is designed to engage students in the wider community and facilitate joint activities. Emily and Christine worked on scrapbooks with the young parents. They celebrated July 4 together with a small BBQ. Best of all, they took turns holding the babies. The warmth of the mothers and their children, and the sense of community made the students’ weekly visits a highlight of the summer.

If you would like to become involved in the Elm Street Partnership, please contact Karin Hanta at 443-5937 or khanta@middlebury.edu.

Thank You to Our Donors

In the past year, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and Chellis House have received support from various alumnae and friends. First and foremost, the Gensler Family has funded an annual symposium, the first of which, “Sex & War,” took place last April. The Gensler Family also supports the Fraker Prize for best paper written in the field of women’s and gender studies and Gensler Thesis Award for best thesis related to women’s and gender studies, as well as a travel fund for students. In addition, some of the funds have been used to add some new technology to the seminar room at Chellis House. A big thank you out to California!

Last spring, Dr. Joseph Barry Gimbel of Arlington, Mass., contributed substantial funds to our speaker series. With his help, we will be able to bring eminent thinkers in the field of women’s and gender studies to campus. Thank you, Dr. Foot!

In addition, we received support from the a number of graduates: Katherine L. Culkin ('91), Lauren A. Curatolo ('06), Emily B. Hall ('89), Ashley Nill Honerkamp ('95), Laurie E. Koh ('01), Catherine E. Milne ('04), Kate M. Landis Loewengart ('99) and Michael S. Loewengart ('98), and Elizabeth A. Zogby ('88). Their support will help fund our academic efforts as well as Chellis House community outreach programs. Thank you again to all of them!

If you would like to find out how to support our activities, please contact Dr. Sujata Moorti (smoorti@middlebury.edu)