

# A Vision: Center for Feminist Futures

## Mobilizing Intergenerational Connections for Gender Justice

The contemporary movement for gender justice stands at a generational crossroads. For at least two hundred years, the feminist struggle has waxed and waned but always persisted. New generations come along to take up the work, often challenging and moving beyond what came before. Now those who came of age in the 1960s are in the culminating phase of their careers as scholars, policy-makers, and activists. It is time to build the kind of intergenerational bridges that connect experience and wisdom to fresh visions and novel strategies. It is time to help empower future feminist leaders to chart their own course.

The fundamental objective of the Center for Feminist Futures will be to enable transformative intergenerational exchange and learning in every facet of our work. We will develop our own distinctive best practices for intergenerational leadership transition; we will collaborate across generations on forward-looking research; and we will mobilize research to find innovative solutions to persisting problems of gender inequality.

The Center will bring together faculty members, graduate students, undergraduates, visiting practitioners, and community members, including high school students to:

- engage in collaborative and individual research;
- translate and disseminate research through op-eds, social media, and policy briefs;
- sponsor talks, performances, workshops, and reading groups on campus;
- create interdisciplinary courses offered through existing departments and programs; and,
- institute a regular weekly social hour to facilitate informal interaction.

UC Santa Barbara enjoys a robust history of strength in research and teaching around gender justice, from the top rankings of the Department of Sociology in the field of sex and gender and the Department of History in women's history to the Hull Chair, the first endowed chair in women's studies in the University of California system. Led by a high-profile faculty director, the Center will feature thematic scholarly initiatives focused on forward-looking intergenerational collaboration. Potential themes include:

- Feminist Environmental Justice: Building a Healthy Future
- The Gig Economy, Gender, and the Future of Work
- The Future of Politics with Feminists at the Table
- The Unfinished Business of Race, Class, and Gender Equality
- Technological Intimacies: How are Social Media Changing Relationships?

## Funding Priorities

**Phase I:** \$1.5M Current Use Funding over 5 years to provide an infusion of support to launch the public face of the Center through public programming, graduate fellowships, postdoctoral scholars, undergraduate internships, and support for program leadership.

**Phase II:** \$2.5M Endowment to solidify the future of the Center and provide a foundation of support to realize our vision and goals, including teaching, research, and public programming.

**Phase III:** \$5M Endowment to name the Center for Feminist Futures to realize our bold vision through support of an ambitious agenda of research, teaching, and public programming.

# FEMINIST FUTURES INITIATIVE

*Facilitating Intergenerational Collaborative  
Research with Public Impact*

2019-  
2020  
Events

## RACE, GENDER, & VOTING PATTERNS **WHY DO WHITE WOMEN VOTE FOR TRUMP?**

Panel Presentation and Discussion  
December 6, 2019



## SEXUAL HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS **IS TITLE IX BROKEN?**

Campus Research and Workshops  
**Arts & Lectures Keynote by Dr. Anita Hill**  
"From Social Movement to Social Impact:  
Putting an End to Sexual Harassment"  
February 19, 2020

## WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF TRANSGENDER POLITICS? **BEYOND THE BATHROOM WARS**

Speakers and Workshops  
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## Feminist Futures Initiative

### Why Do White Women Vote for Trump? Race, Gender, Space, and Electoral Politics

*December 6, 2019, 2:00-4:30 p.m.*

#### **Alice O'Connor, History and Blum Center, UCSB**

"Why did white women vote for Trump" is a version of a question the liberal-left has been asking in some fashion for the last 50 years, (George Wallace, Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush...) and points to two interrelated transformations that shape where we find ourselves today: the fragmentation of the New Deal political coalition (and the internal battles about the direction of the party it has generated); and the Republican party's radical right turn. This reconstructed Republican Party has succeeded (at least for now) in a project that has persistently eluded the liberal-left: creating a space for a kind of intersectional politics, this one within and across lines of race, class, gender, religion, and variously chauvinistic ideologies that does not necessarily represent an electoral majority, but has been effectively mobilized to deliver strategic electoral victories.

#### **Lorrie Frasure-Yokley, Political Science and African American Studies, UCLA**

Political analysts have struggled to explain why over 50% of white women voters chose Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton in 2016. This is not a new trend. With few exceptions, white women have been longstanding and consistent supporters of Republican Party presidential candidates and politically behave differently from women of color. The persistence of a partisan gender gap between male and female voters is driven by the historical patterns of women of color voters, particularly black women, in majority support of the Democratic Party candidates since the 1960s.

#### **Jane Junn, Political Science and Gender and Sexuality Studies, USC**

Voting behavior and attitudes among American women have long been heterogeneous. It is clear that women are not now, nor have even been since the Civil Rights Era, a monolithic voting bloc. Instead, U.S. women voters are heterogeneous for identifiable reasons. Those reasons are a result of their distinct positionality within patriarchy and the racial hierarchy, which helps us to understand why women voters support Trump.

#### **Will Marble, Political Science, Stanford**

A surprising fact about the 2016 election is that Donald Trump received fewer votes from whites with the highest levels of racial resentment than Mitt Romney did in 2012. Attitudes being activated provides almost no information about the number of votes candidates receive from a particular group. To understand the contribution of voting blocs—demographic characteristics, socio-economic status, or attitudes—to a candidate's vote totals, we must also take into account the size of voting blocs and the blocs' turnout. Once we take bloc size and turnout into account we find that Trump underperformed Romney with whites who have the highest levels of racial resentment and most conservative racial attitudes, and obtained approximately the same number of net votes among whites with moderate and conservative immigration attitudes. Trump's support increases the most among low-socioeconomic status whites who are independents and ideological moderates.

**Justin Gest, Policy and Government, George Mason University**

Ethnographic fieldwork in Youngstown, Ohio, helps us understand the nature of white working class people's marginality in the United States and how status concerns prime cultural identities that override the salience of gender identities.

**Edwina Barvosa, Feminist Studies and Political Science, UCSB**

It remains a puzzle why many white women voted for Donald Trump in 2016 despite knowing of his statements favoring the sexual mistreatment of women. The reasons for their support have been obscured in part as some female swing voters held secret their electoral choice to avoid social criticism. Preliminary research on Californian women – including white women and women of color from diverse class backgrounds – who secretly voted for Trump but who confided their reasons for doing so only when assured of secrecy reveals both a desire for political clarity and a contradictory relationship to patriarchy.

## References to the UCSB Feminist Futures Initiative Panel “Why Do White Women Vote for Trump?” (created 12/5/19; last updated 12/9/19)

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### Writings by Others

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