



# The Monthly Rag

Brought to You by the Feminist & Gender Studies Student Advisory Council and Edited by Kadesha Caradine (FGS '16)



## Flibanserin By Willa Rentel ('18)

Over the past few years, Sprout Pharmaceuticals has been working to have a drug called flibanserin approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Flibanserin is a female libido pill that was created in response to cases of dwindling sex drive in middle-aged

females. The FDA has disapproved flibanserin on two occasions. Sandra Kweder, Deputy Director of the Office of New Drugs within the FDA, points to "the combination of [...] not very robust effectiveness, and the fact that the safety profile has not really been characterized very well," as reasons behind the disapproval.

Although the disapproval of this pill, according to the FDA is apolitical, women's rights advocates, and the CEO of Sprout, Cindy Whitehead, disagree. The creation of this pill, Whitehead argues, is directly related to the need for female sexual liberation, autonomy, and control and the disapproval of this drug is a response to a sexist cultural norm surrounding female sexuality. "Men have a number of treatment options for sexual dysfunction," Whitehead explains to *NPR's* Rob Stein, "we haven't yet gotten one for women's dysfunction. Up until now, the treatment paradigm for women with sexual dysfunction has essentially been 'let's take a drug that works in men and see if it works in women.'" Whitehead's points highlights a lack of female sexual autonomy and a failure to view women's sexuality independently. This drug, she contends, will encourage women's sexual agency and control, consequently shifting the narrative surrounding sexuality. Along these lines, Whitehead points out the fact that the lack of "sexual dysfunction" drugs designed specifically for women demonstrates female's lack of sexual sovereignty. In Anne Koedt's "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," she argues that "women have thus been defined sexually in terms of what pleases men; our own biology has not been properly analyzed" (196). The male-centric approach to female sexuality to which Koedt is referring is the very framework of Whitehead and many other women's rights advocates arguments surrounding the implicit sexism the disapproval of flibanserin.

To read the entire article, scan the QRC code!

## Binary Schminary By Taylor Knight ('18)

Softly glowing, my laptop throws a timid presence of light over the room. On the login screen, the name "Taylor" blinks back at me below a small picture of me until tears streak down my cheeks. At first, I can't find the words to capture the ethereal feeling of pure bliss in my chest. For the first time, I am given the chance to remove the lens of cisnormativity, and I am suddenly aware that this gender-neutral name fits me better than my birth name ever did. Since then, I have openly identified as non-binary and plan on changing my legal name later in the spring.

Gender is simply performative. We pretend that our performative identities are natural instead of fabricated, and we imitate internalized "regulatory fictions" (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 180) just to repeat a story that society has repeated from generation to generation. In this way, Judith Butler argues that gender liberation requires an abandonment of "gender coherence" (Butler 119). It is nearly impossible to be objective under the glaring lens of a cultural narrative for gender; every member of every society is harnessed to systematic constraints and conditioned through disciplinary methods to internalize the narrative of their own culture.

Queer theory's concept of gender fluidity allows for us to approach gender in more complex ways—as a gray area instead of black and white, which would allow for stratified limitations to be broken. Non-binary identities exist within the transgender community for people who don't fit into the gender binary, including terms like agender, gender-fluid, demiboy, and more.

To read the entire article, scan the QRC code!

## Diversify the Curriculum By Amairani Alamillo ('16) & Han Sayles ('15)

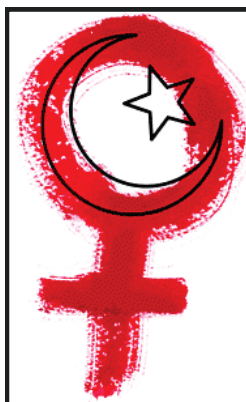
Dear President Tiefenthaler, Dean Wong & Faculty,

In recent years, Colorado College has made strides in becoming a more inclusive and diverse institution. There has been an increase in diverse course offerings; an increase in tenure track lines for the Feminist and Gender Studies, and Race and Ethnic Studies, and Southwest Studies programs; a restructuring of academic programs, such as the Bridge Scholar program; the establishment of The Butler Center; and, finally, a substantial increase in the percentage of students of color admitted to CC each year. The aforementioned accomplishments are all evidence of the current administration's and faculty's commitment to having an inclusive campus. We want to propel these efforts forward, as we believe there is still much work that needs to be done to transform CC into a truly diverse educational environment.

We, the students of Colorado College, believe that every student who graduates from CC should have a basic grasp of issues concerning responsible citizenship in a globalized world. In an increasingly hostile racist, sexist, classist, and homophobic national and global environment, we want the skills to peacefully confront the hurdles that we are facing today, which we will undoubtedly grapple with throughout our lives. That means our curriculum should facilitate a critical historical engagement with the pertinent issues affecting ourselves and our local, national, and international communities. This petition is a formal statement of our dedication to engaging with subjects of (but not limited to) class, race, gender, and sexuality everyday—subjects we want to see reflected in our classrooms and in syllabi across campus. We want to embrace Colorado College's core values: "value all persons and seek to learn from their diverse experiences and perspectives," "seek excellence, constantly assessing our policies and programs," and, "honor the life of the mind as the central focus of our common endeavor."

Many members of the staff and faculty at Colorado College have been advocating for this initiative, privately and publicly, for decades, and students have been by their side, but there has not yet been a collective effort on behalf of the students at the College to communicate clearly to faculty and administration exactly what we want from our education. Here and now is the time and place for Colorado College to become a national leader. The following are the points that we believe the faculty and administration at Colorado College need to enact in order for our education to be utilitarian, relevant, and ethical.

To read the full petition, scan the QRC code!



## Join Feminist & Gender Studies in welcoming Dr. Nadia Guessous, our newest Assistant Professor!

Nadia will be teaching **FG 206 The Discourse of the Veil in Block 3**; **FG 308 Transnational Feminist and Queer Politics in Block 4**; **FG 308 Feminist Texts/Feminist Subjects**, a seminar that will explore Middle Eastern and Islamic feminist studies in **Block 7**, and **FG 206 The Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality in the Modern Middle East in Block 8**. Nadia will also be teaching **FG 110 Introduction to Feminist & Gender Studies** in Block 1 (Non-FYE) and Block 5.

Please also note that Tonja Olive will now be teaching **FG 118 Gender & Communications in Block 7** NOT Block 8. For more information, contact Director Phoebe Lostroh at [plostro@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:plostro@coloradocollege.edu).



Scan the QRC code to view *The Monthly Rag* online! Also, if you would like to submit to the **Block 8 Rag**, email Editor Kadesha Caradine at [Kadesha.Caradine@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:Kadesha.Caradine@coloradocollege.edu) by **Friday, April 24th at 5 pm!**