



### President's Report

Dear Colleagues,

October began my official taking up of the Bronze Tampon of leadership for our beloved Society, and I marked it by enjoying a two-day retreat with Chris Bobel, our fierce outgoing president, to get some much appreciated mentorship.

Thanks, Chris, for all you have done and continue to do for the cause of menstrual and reproductive justice. You're a tough act to follow, but I'm going to do my best!

I'd like to start by welcoming our new Board members, Rachel Fikslin, Saniya Lee Ghanoui, Jennifer Gorman, and Eugenia Tarzibachi. Thanks to Secretary Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris and Webspinner Ashley Reilly, for updating the records and our beautiful webpage with their information. Everyone should

check it out.

As most of you already know, after much research on potential locations and frameworks for our next conference, a small subcommittee appointed at our Board Retreat in Atlanta, decided on Colorado for 2019. We left the retreat with a charge to find an accessible and affordable location, and my own institution, Colorado College, fit the bill, with a commitment to on-campus housing for up to 130 of our attendees at under \$50 a night (there will of course also be hotel, bed and breakfast, and AirBnb options as well).

Many thanks to Jax Gonzalez for designing a gorgeous logo/announcement for our conference, whose theme is “Traversing the Ridge: Connecting Menstrual Research and Advocacy.” So mark your calendars for June 6-8 2019 in beautiful Colorado Springs, CO, USA for what’s sure to be an exciting conference, where the traverses connecting the high mountains of the Rockies will provide the backdrop and inspiration for enabling scholarly and advocacy-based menstrual health and justice work to mutually inform one another.

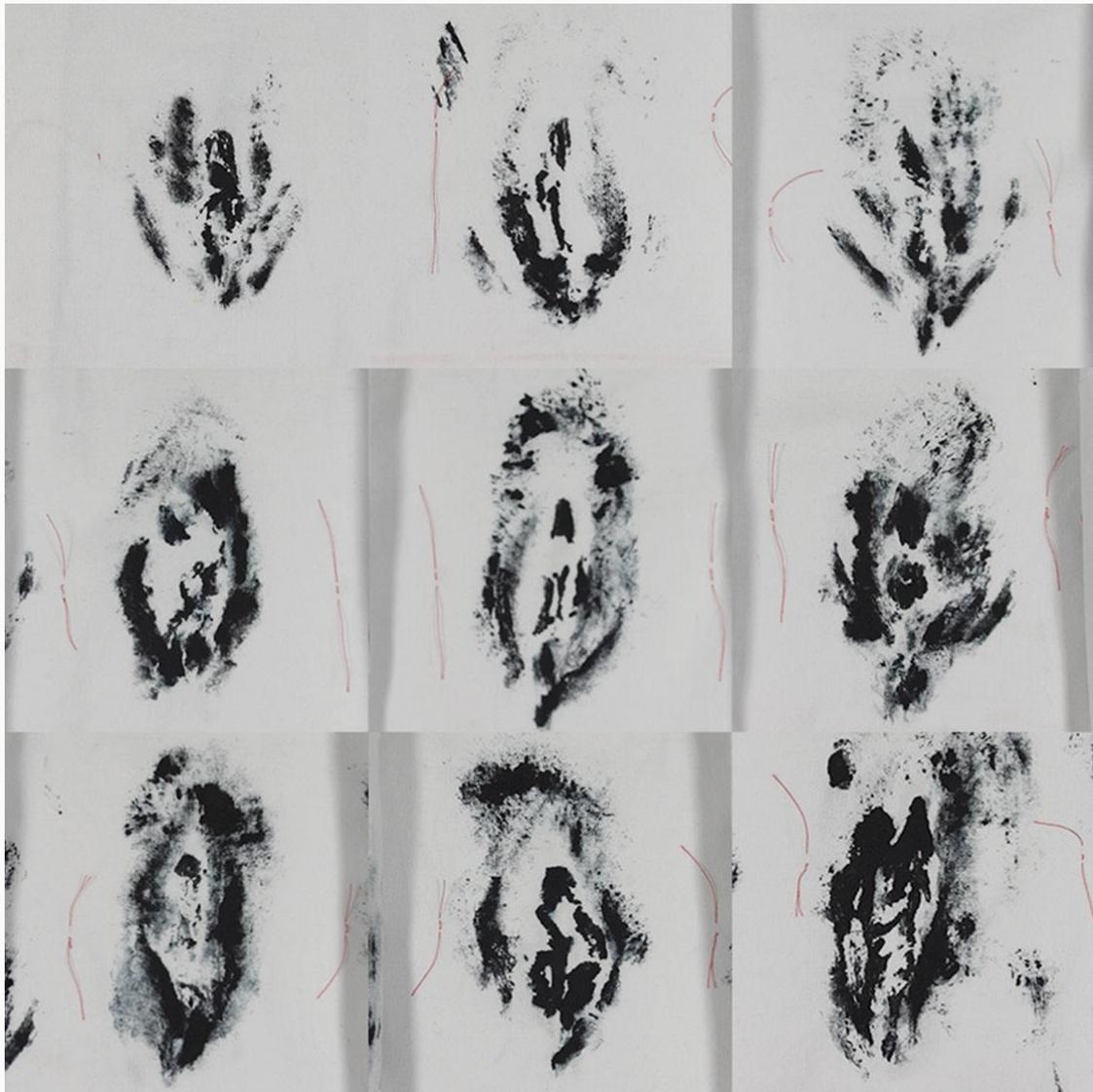
Speaking of exciting conferences, as both your President *and* the 2019 Conference Chair (I appear to be in Erikson’s generativity life phase!), ***I’m going to need your help.*** Expect emails and phone calls in the coming months asking for your contributions of time and energy in ways that honor your expertise and passion, so that our conference will indeed be all it can and should be.

We are in strange times, it seems, of creative and exhilarating developments nearly every day in the menstrual movement, right alongside a political climate frightfully akin to *The Handmaid’s Tale*. I feel strongly that the now 40 year old SMCR is in an excellent position to be a kind of Mother Ship, steering the

narrative with our strong research and advocacy, toward a safe harbor of menstrual justice. I'm honored to be your President for the coming two years.

In appreciation for all you sisters, brothers and others in making menstruation matter,

Tomi-Ann



## Menstruation Symposium

17 January 2018

Boswell Room, School of Art History,  
79 North Street, University of St Andrews

9.30am–5pm

Join us for a one-day interdisciplinary symposium about menstruation. 12 speakers from various fields will share their ongoing research, with plenty of time for discussion.

Sign up via [cmr30@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:cmr30@st-andrews.ac.uk) (vegan lunch provided, but you must sign up!)

Image: Bee Hughes, *Printed Periods* (2016), Month 1 / Days 1-9.

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## Member Updates

**Camilla Mørk Røstvik** organized a symposium (see above poster) at St. Andrews that included 12 different researchers from 12 different disciplines who shared and discussed their work.

Each week on The Heavy Flow Podcast **Amanda Laird**, Registered Holistic Nutritionist, has casual conversations with guests about menstruation, feminism and body politics. Launched in the fall of 2017, the show aims to break through the shame of talking about menstruation and other health and wellness topics often considered taboo. Topics have included menstruating while homeless, freebleeding, hormonal birth control, endometriosis, cycle-syncing, and reproductive health topics such as childbirth, a abortion and miscarriage. Subscribe on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen to podcasts, and visit amandalaird.ca for more information.

### **Kajal Kerkar Rivankar**

I have been working as 'Menstrual and Adolescent Health Educator' through various Government agencies and NGOs in Goa, India for last 9 years. My PhD research is in the area of Menstrual Practices & Customs and Interventions for Adolescent Girls in Goa, India in 2013. I was drawn to Atlanta Conference to share few of the findings of my research through oral presentation and also to learn new practices and interventions in the area of menstrual Health. Menstrual Cup as a menstrual hygiene absorbent is a very new in Goa. I learnt about in depth only when attended the Atlanta Conference. I recently started using this product before promoting it. And I personally found it very revolutionary product. I really thank SMCR Conference and network which helped me in this. I have written this to all the SMCR members to help me with strategies, ideas and networking with international organisations on promoting menstrual cup among Goan menstruators.

**Maura Stephens** is a Ph.D. student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, specializing in medical and cultural anthropology. Her research focuses on experiences of menstruation for young women in urban Japan. She is currently living in Tokyo for one year, conducting her dissertation fieldwork. She is also interested in the menstrual product industry in Japan, especially advertisements. She is eager to hear from other members about menstrual product ad in other countries as well as those for related products such as pain relief medicine and cleansing wipes. Maura is eager to share more information about her research and to hearing from others about their work. She can be contacted at **Maura Stephens** [maura4@hawaii.edu](mailto:maura4@hawaii.edu).

In addition to continuing in the role of co-editor of THE PERIODICAL, **David Linton** has been writing and performing menstrual-themed poetry in various venues around New York City as well as a member of the cast of the podcast, Fireside Mystery Theater. He is also working on the manuscript of a book scheduled

for publication in 2019 about how women and men interact with one another in the social construction of the menstrual cycle.

**Saniya Lee Ghanoui** is giving three different talks in the Spring 2018, two at Aarhus University in Denmark and one at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, related to her dissertation on the history of sex education in the United States and Sweden.

### Update from the Centre for Menstrual Cycle and Ovulation Research

Jerilynn C. Prior [jerilynn.prior@ubc.ca](mailto:jerilynn.prior@ubc.ca)

The Centre for Menstrual Cycle and Ovulation Research (**CeMCOR**) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) has researched and shared evidence-based new information about women's reproductive and bone health now for 15 years.

We have shown and published important new women's health information: 1) regular menstrual cycles without ovulation /progesterone are associated with important bone loss; 2) perimenopause is characterized by higher and erratic estrogen levels, not lower; it is therefore *not like menopause*; 3) progesterone is effective therapy for menopausal hot flushes/flushes and night sweats and increases deep sleep; 4) women ages 16-19 in the population who use combined hormonal contraception (CHC, *the Pill*) will gain less peak hip bone than their CHC non-using peers; and 5) clinically normal menstrual cycles in the population (>3000 women in Norway) are without ovulation (low progesterone levels) over a third of the time. CeMCOR's website ([www.cemcor.ca](http://www.cemcor.ca)) now garners 3,500-7,000 page-views a day from >180 countries. *We have accomplished all of this with virtually no institutional support.*

CeMCOR has recently been flatly refused support from Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI), the research institute with which, for geographical reasons, we are associated. CeMCOR does not have the *one million dollars a year* in infrastructure funding required to become an official VCHRI 'Program'. CeMCOR *needs* ~\$50-75,000/year to do what it does. The injustice is that CeMCOR's federal research grants (averaging about \$150,000/year) provide up to 17% of their value *to VCHRI*. This is an excellent example of the "reverse Robin-Hood" principle. Plus half of the taxpayers providing these research infrastructure dollars are women. Yet *women's health research is not supported by VCHRI* (except, as of 2016, for a foundation-supported ovarian cancer organization—<2% of all women get ovarian cancer in their lifetimes). Yet we cannot *prove* discrimination based on sex and gender.

Over the summer of 2017 we tried to ensure that VCHRI knew of CeMCOR's value to many around the world. A number of letters were received by VCHRI's leadership: a strong one written by Tomi-Ann and approved by SCMR's Board, by Our Bodies Ourselves, Menopause Chicks and at least 37 others from academics around the world, health care providers and members of the public. After being rejected, CeMCOR finally secured a meeting with VCHRI's head, laid out our practical needs, our plans and our

commitments. VCHRI gave us \$15,000 for 2017 and \$15,000 for 2018. Beyond that—"No".

CeMCOR has survived in the past thanks to many and a few major donors. Our initial donor provided start-up funds and enabled the "progesterone for menopausal hot flush randomized trial". But for the last 10 years she has been unable to continue donating. I have recently been the major donor. My motivation is this: **CeMCOR's new approach to women's health research focusing on silent ovulatory disturbances during the premenopausal years holds the key to the prevention of women's osteoporosis, heart disease and breast cancer.** This research must not die. *As I am sure it will when I retire—I'm now almost 75. I'm committed to continue until I have an academic successor (UBC has frozen replacements) and until CeMCOR is on a viable financial footing—or until I am no longer able. . . .*

We need several million dollars for a **UBC Professorship in Women's Health in Endocrinology** plus donations to **CeMCOR's endowment fund** <http://www.cemcor.ca/donate> (tax receipts for ≥\$25 are available in USA, UK and Canada). Why not make your donation a birthday present for someone you love?

## Journal News

SMCR's journal, *Women's Reproductive Health*, becomes a quarterly in 2018, so please watch for four issues this year (rather than three). This is exciting news, as it means we have "grown up" from our start with two issues per year in 2014. It means more pages in which we can fit more interesting content, so please consider submitting your work.

The spring issue (vol. 5, no. 1) will be published in March. It contains a special section on screening for depression during pregnancy and postpartum. The section features an anchor article about screening and informed consent practices, followed by four commentaries by experts in depression, followed by a response from the authors of the anchor article. The result is a lively and multidisciplinary discussion of some important issues in women's mental health.

Other content in the spring issue includes articles on reproductive health care use in women recently released from jails in the U.S. and on use of menstrual cups by low-income women in Zimbabwe; there are also several reviews of recent books (topics: abortion, infertility and ARTs, surrogacy).

If you would like to write a book review for *WRH*, contact Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris ([jbarntav@gmail.com](mailto:jbarntav@gmail.com)).

If you have trouble accessing your online subscription to *WRH*, contact Mindy Erchull ([merchull@umw.edu](mailto:merchull@umw.edu)).

Any other questions, or feedback about the journal and its content, should be addressed to the Editor,

Joan C. Chrisler ([jcchr@conncolle.edu](mailto:jcchr@conncolle.edu)).

## Call for Nominations: Making Menstruation Matter Award

Please start thinking about nominees for the Making Menstruation Matter Award!

SMCR established the Making Menstruation Matter Award in 2013 to acknowledge a journalist, activist, artist, public figure, or organization who has meaningfully contributed to the public understanding of menstrual cycle-related issues. The point of the award is to recognize and encourage thoughtful dialogue about the menstrual cycle beyond the academy.

The 2013 honor was awarded to Gloria Steinem; the 2015 Award went to the Boston Women's Health Collective, publishers of the influential publication, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*; the 2017 Award went to Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney who has steadfastly advocated on behalf of legislation that would improve the testing and regulation of menstrual products.

The fourth MMM Award will be presented at the 2019 SMCR conference in Colorado.

If there is an individual or organization that you feel would be a worthy recipient of this award, please send a 100-500 word nomination statement to Mindy Erchull at [info@menstruationresearch.org](mailto:info@menstruationresearch.org) or [merchull@umw.edu](mailto:merchull@umw.edu) by April 15, 2018.

## Deadline for the Next Issues of **THE PERIODICAL**

If you missed getting your news in to the editors for this edition or you have new accomplishments to report in the coming months, put this date on your calendar now: **JUNE 1, 2018**. This will give everyone time to gather together work that's done through the Spring and to announce new initiatives for the Summer.

Please send items to: Saniya Lee Ghanoui ([saniya.ghanoui@gmail.com](mailto:saniya.ghanoui@gmail.com)) and David Linton ([dlinton@mmm.edu](mailto:dlinton@mmm.edu)).



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