Why Women Studies Matters...
Dr. Huma Ahmed-Ghosh

Huma Ahmed-Ghosh is the Chair and Professor in the Department of Women’s Studies at San Diego State University. She is also on the Advisory Board of the Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies and the Center for Asia-Pacific Studies. Her research and publications focus on Afghan women in Afghanistan and the USA, Muslim diaspora to the USA, and Islam and feminism. She has also published articles on women’s issues in India such as gendered ageing, widowhood, domestic violence and women’s representations in beauty pageants. Ahmed-Ghosh guest-edited a special issue for the Journal of Lesbian Studies on Lesbians, Sexuality and Islam. She teaches courses related to enquiry into feminist scholarship, gender and Islam, women in cross-cultural perspective and gender, war and peace. Ahmed-Ghosh has also conducted study abroad programs to India, South Africa, Ghana and Oaxaca in recent years. This year, the Outstanding Graduating Senior Award was bestowed on Laura Ortiz who selected Dr. Ahmed-Ghosh as her Most Influential Faculty.

Faculty and Staff Bios

Dr. Susan Cayleff

Cayleff’s current research interests continue to be the history of medicine, girls’ studies, and the histories of LGBTQ sexualities. The final manuscript for Nature’s Path: Naturopathic Medicine and Alternative Healing was sent to Johns Hopkins University Press in May. She is also writing the “Body Politics” introduction for Women in Culture: A Women’s Studies Anthology, co-edited with her colleagues to be published by Blackwell Publishing. A continuing love affair with issues in women’s sports still informs her research projects. Dr. Cayleff also works as the co-director of SafeZones and faculty mentor of the Young Women’s Studies Club at Hoover High School. She teaches courses on women’s history in the U.S., women and sports, narrating women’s lives and body politics.

In San Diego, I love the pow-wow circuit and attend as many as I can. We love taking our dogs, Black-eyed Pearl the Pirate Wonder dog, and Jake—Duke of Chowdah to the dog beach at Fiesta Island and other dog parks. Street fairs and farmer’s markets also rank high. I’m more a country-type, so trips to Idyllwild (particularly when it snows) and Julian during the fall are favorite jaunts.
Dr. Esther Rothblum

Esther Rothblum is the Graduate Advisor in the department. She continues to serve as advisor for the LGBT Studies undergraduate major and minor. Dean Paul Wong has also urged her to form an LGBTQ Research Consortium, highlighting LGBTQ scholarship and potential research collaboration among SDSU faculty. Esther is one of the researchers on a $1.2 million National Institutes of Health grant to conduct the ten-year follow-up study of same-sex couples who legalized their relationship. This study also compares these couples to heterosexual married siblings, and to same-sex couples in their friendship circle who did not legalize their relationship. Her research was recently featured in the New York Times as well as the Wall Street Journal, ABC News, and other media. Esther continues to serve as editor of the academic journals Fat Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Body Weight and Society and the Journal of Lesbian Studies.

My favorite thing about the San Diego area is the Pacific Ocean. Whether kayaking off the mouth of the big bay, boogie boarding, walking on the Mission Beach boardwalk, or swimming at the La Jolla Cove, it always brings me pleasure.

Dr. Doreen Mattingly

Doreen Mattingly is making steady progress on her biography of Midge Costanza, feminist activist and Assistant to President Jimmy Carter. She has used her Spring 2013 sabbatical to write, and has a draft ready. The tentative title is Unlikely Insider: Midge Costanza, Washington Feminism, and the Carter Administration. Two articles will be out soon (one in Journal of Women’s History and one in Journal of Lesbian Studies) and two more are in the works. In fall she is back in the classroom, teaching WMNST 530: Women’s Movements and Activism, and WMNST 385: Women’s Work: Invisibility and Empowerment (recently renamed!). Also in the fall she is filling in as chair while Huma Ahmed-Ghosh takes a much-needed sabbatical. In her free time she keeps busy with the University Senate, General Education Committee, and California Faculty Association.

My favorite thing about San Diego is the Huddle in Mission Hills—if you stop by that diner any weekday morning at 6:30 am you can join me as I read the New York Times and chat with the regulars.

Dr. Irene Lara

Associate Professor Lara’s research builds on the scholar-activist-healer work of decolonial and women-of-color feminism that intersectionally critiques the sexism, racism, and other social injustices in dominant U.S. culture. A series of her articles analyzes the ways that some contemporary Chicana/Latina women writers, artists, and healers self-define their spirituality and sexuality in empowering ways through their healing work. This analysis stems from a critique of dualistic thinking common in western modern-colonial thought, that sets, for example, woman in opposition to man, people of color in opposition to whites, the body in opposition to the mind, and flesh in opposition to the spirit, with the former category generally deemed inferior to the latter category. She is currently working on a book based on interviews with Chicana “curanderas” who draw on a syncretic, largely indigenous holistic healing praxis.

My favorite thing to do in San Diego is taking a walk from North to South along Coronado Beach all the way to the Hotel Del and tide pools... You can enjoy the view of the Pacific and Mexico. Make a picnic and take a camera!

Dr. Kimala Price

Associate Professor Kimala Price’s current project, entitled “Abortion, Black Genocide and the Politics of Outrage,” examines both the verbal and visual rhetorical strategies used by the anti-abortion movement to mobilize the African American community. In addition to examining the documents produced by anti-abortion groups, she examines the efforts of reproductive justice activists to contest the messages of these campaigns. In March 2013, this project was featured in an exhibit on visual politics at the annual conference of the Western Political Science Association. Dr. Price teaches courses on gender, race and class; reproductive justice; sexuality and the body; and women’s relationships and social policy. She is also on the board of Planned Parenthood in San Diego.

My “must-see” spot is the Torrey Pines Natural Reserve; I especially like picnicking and watching the sunset over the ocean at the glider port.

Dr. Anh Hua

Assistant Professor Anh Hua’s research focuses are critical race and postcolonial feminisms, diaspora studies, cultural studies, migratory and diasporic identities and communities, and aesthetic texts (contemporary fiction, poetry, autobiography, independent film and the visual arts) by marginalized women. Her interdisciplinary scholarship examines personal and collective memory, cultural trauma, identities, home, migration, displacement, nationhood, cultural resistance and transformation by marginalized groups, with an emphasis on the literature and film produced by women of color in North America. She has published in the journals African and Black Diaspora, Journal of International Women’s Studies, Canadian Woman’s Studies, J spot, and in the anthologies...
**Diaspora, Memory, and Identity: A Search for Home and Emotion, Place and Culture.**

One of my favorite activities to do in San Diego is hiking, in particular, the Torrey Pines hiking trails.

**Dr. Sara Giordano**

Assistant Professor Sara Giordano’s area of focus is feminist science studies. Through her research she critically examines scientific assumptions and claims about race, gender, sexuality, disability and other socially salient categories of difference. She is currently working on two projects. The first focuses on the DIY ethics of synthetic biology; comparing synthetic biologists’ plans for open access science with decades-old calls from feminist communities for democratic, community-based and community-controlled practices. The second project looks at biometric technologies, such as face recognition software. The aim of this project is to ask what understandings of race and gender inform current biometric technologies and what effect could/should interdisciplinary understandings of these categories have on these technologies. One of Dr. Giordano’s long-term goals is to develop a community/academic science partnership based on the concept of a feminist science shop.

One of my favorite things to do in San Diego is watch the sunset at Sunset Cliffs.

**Dr. Anne Donadey**

Professor Donadey’s research interests revolve around contemporary Francophone North African women writers and filmmakers, comparative postcolonial and ethnic literatures, and representations of colonialism, race and gender in literature and film. Her main area of research has been analyzing the postcolonial feminist works of two women writers, Assia Djebar (Algeria/France) and Leila Sebbar (France/Algeria). More recently, she has been researching films by Moufida Tlatli (Tunisia) and Rachid Bouchareb (France/Algeria). She has also published articles on the state of feminist literary studies, on anti-racist perspectives in Women’s Studies and French cultural studies, and on the works of feminist writers Fatima Mernissi (Morocco), Tsitsi Dangarembga (Zimbabwe), Maryse Condé (Guadeloupe), Daniel Maximin (Guadeloupe), Azar Nafisi (Iran), Octavia E. Butler (USA), and Gloria Anzaldúa (USA). Prof. Donadey teaches courses on feminist theory at the undergraduate and graduate levels. She chairs the Department of European Studies.

My favorite spot would be Coronado Island, home to the iconic Hotel Del Coronado. My perfect afternoon there begins with a delicious coffee and pastry, continues with a leisurely stroll through various boutiques followed by a nice walk on the beach culminating in watching the sunset, and ends with La Terrazza’s succulent Osso Bucco.

**Janet M. Roberts**

Janet Roberts is a Black feminist scholar. Committed to the principles of diversity and equality, she has taught Black Studies and Women’s Studies to continue and further the work begun by activists of the 1960’s and 70’s. Drawing to the arts, her field of study is literature, focusing on Black literature and women’s literature in all of its diversity, along with literary theory developed within these fields. Teaching two introductory courses in Women’s Studies, she also teaches composition at City College, incorporating her commitment to issues of gender, race, class, and sexual identity into her course creation. Concerned over the recent setbacks taking place for women and minorities, she hopes that the work we do in Woman’s Studies will inspire a new generation to become aware of and engaged in the struggle for autonomy and equality.

San Diego has a thriving live theater community. There are the prestigious venues like: Broadway, San Diego; The Old Globe; The San Diego Repertory Theatre; and The La Jolla Playhouse Theatres, which provide large, magnificent productions, as well as the many smaller venues in the area.

**Dr. Jacki Davis Leak**

Dr. Jacki Davis Leak is an educator in the Department of Women’s Studies at SDSU. Jacki has degrees in Psychology, in Education with a Multicultural Counseling emphasis and in the Psychology of Culture and Human Behavior. Jacki retired (the first time) in 1990 after a 17-year career as a detective in the New York City Police Department, and subsequently established a successful private hypnotherapy practice in San Diego. Along with women’s personal growth and empowerment facilitation, Jacki’s interests include the power of ritual, bridging and strengthening cultural diversity, and African American women in their relationships with themselves, their significant others and their communities.

Driving into San Diego for the first time, the 163 freeway, as it roamed through the tall, arching trees of Balboa Park, was a dramatic sample of the beautiful natural setting that is San Diego. Balboa Park is a cultural center, hosting multiple museums, the Japanese Gardens and International Village, but also a gathering place for fundraising walks, for concerts, and for events like Earth Day, and just a beautiful green setting for casual walks and enjoying the outdoors. Jacki’s other favorites include Imperial Beach, La Jolla Cove, the top of Mount Helix, and the motorcycle ride out to Julian for Dutch apple pie!
Dr. Sue Gonda

Sue Gonda serves as Faculty Senate President at Grossmont College, her full time job, while teaching American Women’s History at SDSU. She is involved state-wide with LGBT issues and programming as well as curriculum development and assessment in general. She enjoys the challenges of teaching online and lectures in the San Diego community on topics in U.S. women’s history.

We as a Department are also very grateful to our lecturers Jessica Nare, Jessica Heredia, Shogofa Abassi, Cat Thompson, Geneva Darcueil, Doe Elliott, and Moriah Gonzalez-Meeks. Without their class offerings, the Department of Women’s Studies would not be able to sustain the rich intellectual environment we are so proud of.

Teddi Brock

Teddi Brock, the Department’s Administrative Coordinator, has had a year of milestones. Last fall, she achieved her 25th year on campus at SDSU and was awarded the SDSU Presidential Staff Excellence Award for peer-to-peer mentoring. She accepted this honor as a representative of all the staff who have done so much to help and support each other. During the winter recess, she was thrilled to be able to join Huma Ghosh and 17 other students (yes, she enrolled in a class) on the India study abroad trip that covered both South and North India. It was a truly memorable and awe-inspiring once-in-a-lifetime adventure. Then she turned 60 in February and celebrated with many friends.

Having lived in San Diego for most of her life, Teddi has many favorite places and neighborhoods. Overall, her favorite activity is camping in the local mountains and desert, especially in Palomar Mountain State Park, William Heise County Park, and the Palm Canyon campground in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

SafeZones

By EL Glasheen

I’ve been asked more than a few times if SafeZones@SDSU is a group that focuses on bullying in primary and secondary schools. We aren’t. This highlights the transitional state of our society with regards to LGBTQ issues. In a few short years, awareness of and action against homophobic bullying has undergone significant changes. The campus environment at SDSU has undergone a similar shift, in part thanks the efforts of SafeZones@SDSU.

The group is approaching its five-year anniversary. It began as a direct response to a series of serious homophobic incidents on campus and today offers free ally trainings and internships. We also formed the SafeZones@SDSU Student Organization in 2012. At this time, SDSU has a 5 star LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index rating from Campus Pride and has been ranked among the top 20 LGBT-friendly campuses in the nation. It has a burgeoning LGBT Studies major and minor. Significant portions of the campus faculty, staff, administration, and students have undergone SafeZones@SDSU certified ally trainings. Organizations like the Queer Student Union and Gamma Rho Lambda have a routine, public presence on campus.

As one of the co-founders of the student organization, SafeZones@SDSU has become a major part of my life. I’ve been grateful to work with the SafeZones@SDSU Coordinating Committee faculty and staff, Graduate Assistants and student interns over the past two semesters. It has genuinely been a rewarding and fun experience, and I’ve become good friends with many people because of it.
2013 Lavender Graduation
By Damien Sutton, Women’s Studies Graduate Student

On May 8th, 2013 San Diego State University hosted the fourth annual Lavender Graduation at the Parma Payne Goodall Center. Along with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Major, Women’s Studies co-sponsored the highly attended and joyous event that brought together the many diverse faces of the campus. The event, a graduation ceremony that celebrates individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or allies, was particularly noteworthy because this year marks the occasion where San Diego City declared May 8th to be the official day for Lavender Graduation.

The ceremony also celebrated the work done by supporters and activists of the LGBT cause. This year honored the works of Dr. Susan Cayleff (professor of Women’s Studies), Mary Kelly (Director of LGBT Resource and Program Development, College of Arts and Letters, Emerita Lecturer of Religious Studies/Women’s Studies) and Dwayne Crenshaw (Executive Director of San Diego LGBT Center). All have been instrumental in furthering the LGBT cause in San Diego.

This year, the Outstanding Graduate award was bestowed upon Lyssa Baker and Professor Douglas Bigham was chosen to receive the Most Influential Faculty Award.

The Vagina Monologues
By Sharlene Castle, Women’s Studies Undergraduate Student

Simply put, The Vagina Monologues is a play about women and their vaginas. Playwright and feminist activist, Eve Ensler, traveled the world interviewing women about their vaginas and composed a hilarious and heart-wrenching play that covers everything from rape to orgasms to childbirth. She also founded V-Day, the global movement to end violence against women and girls. Since its founding 15 years ago, V-Day has spread across the world.

Each year, thousands of benefit performances of The Vagina Monologues take place all over the world. One hundred percent of the proceeds from each performance is donated to help stop violence against women and girls: ninety percent to a local beneficiary and ten percent to a spotlight country chosen by V-Day. What makes The Vagina Monologues unique is that it raises awareness about violence against women and girls in an engaging and entertaining manner. In combining social engagement with financial activism, V-Day has become an incredibly effective movement.

In 2013, V-Day SDSU produced three benefit performances of The Vagina Monologues. It was performed by 16 SDSU students and attended by approximately 1,250 people. The program raised $16,500 and donated $14,650 to our local beneficiary, the Center for Community Solutions, which helps adults and children heal from and prevent relationship and sexual violence. The remaining $1,850 was donated to V-Day’s One Billion Rising campaign, a global strike to end gender-based violence which took place on February 14, 2013. If you would like more information on V-Day SDSU, please visit facebook.com/vdaysdsu or email vdaysdsu@gmail.com.
The Chronicles of a Women’s Studies Post-Graduation Student
By Dr. Tanya Saroj Bakhru, Women’s Studies Graduate Student (Class of 2003)

The spring of 2013 commemorates the ten-year anniversary of my graduation from San Diego State University’s Women’s Studies Master’s program. I came into the program from an undergraduate degree in Music in Violin Performance and Minor in Women’s Studies at the University of Redlands. Changing the course of my career trajectory from music to Women’s Studies had been a frightening proposition. However, the social justice and activism aspects of Women’s Studies resonated with the core of my life and trumped my long-held love of music.

The MA at SDSU provided a forum with outstanding professors, mentors, and fellow graduate students where I could learn, discuss, question, and push myself to be a critical thinker and active contributor to this worthy and burgeoning field. Through the study abroad opportunities and chance to teach an introduction to Women’s Studies course, the program exposed me to new ideas and fed my ambition to understand and experience a diversity of situations, people, and ideas that were outside my comfort zone. Since graduating from SDSU I have completed my PhD in Women’s Studies from University College Dublin in Ireland. I returned to the United States in 2006 to finish writing my dissertation and lectured at SDSU in Women’s Studies for a year while looking for a permanent job.

In 2008 I began a tenure track job in Women’s Studies at San Jose State University. I have published articles in books and scholarly journals; and despite my familiarity with the field, I am often surprised at the excitement and passion each new article evokes. In September of this year I go up for tenure. I really believe in the mission of the California State University system, and feel proud to have attended and now work at academic institutions that are based on the notion of universal access to higher. The vast majority of my students are the first generation in their family to attend college. In connecting with them and facilitating their engagement with the potentially transformative ideas of Women’s Studies, I feel like I am making a difference in their lives and expressing my gratitude for the care and intellectual nourishment that was provided to me years ago. With the help of my family, friends, and community, I have come to realize that victory of spirit always leads to victory in our daily reality; even if life sometimes turns out differently than what we had originally intended.

Interviews with Undergraduate Women’s Studies Majors
Monique Martinez

1.) How have you enjoyed your Women’s Studies classes at San Diego State?

I have extremely enjoyed my Women’s Studies classes because of how much valuable information I have learned. The professors I have had are extremely knowledgeable and helpful so I have always looked forward to and appreciated my classes. These professors and their classes have truly enhanced my time at SDSU.

2.) What kind of things have you learned from taking these courses?

There are so many great things I have learned, but there are a few things that stick out among the rest from over the years. From my very first Women’s Studies class, the thing I always remember learning about the most was the cycle of violence regarding domestic violence. Not only did I learn about the cycle, but also appropriate ways to react and/or help someone going through domestic violence. I remember at the time thinking that was such a valuable tool to have as I will inevitably know someone going through such an experience. Furthermore, learning about women throughout the world and their struggles has really impacted me. It was the first time I had really been exposed to some of the issues and conflicts many women live with on a daily basis. Above all, I learned to look at things from a feminist perspective and critically think about the things I see and hear.

3.) How do you feel you’ll use the information you’ve gained from the classes in your future?

Being able to apply a feminist analysis to all the things I come across in my future is so important because I believe it makes me a better asset to society. Additionally, as I plan to go to law school and practice a career in law, the things I learned will help me be more aware of the issues certain groups in society face. Additionally, I want to continue to learn and stay up-to-date on the issues women in the United States and around the world face. Hopefully, one day I can move from being aware of issues to helping to create viable solutions and, without my Women’s Studies background at SDSU, that would never be possible for me.
What Activism Can I Do? “Women Say No to War” but “Yes” to (CODE)PINK

By Rhianna Maras, Graduate Student

Medea Benjamin, a co-founder of the feminist anti-war organization CODE-PINK, spoke to members of the SDSU community as a part of the Women’s Studies colloquium series on April 8, 2013. Benjamin has been an activist for peace and social justice for more than thirty years, and co-founded CODEPINK with Jodie Evans in 2002 in an effort to protest the U.S. invasion of Iraq and promote peace and social justice. While Benjamin’s new book, Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control, primarily focuses on the militarization of drones, Benjamin also discussed her work with CODEPINK at her SDSU lecture.

CODEPINK is predominantly a women-based, non-governmental, grassroots organization that strategically utilizes pink attire and outlandish costumes to gain international media attention. The goals of CODEPINK include disputing the governmental funding of wars and the military and challenging global militarism. CODEPINK supports diverting governmental funding away from war and militarism and towards health care, the environment, and educational programs. Code Pink has had numerous successes, including: providing humanitarian aid to survivors of war torn areas and the launch of the “Women Say No to War” campaign, in which CODEPINK sent more than 100,000 signatures to the White House, protesting the U.S. involvement in Iraq. (If you would like to get involved with Code Pink San Diego, please visit www.codepink4peace.org or email Reba Campbell at codepink.reba@gmail.com).

The Fulbright Program

By Damien Sutton, Graduate Student

Begun alongside the Peace Corp, the Fulbright program in the USA was started in the 1960s to offer students in the United States the opportunity to experience the world outside their hometown. More importantly, the government and, specifically, Mr. Fulbright himself, understood the importance of crafting the next generation of international leaders through global diplomacy and research. This program, through its emphasis on research and education, helps foster the concept that we, as a nation, must be globally conscious and begin to take steps towards a more cosmopolitan identity.

Given this, it is fortunate that at San Diego State University we have the opportunity to take part in this development of an international community. In charge of helping students apply to this prestigious program is Patricia Huckle, former member of the Women’s Studies Department and life-long supporter of the program. With her guidance, students have been able to successfully navigate the sometimes trying and complex application process that can take up to a year to complete. While she is retiring this fall, Patricia Huckle will be succeeded by Alda Blanco of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Although the process is daunting, San Diego State University has proven to be one of the more successful universities for Fulbright applications. This is best demonstrated in the fourteen successful awards this past academic year with the positions ranging from teaching English to research in foreign universities.

At the time of this writing, I too am beginning this application and hope to be able to detail the process in a more personal manner in next year’s edition of this newsletter.

You may contact Alda Blanco at ablanco@mail.sdsu.edu. You can find out more information at the SDSU Fulbright website, www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~oip/fulbright.htm.
Adventures in India: My Study Abroad Experience

By Laura Ortiz, Women’s Studies Graduate Student

Last year as an undergraduate student, I had the opportunity to travel to India through an SDSU Study Abroad Program, and it was truly the adventure of a lifetime. On our way there and back we had layovers in Dubai, so I was able to see Dubai as well! In India, we visited many breathtaking sights such as Qutub Minar, the tallest minaret in the world, and the India Gate, an arch commemorating soldiers killed in WWII. Another favorite location we visited was the ISHA Foundation which is a non-profit spiritual organization specializing in yoga and meditation, located in the mountains of Coimbatore. Additionally, we saw many Indian dances, but my favorites were the traditional Indian dances in which the participants not only dance by moving their bodies, but also relay stories with their facial expressions. Sonal Mansingh, an Indian classical dancer, choreographer, and activist performed and I had the pleasure of meeting her after the show.

We visited NGOs that work along with universities and the government to empower women. They do this by teaching women different trades with the goal of helping them out of poverty through micro-credit programs. We visited Jagori, a non-profit organization that works to help the status of women in India through various educational programs. They provide training sensitizing police officers about how to treat women who have been victims of crimes. Additionally, Jagori advocates for safe cities, free of violence for girls and women.Visiting Jagori, listening to staff, and purchasing a small handbook on child sexual abuse in fact solidified the focus of my future professional and educational goals. My fondest memories of India are of the people I met, and they have left a lasting impression on me. One person that I will remember most fondly is Anjali Gopalan founder of the NAZ Foundation, a home that cares for children with HIV and AIDS. Ms. Gopalan also fought for the decriminalization of homosexuality in India and is a devoted human rights activist for gays.

I highly recommend study abroad programs, not only for students, but for community members as well because it made me understand my position as a global citizen. Meeting these extraordinary people has given me the confidence as well as the knowledge that we are on this earth to help others.
“I’m working on a research paper and am having a hard time finding sources to use, who can help me?”
The Women’s Studies Department has their own librarian! Laurel Bliss is incredibly helpful when trying to find sources for papers and/or graduate MA theses. The library offers a wide variety of online and in-print sources, and if she can’t find what you’re looking for she can show you how to request an item through interlibrary loan. Laurel Bliss is available in the Love Library and via email at lbliss@rohan.sdsu.edu.

“I’m struggling with some of my course material, who can I go to for help?”
The faculty members in the Women’s Studies Department provide a supportive and helpful environment for students. Faculty members are available during office hours or by appointment to help you with your course work as well as give you the motivation to achieve your academic goals.

“I want to get involved in activism outside of the classroom. Where can I find activism on SDSU’s campus?”
The Women’s Studies Department hosts numerous colloquium events each semester, which include a variety of speakers who have successfully bridged the gap between activism and academia. In addition, the Andrea O’Donnell Womyn’s Outreach Association works with the Women’s Studies Department and other community-based organizations to help plan events like Take Back the Night, The Vagina Monologues, and the Clothesline Project. It is a great opportunity to get involved in community activism!

“I am interested in teaching. What are some of the opportunities available?”
The Women’s Studies MA program offers both first and second-year students numerous opportunities to become involved in teaching. Graduate assistantships are given to selected incoming first year graduate students, who will then have the ability to engage with students and their faculty advisor. Second-year graduate students can apply for Graduate Teaching Associates in either WMNST 101 or WMNST 102. This allows students to teach their own introductory level Women’s Studies courses and it’s a great chance to gain teaching experience.

In a Bind(er)? The Women’s Studies Department Has Your Back!  By Rhianna Maras, Graduate Student

Save The Date!
The theme for 2013/2014 is “Science, Sexuality, and Health.” Following are the currently planned dates for colloquia and other events:

**Fall 2013**
- Sep. 18  Faculty Brown Bag: Dr. Kimala Price
- Oct. 10  National Coming Out Day/Safe Zones Event
- Oct. 16  Colloquium: Dr. Alondra Nelson: Science, race and health
- Oct. 22  Colloquium: Malalai Joya: Afghan woman activist and author 7 pm
- Nov. 6   Workshop: Discourse Analysis
- Nov. 13  Colloquium: Bonnie Zimmerman Lecture: Dr. Jennifer Terry: feminism and science - 1-3 pm, location TBD

**Spring 2014**
- Mar. 7   Common Experience Colloquium: “Water, Sovereignty, and Social Justice on International Women’s Day” (Friday afternoon or half-day symposium; possibly in collaboration with Chicana & Chicano Studies and American Indian Studies)
- Mar. 24  Scholarship Lecture: Dr. Dorothy Roberts on Criminal and Reproductive Justice (Thur. 7pm)
- Mar. 25  Reproductive and Sexual Justice Workshop & Healing Circle (Friday all or half day, possibly in collaboration with the Diversity Conference, the Women’s Outreach Association, California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, and more)

Please note, events are scheduled on Wednesday afternoons unless otherwise noted. For updates please visit: http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~wsweb
Graduate Student Caucus

By Kari Szakal, Graduate Student and Co-Chair of the National Women’s Studies Association Graduate Caucus

The primary objective of the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) is “promoting and supporting the production and dissemination of knowledge about women and gender through teaching, learning, research and service in academic and other settings.” The NWSA Graduate Caucus echoes this mission. This Caucus hopes to encourage and support graduate students who have chosen to pursue a graduate education in women’s studies, or a related interdisciplinary field. The Graduate Caucus will present the Sponsored Session “Practices of Effecting Change: Alternative Forms of Activism in Academia & Beyond,” at the 2013 NWSA Conference will be held in Cincinnati, OH, November 7-10. Those interested in joining the NWSA Graduate Caucus may do so by becoming an NWSA member at www.nwsa.org. If you have any questions about the NWSA Graduate Student Caucus, please email the co-chairs at: NWSAGraduateCaucus@gmail.com.

List of Scholarships

Undergraduate Scholarships

Andrea O’Donnell Memorial Scholarship – Sharlene Castle, recipient

Given in the memory of an activist student at SDSU, this $1,000 scholarship was designed to aid in the education of SDSU undergraduate students who demonstrate commitment to community activism and leadership in developing, promoting, or supporting activities which empower women.

Joanne Davis Women’s Studies Scholarship – Sebnem Uzuner, recipient

In memory of Joanne Davis, this $1,000 scholarship is given in support of students whose parents did not attend a four-year college or university.

The Sue Russell Scholarship – Stephanie Cook and Roxanne Cueva, recipients.

Given in memory of a SDSU graduate who earned her degree later in life, this $1,000 scholarship was created to aid Women’s Studies majors or minors who demonstrate academic success while facing challenges toward attaining their degree.

Betty Nesvold Scholarship – Parisa Crockett, recipient

Given in memory of one of the founders of the department, this $1,500 scholarship is awarded to students in the SDSU Women’s Studies M.A. Program who are entering their second year of study or beyond and who have a thesis advisor. Their research should focus upon lesbian women and/or women of color. The award is $500.

Phyllis Hall Graduate Student Scholarship – Damien Sutton, recipient

Given by Professor Laura J. Hall in honor of her mother, this scholarship is available to students in the SDSU Women’s Studies M.A. Program who are entering their second year of study and link the relevance of their thesis topics to post-graduation goals.

Graduate Scholarships

Oliva Espín – Sanam Kalhoro, recipient

Given by Professor Emerita Olivia Espín, this scholarship is awarded to students in the SDSU Women’s Studies M.A. Program who are entering their second year of study or beyond and who have a thesis advisor. Their research should focus upon lesbian women and/or women of color. The award is $500.

Wertz/Carstens Sistership – Alyssa Brooke-Gay, recipient

Given in honor of Professor Jackie Wertz by her student Deb Carstens, this award honors the beginnings of the Department. This is given to first-year MA students.

Bonnie and Tom Scott Sistership – Sanam Kalhoro, recipient

Given by Professors Bonnie and Tom Scott in order to help recruit new MA students into the program by increasing their financial aid award.

This scholarship recognizes the contribution of Phyllis Hall to Women’s Studies during her years in publishing.
Oaxaca Trip
By Damien Sutton, Graduate Student

I step off the plane and the first thing I realize is that I may be a tad overdressed for the next week. At a not so cool eighty degrees, my professor, classmates and I have crossed the border and will claim Oaxaca, Mexico as our home for the next several days. With its many valleys, sun-drenched landscapes and familiar traffic patterns, I figure that this will not be too dissimilar to my youth in Los Angeles. Within minutes of our arrival, this would quickly prove untrue.

This is not because of a lack of similarity in terms of culture necessarily, but because of a sense of community that openly embraces political action. It was not simply those directly affected by repressive governmental policies and actions that took part in the various activist activities seen throughout the town (such as graffiti, protests and rallies), but the entire community stood in solidarity for social progress. Each night I walked the stone and cobble streets to find the city alive with a certain electricity and energy that I have not had the pleasure of experiencing in the United States.

However, the trip was not simply one of political activist sightseeing, but one of cultural enjoyment. As a group, we were given the opportunity to experience the rich culture of Oaxaca and shown just a small amount of the riches to be discovered in the region. Such examples were the various museums, the cathedrals (especially those in the city like the Santo Domingo), Mitla and Monte Alban pre-Columbian archeological sites, artist’s homes, large local markets and artisan shops.

Of course, a true discussion of the city would be incomplete without at least one mention of the amazing food found throughout the city of Oaxaca. Picking a favorite would be difficult, but were I to pick my favorite edible goodie on the trip, I would have to tip my hat towards the many tamales devoured by the entire group. To conclude this piece, I have to say that none of this would have been possible without the generosity of graduating Women’s Studies Master’s student, Adriana Martinez. She offered up both her home (right on the zocalo) and heart for which the group and I shall be forever thankful.

Women’s Studies needs your support!

The Graduate Program and other worthy projects discussed in this newsletter can be sustained only by the support of generous donors.

Please make checks payable to The Campanile Foundation – Women’s Studies. If you would like to support a specific project, please specify on the memo or a separate note. Thank you!

Please send contributions to:
The Department of Women’s Studies
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Attn: Teddi Brock
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-6030
Congratulations to the Women’s Studies Master of Arts Class of 2013!

Top row from left - Teddi Brock, Administrative Coordinator; MA graduates Shawna Held, Jerrica Escoto, Lindsay Bond, Claire Scripter, Danielle Bauer, Professor Esther Rothblum
Bottom row from left - Alicia Nichols, Stephanie Croney, Adriana Martinez Noriega, Kristine Palma

Spring 2013 Thesis Topics:

Shawna Held: “Menstrual Madness: Female Athletes & Menstruation.”
Jerrica Escoto: “Who We Are When We Say We Are: The Politics of Slam Poetry.”
Lindsay Bond: “‘Take What You Want and Leave the Rest:’ Alcoholics Anonymous and Female Empowerment”.
Claire Scripter: “Dear Emma: Narrating the Political Life of Anarchist Emma Goldman through Women’s Correspondence.”
Danielle Bauer: “Kings, Queens, and In-Betweens: Exploring Gender and Power Through Drag Performance.”
Stephanie Croney: “Placing Theory into Practice: An Evaluation of Female Delinquency and Incarceration”
Kristine Palma: “Who Can Come Out and Play? Re-conceptualizing Title IX to Address the Interrelated Barriers of Sexism, Homophobia and Racism.”
Young Women’s Studies Club
By Lindsay Bond, Graduate Coordinator

The Women’s Studies M.A. program at San Diego State University (SDSU) afforded me rare opportunities for community involvement. From 2011-13, I served as the Graduate Coordinator for the Young Women’s Studies Club (YWSC), a multi-layered, collaborative effort that bridges the academy and the community, designing and autonomously teaching classes, workshops, and events for both the undergraduate mentors and the high school students. The YWSC is a joint effort between the Women’s Studies Department at SDSU and Hoover High School, which seeks to empower young women and men eager to create a more just and feminist world. The YWSC meets every week with about 50-70 students attending the meetings. Given the location of the High School, the program represents a very wide range of nationalities and ethnicities.

I have spent the last ten years working in non-profits centered on race, gender, class, and sexuality issues. I have worked at the National Organization for Women and the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition in Washington, DC and the Oceanside Boys and Girls Club in California. After working at the national level for so long, I wanted to get back to my local community and use all my newfound tools and abilities. It was through the YWSC that I came full circle as I mentored, tutored and guided the youth I identified with. They taught me more about a just and feminist world than I could ever convey within this piece.

As I move on to the next phase of my life by pursuing a Ph.D. in Anthropology at UCSD I will work to increase campus and departmental diversity in the ways I have done throughout my various jobs, specifically the way I teach and mentor, as I feel better able to relate to my students’ diverse backgrounds and hardships. I want to be the professor who validates and honors difference through her teaching and research, to hold open the door after I have walked through it, and liberate others to believe in their dreams by following my own. I hope to become a college professor that never forgets where she came from. I believe we must incorporate activism and grassroots work in our doctoral program and teaching careers. It was an honor and a privilege to serve as the graduate coordinator for the YWSC. This program not only changes the lives of the youth we mentor, it changes us as teachers forever.

Thoughts from a GTA in the Women’s Studies Department
By DB Bauer, Women’s Studies Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA)

Teaching is a gift. Throughout this last year and the three courses I have taught, I have learned an incredible amount. Teaching requires a lot of energy and constant commitment, but often, the students make it all absolutely worth it. There is something very special about being in the classroom and seeing students’ eyes light up and knowing an important idea just “clicked.” Over the course of a semester, students grow academically and personally. It is very rewarding to be a part of this process. This matters to me because I remember sitting in my first Women’s Studies class and finally feeling like I belonged somewhere in academia. I felt that the issues that affected me were centered and illuminated. I hope to extend the opportunity for personal and academic growth to my students as it has been provided to me. Often, Women’s Studies is a home base that fosters lifelong learning.

I chose this MA program because it provided me with the opportunity to teach. I had always wondered (and dreamed) about what it would be like to teach my own course. For me, it proved to be a passion. I have a greater amount of respect for academia, especially for our wonderful instructors who pour their time, energy, and enthusiasm into teaching.

Without the mentors in this department, I doubt that the GTA experience would have been as rewarding. After about nineteen years of schooling, I am indebted to the inspiring teachers, including those in my own family, who have led me along this path of becoming an instructor myself. I look forward to a future in academia and would like to express my thanks to this department. I highly recommend the GTA position for any MA students interested in the teaching process. For those of you who do become GTAs: best of luck! You can do it!
Women’s Studies Activism
By Jessika Seekatz, Undergraduate Student

Feminist activism can be intimidating, especially for those of us who subscribe to more radical goals of overthrowing the heteronormative, capitalist, militarized patriarchy. A daunting task indeed. I have learned to find comfort in the baby steps.

The Andrea O'Donnell Womyn’s Outreach Association hosts Take Back the Night every year and it is always a great success. The event captures the tradition of creating a safe space for survivors of psychological, emotional, and physical abuse to share their stories. Scripps Cottage radiated with support and love and everyone present could feel the energy in the room. The event started with a march down Campanile Walkway. People present held signs exclaiming things like, “No Means No!” and “We Will Not Be Victims.” The event also hosted the SDSU female a cappella group "Vocal Vixens" and a multitude of guest speakers who discussed the subject of violence and services open to individuals experiencing it. The night closed with a candlelight vigil signifying a light in the darkness, an illumination of hope and healing that filled the evening.

On March 8th 2013, Sigma Beta Lambda Fraternity welcomed my Vagina Monologues sister Kristyl Smith and me to present at a workshop in honor of International Women’s Day. The men of this fraternity, by placing importance on the appreciation of women and their perspectives, play an important role in the fight for equality. I was honored to have the opportunity to speak with the group and see the women in the workshop feel open to conversations centered on racial and sexualized stereotypes of women. Further, this workshop showed that all people are capable of making connections in spite of perceived differences. One woman in the group asked Kristyl and me about the differences in our feminist perspectives as white and black women and how that translates into the ways in which we find strength. We were also able to discuss the ways culture plays into the many feminisms. Learning to interrogate our own privilege and being honest in our dialogue seems to happen with ease when we can enter a room with an open mind and the willingness to support each other the great struggle.

Certificate Program in Women’s Studies

SDSU’s Certificate in Women’s Studies through Open University offers additional training for individuals in any field who would like to increase their understanding of women in the humanities, health, and social sciences, as well as become proficient in understanding basic theories that are unique to the discipline. The program provides diverse ways to develop knowledge of how women have lived, worked, thought, resisted, created knowledge, and engaged in activism. In addition, it offers discipline-specific expertise from faculty with a variety of backgrounds, as well as the experience of interdisciplinary studies. It is ideal for teachers, health care workers, multi-cultural social service agency employees, community activists, and others who are concerned about and involved in a vast array of issues and concerns relevant to women’s lives historically and currently. The Certificate Program consists of twelve units. Please visit our website or contact us via email for a brochure and further information: tbrock@mail.sdsu.edu.

Applications are available at the College of Extended Studies or you may call (619) 594-6255. Website: http://www.ces.sdsu.edu.
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