As interim chair, it is my privilege to write the “Message” for this newsletter. I would like to start by commenting on the successful revival of the International Women’s Day event held on March 8, 2009 at SDSU. The Department of Women’s Studies in partnership with the Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies hosted a symposium titled, “Perspectives on Gender in Muslim Societies.”

Although the event was held on a Sunday afternoon, we had an audience of 130 people. The speakers were Prof. Suzanne Brenner from UCSD who spoke on gender, Islam and democratization in Indonesia, Prof. Lara Deeb from University of California, Irvine who spoke on women’s public participation, sexual rights, and social change in the Hizbullah community in southern Beirut, Lebanon, and Prof. Nayereh Tohidi from Cal State, Northridge who gave an enlightening historical overview of the women’s movement in the Middle East, concluding her talk with the situation of women in Iran. We are very thankful to the Cross Cultural Center and the Master’s in Liberal Arts program for their cosponsorship through valuable monetary contributions!

It is my sincere hope that this event will be institutionalized and the department will celebrate International Women’s Day annually.

We are excited that we have participated in the election of the nation’s first African-American President! With the impressive showing of Hilary Clinton, and the participation of Sarah Palin in national politics, women have even more hope to strive for this highest office. To commemorate these events, our Colloquium Series has focused on Women in Politics. This series, under...
Faculty News

For **Susan E. Cayleff**, the 2008-09 academic year has been exciting, exhausting, and rejuvenating all at once. In addition to sending *Keepers of the Path*...a history of Naturopathic healing off to the press, she has also submitted *Which Door am I?...* about gendered images in public places. She is the campus co-chair of SafeZones/SDSU a new and vibrant campus-wide initiative that works to make SDSU welcoming, informative, supportive, proactive, and safe for LGBTQ students, faculty, staff, and administrators. In addition, students from her Women in American History classes and her graduate level seminars are doing community-based service learning internships with SafeZones/SDSU; the Young Women's Studies Club (YWSC) at Hoover High School; the San Diego County Women’s Hall of Fame (WHoF); the Women’s History Museum and Educational Center and the campus-based Women’s Resource Center. Organizing all of this is demanding and necessitates much juggling, but is more than worth it. Each of these endeavors thrives on the commitment and energies of Women’s Studies graduate student leaders who work with each collaboration. She is working on two related community-based projects: with students from her *Narrating Women’s Lives* (Fall 08) graduate seminar. The first is “Girls’ Voices” that will record the lives, gender consciousness and aspirations of select girls within the YWSC. The second is also with graduate students from that same class. This collective project is integrally involved in researching the life stories of the WHoF inductees and producing video vignettes about their lives.

**Elizabeth Colwill’s** current research focuses upon gender, and the intersecting histories of slavery, revolution, and colonialism. She is on a research leave this year, mining eighteenth-century correspondence, government decrees, and notarial records as the basis of a social historical monograph that explores the transformation of gender and racial identities in revolutionary Saint Domingue (later Haiti). An essay drawn from her research in France, entitled “Fêtes de l’hymen, fêtes de la liberté: Matrimony and Emancipation in Saint-Domingue,” appeared this January in *The World of the Haitian Revolution*. In November 2008, she presented a paper on colonial narratives and gendered pathways to citizenship during the Haitian Revolution at the annual meeting of the Haitian Studies Association. Her trip to Haiti, funded in part by a Carstens-Wertz grant from the Department of Women’s Studies, provided a unique opportunity to explore the imprint of history on modern-day Haiti. Last spring she had the opportunity to lead a new graduate seminar on Gender and the African Diaspora, while serving as Undergraduate Advisor and Internship Director for the Women’s Studies Department. Her article on feminist pedagogy and interdisciplinary teaching, “Teaching without a Mask? Collaborative Teaching as Feminist Practice,” co-authored with Professor Richard Boyd, appeared in the Summer 2008 issue of the *NWSA Journal*.

Several research projects in which **Anne Donadey** had been involved in recent years have come to fruition. She guest edited the latest special issue of the journal *L’Esprit créateur* (Winter 2008) on renowned Algerian woman writer Assia Djebar. She also had an article in that issue, “Introjection and Incorporation in Assia Djebar’s *La Femme sans sépulture*.” Another article, “African American and Francophone Postcolonial Memory: Octavia Butler’s *Kindred* and Assia Djebar’s *La Femme sans sépulture*” was published in the journal *Research in African Literatures* in fall 2008, as was an essay in *The French Review* on a French Caribbean writer, “The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: Irony and Identity in Maryse Condé’s *Heremakhônô*.” An essay on a male Caribbean feminist author, “Beyond Departmentalization: Feminist Black Atlantic Reformulations of Outre-Mer in Daniel Maximin’s *L’îsîle soleil*,” also appeared in 2008 in the *International Journal of Francophone Studies*. Anne has been teaching Women in Literature and the undergraduate and graduate feminist theory courses for Women’s Studies, as well as courses on European colonial history, Algerian decolonization, and critical methods for the programs in European studies and French (her other unit). She remains active as chair of the University committee on Diversity, Equity and Outreach. Finally, she was recently elected to a five-year term as executive committee member of the Division on Francophone Literatures and Cultures of the Modern Language Association.

**Huma Ahmed-Ghosh** is currently the interim Chair of the Department of Women’s Studies. She also serves on the Advisory Boards of the Center for Islamic Studies and the International Security and Conflict Resolution Program. Her research focuses on women in Afghanistan, Islam and feminism, and immigrant Muslim women. More recently she is writing on gendered violence and conflict, as well as on conflict and masculinities. She recently traveled to Sweden and Bali to present her research on the impact of Afghanistan’s conflict on Afghan women’s lives. Her article on this research is forthcoming in the *Journal on International Women’s Studies*. Two other articles on “Feminization of Ageing in India,” and “Widows in India: Issues
of Masculinity and Women’s Sexuality, “have been accepted by the Asian Journal of Women’s Studies and Asian Feminisms. Ahmed-Ghosh teaches courses on women in cross-cultural perspective, gender and Islam, and graduate courses in foundations of feminist scholarship and privilege and oppression. This year she will continue her Travel Study Abroad Program to India with Women’s Studies students. Next year, 2009-2010, Ahmed-Ghosh will be on leave of absence as she has accepted an Endowed Chair’s position in the Women’s Studies program in Brooklyn College, New York.

Anh Hua’s research focuses on Asian and Black Diaspora women’s aesthetic texts. Combining critical race feminism, cultural studies, diaspora studies, literary and film studies, her interdisciplinary research focuses on personal and collective memory, cultural trauma, identities, home, migration, nationhood, and cultural resistance and transformation by oppressed groups. She is interested in analyzing how women of color and other oppressed groups deploy memory and cultural trauma in their cultural texts (fiction, memoir, film and the visual arts) to understand identities, community, home, displacement, nationhood, and resistance. She is also interested in how women of color create memory narratives in their aesthetic texts to rewrite official history and the nation as a way to work through diverse personal and historical traumas. Recently she has published a book chapter “What We All Long For: Memory, Trauma and Emotional Geographies” in Emotion, Place and Culture, edited by Mick Smith, Joyce Davidson, Laura Cameron, and Liz Bondi. She has also published an article “The Fish Gill” and “Travel and Displacement” in the journal Canadian Women Studies, as well as “Primitive Spectacle in Black Narcissus” in j_spot: Journal of Social and Political Thought. At San Diego State University, she teaches the courses “Sex, Power, and Politics” and “Women and Violence.”

Irene Lara was recently tenured and just celebrated the one-year birthday of her second daughter, Xochitl. As she likes to describe, “2008 was a very productive year for me!” It saw the publication of many of her essays, including: “Goddess’ of the Americas: Beyond the Virtuous Virgen/Pagan Puta Dichotomy” in Feminist Studies, “Tonantulanisma: Re-Membering Tonantzin-Guadalupe in Chicana Visual Art” in Aztlán: A Journal of Chicana Studies, and “Latina Health Activist-Healers Bridging Body and Spirit” in Women and Therapy. She also presented on some of her oral history work with the late healer Madre Sarita at UCSD’s Ethnicity and Indigenous Peoples Conference. As fate would have it, Irene presented on the curandera’s decolonizing healing work the day after her passing. Her co-edited anthology on Chicana, Latina, and indigenous women’s spirituality chugs along, but she hopes to present her essay for the project at the international Gloria Anzaldúa conference in May. “Sensing the Serpent in the Mother: Chicana Spirituality, Sexuality, and Mamihood” creatively brings together her scholarly and motherly passions. Irene is the Undergraduate Advisor and Internship Coordinator this year. She continues to assist with the Feminist Scholarship Colloquia and is proud to have worked with the Association of Chicana Activists, and many departments, to bring the internationally renowned Chicana writer Ana Castillo to SDSU in late February.

After a year of part-time leave, Doreen Mattingly is back at SDSU. In addition to teaching in Women’s Studies, she is doing some work for the College of Arts and Letters, including coordinating international programs and directing an interdisciplinary graduate program: Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences (MALAS). She has also been helping Midge Costanza sort through her records and memories from her years as Special Assistant to President Jimmy Carter. Rumor has it that a book will result one of these days. In her free time she continues to paint and study Spanish. She took two trips to Guatemala this year: a summer trip for Spanish immersion and a winter community service learning trip with 11 students from Latin American Studies.

This has been a busy year for Kimala Price, who is the department’s resident political scientist. The 2009 elections sparked lively class discussions in all of her classes, especially her Women, Law and Policy undergraduate course. Hilary Radham Clinton, Sarah Palin, Barack Obama and all of the sexism news commentators provided a lot of fodder for debate. Kim continued her duties as co-chair of the Feminist Research Colloquium Series; the 2008-09 theme is Women, Politics and Activism. With SDSU political scientist Ronnee Schreiber, Kim participated in an SDSUniverse ViewPoint PodCast entitled, “Women in Politics: More Than Just Cosmetic Change?” The podcast can be viewed on the university’s web site. She was also asked by the student-run newspaper, The Daily Aztec, to provide commentary for an article on women and the 2008 elections. Kim continued to work on her research on reproductive justice. Her essay “Teaching about Reproduction, Politics and Social Justice” is forthcoming in the peer-reviewed journal Transformations. In the fall, she taught her new course Reproductive Rights and Justice for the first time. The highlight of her year was attending the Inauguration of President Barack Obama in Washington, D.C. She took lots of pictures that she shared with faculty and students in a lunch presentation.

Lecturer News

Sue Gonda has been awarded Grossmont College’s 2008-09 President’s Leadership Award. She is Professor and Chair of the History Department, co-Chair of College Curriculum, Vice President of the Academic Senate, one of two faculty members on the College-District Relations Task Force, and a member of the College’s new Student Success (Basic Skills) Committee. As Historian at the Women’s History Museum and Educational Center, she curates exhibits, assists grant writing, sits on the Women’s Hall of
Jacki Leak, PsyD is a Cultural Psychologist. She teaches Psychology of Women and Ritual, Myth and the Sacred, and her current interests include the Accessible Technology Initiative and the creation of a fully online version of the Psychology of Women. She recently facilitated “Womenpowerment,” a series of community workshops sponsored by the Malcolm X Public Library.

Barbara Shaver has continued her work as Executive Director of the full service shelter-based agency, Center for Family Solutions, which serves women and their children who are victims of family violence through emergency and transitional shelters, legal and educational services, and violence prevention programs for children, youth, and adults. This year the Center introduced a new program, Healthy Border Women, for victims of violence and other women who are at high risk for HIV/AIDS. In this endeavor she partnered with Dr. Enrique Gomez, M.D. of the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California, whose research has revealed that women living along the border region are at higher risk for HIV/AIDS than women in the general population. She published two articles about homelessness among women who are survivors of violence in Rural Voices and the Formulas for Success: Housing Plus Services in Rural America, a publication of the Housing Assistance Council. She is active in violence prevention and homeless issues in the community, and serves on the state level as a member of the Governor’s California Council on Criminal Justice. She continues to teach Women and Violence, Sex, Power, and Politics, Women in Cross/Cultural Perspective, Women in Modern European History, and Women in United States History on the San Diego and Imperial Valley Campuses of SDSU.

Other lecturers include Mary Kelly, Janet Roberts, Sophia Arredondo, Desire Anastasia, and Lisa Weir.

Theses Completed Spring 2008

Seiko Chiba: “Human Trafficking in Japan: An Analysis of NGO Activism and Discourse”

Chelsea Larson: MA Exam covering Sex Education Frameworks, Educational Environments, and Female Identity Construction


Abby Gondek: “Afro-Brazilian Jewish Women: Caught in the Crossfire”


Kimberly Long: “Gender and Education in the Life Work of Henrietta Szold”

Michelle Polk Wolff: “Feminist Comix: Saving these fragile pieces of history”

Lena Schmidt: “Crafty Feminism: A Collective of Suggestions for Socially Conscious, Craftively-Inclined, Feminist Elementary School Teachers”

Monica Bradley currently teaches a section of Women’s Studies 101 and 102. She feels that teaching is an honor and that it is inspiring to be able to bring her passion and knowledge of Women’s Studies to a new group of students. She also values the freedom to construct her own course, which allows her to include sections of her own specializations; she enjoys bringing in her oil paintings of drag performers to class to discuss the social construction of gender or her paintings of cyborgs to discuss the politics around science, feminism, and art. Doing so allows her to integrate her passion for art, activism, and teaching into her course and life.

Anjali L. Nath is currently working on a thesis titled “Cultivating Feminist Knowledge through Teaching the War on Terror” and recently shared her research at the Annual Eastern Society for Women in Philosophy (ESWIP) Conference. She is honored to teach Women’s Studies 102 and contribute to a transformation in consciousness of many students. Anjali will finish her M.A. in Women’s Studies this May and is looking forward to an upcoming visit of various feminist grassroots collectives in Kyrgyzstan.

Katie White is enjoying her role as Graduate Teaching Associate while working on her thesis: “Stirring the Pot of Creolization: Women and the Culinary History of Gullah Communities on St. Helena Island, South Carolina.” Her thesis research has taken her to Beaufort County, S.C. twice this past year for an institute on Gullah Studies and most recently to conduct interviews. In April 2009 she will present a paper on Gullah culinary traditions at the National PCA/ACA Conference. She served as a Campus Organizer for the V-Day Campaign at SDSU and is planning more events this spring. She is excited to continue her feminist scholarship and activism as she begins a Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies in Fall 2009.
Bonnie Kime Scott on Sabbatical

Bonnie Kime Scott is enjoying time for research during a spring sabbatical. Near- ing completion is a book tentatively titled “In the Hollow of the Wave”: Virginia Woolf and Modernist Uses of Nature. This applies eco-feminist understandings to Woolf’s life and work. Aspects include modernist writing on nature, popularization of evolution and natural history, landscapes, gardens, cross-species relationships, and environmental holism. This research supports her course on Women and the Environment. A related theoretical piece, “Green,” appeared in Modernism and Theory: A Critical Debate.

Scott has just finished a 3 year term as President of the International Virginia Woolf Society and headed a panel on the negotiation of international property rights at the annual Woolf convention. She has completed articles on “Modernist Women Transforming the Novel” for a Cambridge Companion to Women’s Modernism and “Woolf and Consciousness” for an Oxford History of the Novel. Scott’s 4 volume collection Gender and Modernism was published last summer by Routledge.

In line with a second interest in transnational feminisms, Scott’s recent travels have taken her to Australia and Ecuador. May-June will find her at the University of Queensland, were a mini conference on “Women Writers/Artists and Traveling Modernisms” will be held in conjunction with her visit as George Watson Fellow. She is also busily engaged in plans for the 40th anniversary celebration of Women’s Studies at SDSU.

Esther Rothblum: Publications and Grants

Esther Rothblum completed her study of lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual women’s communities that was funded by a grant from the Lesbian Health Fund of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association. This grant also funded eleven graduate and two undergraduate students to transcribe the interviews. One article based on this research has been published and two other articles are under review.

In 2008 Esther published three articles based on her longitudinal research of same-sex couples in legalized relationships. Due to the media focus on same-sex marriage in California this year, Esther’s work was featured in the New York Times on three occasions as well as in other media.

In 2008 Esther also published two articles that compared transwomen, transmen, and genderqueers with their non-transgender brothers and sisters.

Esther received a University Grants Program grant that will focus on U.S. lesbian and bisexual women’s butch/femme roles in the 21st Century.

Regarding her interest in the new field of fat studies, Esther’s book The Fat Studies Reader (co-edited with Sondra Solovay) is in press with New York University Press and due out in print this fall.

Esther continues to co-author book reviews with graduate students. During this academic year she has submitted five book reviews with twelve graduate students.
Amber Guthrie’s thesis
“To benefit older abused women: An examination of service providers’ views of the domestic violence and elder abuse fields.”

Jenika Heim’s thesis
“Women in the Maul: A Queer Analysis of Northern California-Nevada Women’s Collegiate Rugby”

Katie White’s thesis
“Stirring the Pot of Creolization: Women and the Culinary History of the Gullah on St. Helena Island, South Carolina”

Brodie Reynolds’ thesis
“Stop Reproducing Normal! Challenging Cryobanks, Challenging Reproduction”

Barbara Grossman’s thesis
“Gender Construction in a Wilderness Context: A Case for Wilderness Experience as Feminist Praxis”

Monica Bradley’s thesis
“Imag(in)ing Cyberfeminist Art: A Creative Exploration of TechnoScience Culture”

Mary Long’s thesis
“Plot Versus Pipeline: Animeking Stretches Across The Science Gender Gap”

Marilee Armstrong’s Exam Presentation:
“Women With Physical Disabilities: Focus On Paralysis”

Jessica Far’s Exam Presentation
(three sections)
“Defining Sacred Sexuality...On Our Own Terms”
“Using Feminist Theory to Achieve Liberation”
“Panocha Pláticas: Re-visioning the Role of Activist into Healer”

Monica Bradley thesis committee 09, from left: Professor Betsy Colwill, Monica Bradley (MA Graduate), Brodie Reynolds (MA Graduate), Professor Susan Cayleff, Professor Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, Mary Long (MA Graduate)

Thesis presentation by Katie White

Spring 2009 MA Presentations

Mary Long presenting her thesis
Colloquium Series 2008–2009: Women, Politics, and Activism

Co-chairs: Kimala Price and Anh Hua

Events held from September to April broadly addressed the topic of “Women, Politics, and Activism.” All events were free and open to the public. The audience benefitted greatly from a wide array of speakers, and many thanks go to Kimala Price and Anh Hua for their hard work in co-chairing this year’s colloquium series. The series ended with the 2009 Scholarship Lecture and Awards Presentation where Women’s Studies faculty presented scholarships to deserving undergraduate and graduate students. This was followed by a culminating lecture by Senator Christine Kehoe of the 39th California State Senate entitled “Nurturing Future Leaders: Challenges and Opportunities for Women in Politics” where she encouraged more women to consider becoming active in politics and government. Stay tuned for information about next year’s departmental colloquium series!

Fall 2008

September 17
Women in the Global City: Feminist Engagements with Urban Development in India
Speaker: Kalyani Menon-Sen

October 22
A Roundtable Discussion on Women and the Election
Speakers: Ronnee Schreiber
Amy Denhart

November 19
Feminist Research and Activism in the 21st Century
Speakers: Susan E. Cayleff
Oliva Espín
Bonnie Kime Scott

Spring 2009

February 17
Feminist Inter-Religious Dialogue and Ecofeminism
Speaker: Rosemary Radford Ruether

February 26
A Conversation with Ana Castillo
Speakers: Ana Castillo
Irene Lara

March 8
Perspectives on Gender in Muslim Societies
Speakers: Suzanne Brenner
Lara Deeb
Nayereh Tohidi

March 25
A Dialogue about Feminism and Politics
Speakers: Jennifer Fitzgerald
and M.A. Students:
Nicholas Franco
Melissann Herron
Simarjeet Sahota

April 23
Scholarship Event
Oliva Espín presenting the Oliva Espín Graduate Student Scholarship to M.A. students Christina Arrington and Pamela Libed

Complete List of Honorees for 2009 Scholarship Lecture

Betty Nesvold Scholarship: Mandy Lenham
Andrea O’Donnell Memorial Scholarship: Carolina Prado
Joanne Davis Scholarship in Women’s Studies: Dalinda Beatrez
Phyllis Hall Graduate Student Scholarship: Joni Redmond
Oliva Espín Graduate Student Scholarship: Christina Arrington and Pamela Libed
Tracee Parsons Memorial Graduate Student Scholarship: Anjali Nath
Undergraduate Research Paper Award: Irina Chukhray

Carstens/Wertz Graduate Student Sisterships:
Christina Arrington, Kimberly Burke,
Nicholas Franco, Jessica Nare

Deb Pedersdotter Scholarships:
Shannon Reed, Julianne Haitz, Lauren Holland, Joni Redmond, Simarjeet Sahota

Outstanding Graduating Senior and her Most Influential Faculty:
Shannon Reed and Professor Doreen Mattingly
The Andrea O’Donnell Women’s Resource Center (WRC) at San Diego State University (SDSU) is named in honor of Andrea O’Donnell, a Women’s Studies major and Resource Center student leader/activist who was tragically murdered by her boyfriend in 1995. Andrea was an amazing role model and someone whose memory and legacy the WRC strives to honor.

While many schools claim official Women’s Resource Centers (with permanent spaces and paid staff), the WRC at SDSU is a student organization. The WRC aims to provide a safe, nonsexist environment in which students can study, relax, and learn on campus. The center provides free, accessible information, resources, and referrals regarding women’s health, body image, eating disorders, sexuality, and other gender-related issues faced by the SDSU community. Additionally, the WRC works to raise awareness about sexism and its consequences and works toward the eradication of violence, abuse, and all forms of sexist oppression. This is achieved in large part through the organization of various educational and consciousness-raising events. These events include Love Your Body Day, Take Back the Night, and Bridging the Gap High School Conference (for pregnant teens/mothers, their loved ones, teachers, and guidance counselors).

Currently, the WRC is battling for a permanent space on campus. While the WRC has been an active student organization for decades, we are still considered just a student organization. Basically, this means we have the same limits on funding, resources, and office space as any other organization or club (including, for instance, the Chess Club). This semester, the WRC is sharing an office with five other organizations, none of which are specifically focused on women’s rights or empowerment. Each organization has a right to space, but on a campus where sexual assaults are far from rare, the WRC needs a permanent space, a center, rather than maintaining a club or organization-like status. If, for instance, a woman has just been raped, she needs a confidential, safe, secure space to seek aid and crucial resources, not a tiny office adjoined to the Bowling Alley where members of five other organizations can interrupt at any time.

As such, we are currently working with the LGBTSU on a proposal for a permanent Women’s Resource Center. We hope this Center will be part of SDSU for the rest of its existence, serve to empower women, provide essential resources, and create more avenues for women’s leadership. Also, to encourage the administration to take seriously our plight, we have decided to change the name of the WRC so that the school can no longer claim a Women’s Resource “Center” when no such center exists.

Along with the WRC, SDSU houses other important women-centered organizations and clubs such as VOX (Voices for Planned Parenthood), AChA (Association of Chicana Activists), Gamma Rho Lambda (the lesbian and bisexual sorority), and others. We all work together in making sure SDSU continues to be a safe, open environment for all women and men while encouraging female empowerment and leadership. If you are interested in learning more about how you can support the WRC and its campaign for a permanent space on campus, please contact us at wrc_sdsu@yahoo.com.
SafeZones/SDSU: Implementing a LGBTQ Social Justice Program on Our Campus

By Susan E. Cayleff, Professor

In the spring of 2008 a coalition of students, faculty, staff, and administrators met to brainstorm how to create a Safe Zones program at SDSU. This was fueled by a series of instances where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Questioning people and their allies (LGBTQ) were harassed and bullied. Ours is a social justice agenda that seeks to educate the campus and enrich a climate of inclusive diversity. These programs exist in other colleges and universities nationwide and all have the same aim: to make the campus welcoming, supportive, proactive and safe for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) people and their Allies.

A grant from the President’s Leadership Fund provided resources to begin our work. In just over a year we have established SafeZones/SDSU and implemented many key elements. These include: a steering committee comprised of faculty, staff, students and administrators who advise and guide our development. These people are from Counseling and Psychological Services, Residential Life, Public Safety, The Cross-Cultural Center, Office of Diversity; faculty from Women’s Studies and European Studies; and student representatives from Pride at State, the LGBT Center, and Gamma Rho Lambda, the alternative women’s sorority.

Safe Zones programs needed a recognizable logo that designated an individual who has completed the Safe Zones Training. So, a campus-wide competition yielded a student-designed logo to represent the Program on campus, on the web and on the stickers displayed by those trained. A pamphlet that describes the Program in detail is available at the Cross-Cultural Center, Counseling and Psychological Services, Student Health, Public Safety, and many departments and student-run groups and centers campus wide.

Safe Zones provides the perfect opportunity for student involvement and leadership. To date 35 undergraduate students have earned Women’s Studies course credit through community-based service learning (CBSL). Students in two General Education classes devote 20 hours each to furthering the development of SafeZones. A cultural competency-training handbook for these CBSL students was created so that they can interact effectively with all members of the SDSU community. Since fall 2008 CBSL students and Women’s Studies interns have been tabling at Aztec Center to inform the campus community about SafeZones/SDSU. So far three training sessions have occurred and more will be scheduled next year.

Students, undergraduate and graduate, were central to the creation of a web site that details all aspects of our program. It includes: a history of SafeZones Programs nationally; in-depth local and national community resource lists; a listing and description of all courses included in the newly approved Gay and Lesbian Studies minor; and an annotated bibliography of books, films and articles, and web sites that explore and value the experiences of LGBTQ people.

We are building bridges with LGBTQ organizations in the larger San Diego community and planning new initiatives to further our on-campus mission. Please see our web site: http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu if you would like more information about SafeZones/SDSU. You will find registration information for future training sessions, contact information, and a community of LGBTQ people and their allies eager for your involvement and support.

Susan E. Cayleff, Ph.D. and Carrie Sakai, PsyD. of Counseling and Psychological Services are campus co-chairs of SafeZones/SDSU.

Degrees Awarded in 2008

By Kirstin Oesterle, M.A. 1st Year

On May 23, 2008 the Department of Women’s Studies awarded 13 students with bachelor’s degrees. They include:

Ayari Aguayo
JoLina Bild
Michelle Burgard
Adriane Fleming
Rebecca Goodman
Lauren Martin
Christe Miller
Kymeshia Morris
Lindsay Myman
Stephanie Slane
Stacey Trujillo
Shannon Upchurch
Kim Tran

honored with the Outstanding Women’s Studies Graduating Senior Award; selected Dr. Deboleena Roy as her most influential professor

Eight students were awarded Master’s degrees. They include:

Sheana Director
Falayla Franck
Michelle Garvey
Abby Gondek
Jenika Heim
Chelsea Larson
Kimberly Long
Lena Schmidt

After 39 years within the academy of San Diego State University, the Women’s Studies Department continues to celebrate the success of its graduates. The 2009 commencement ceremony will be held on Friday, May 22, immediately following the College of Arts and Letters ceremony (which begins at 4 p.m.). Congratulations to the classes of 2008 and 2009!
Graduate Students: Connecting Academics to Activism
By Jessica Nare and Joni Redmond, M.A. 1st Years

Every year, the San Diego Women’s Hall of Fame inducts several outstanding women into its ranks. An offshoot of the San Diego County Women’s History Museum, its mission is to honor women who have improved the lives of San Diegan women and to bring awareness of their monumental achievements and contributions. The induction takes place at a ceremony that is co-hosted by the San Diego State University Department of Women’s Studies, the San Diego County Women’s History Museum and Educational Center, The Commission on the Status of Women, and The Women’s Center, University of California, San Diego.

This year, six SDSU graduate students used their academic skills from a Women’s Studies Course, Narrating Women’s Lives, taught by Professor Susan E. Cayleff, to work with the Women’s Hall of Fame and the inductees individually. KB Bowman, Nick Franco, Mekila Martin (an M.A. student in the History department), Jessica Nare, Kirstin Oesterle, and Joni Redmond participated in the lengthy process. The process included: nominations, research on the lives of the inductees, interviews of each inductee on camera, the selection of interview parts to appear in vignettes about the inductee’s life to be shown at the event, and writing a narrative which appeared in the event’s program.

The six phenomenal women inducted in the Women’s Hall of Fame were inducted in five different categories.

Joan Arrington Craigwell, a “Trailblazer,” is a highly decorated Vietnam Veteran and a devoted counselor to veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. She has improved conditions for nurses, women, and people of color.

Charlotte Baker, (1855-1936), an “Empowerer of Women,” was San Diego’s first woman physician and the only woman president of the San Diego County Medical Society. Founder of the San Diego YWCA, she worked to eliminate prostitution, led the building of Balboa Park’s Children’s Home, and helped found the San Diego Zoo.

Kate Yavenditti, “Creator of Structural Change,” is a lawyer pioneer in the field of domestic violence. In the 1970s, she devoted her career to advancing pro bono family law services to the disadvantaged, founded the first domestic violence restraining order clinic, and was a co-founder of County’s Task Force on Domestic Violence.

Marisa B. Ugarte, “Creator of Structural Change,” is the founder and executive director of the nonprofit Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, which strives to “preserve the dignity and well being of commercially and sexually exploited women and children through prevention, intervention and education.”

Edith C. Dabbs, “Builder of Multicultural Understanding,” taught ESL and citizenship classes from 1956 to 2003 in the Continuing and Adult Education Division of the San Diego Community College District. She has devoted decades to the San Diego Woman’s Club.

Li-Rong Lilly Cheng, a “Cultural Guardian” for contributing to the maintenance and integrity of her community, is a Professor of Communicative Disorders at San Diego State University. She has received rewards and keynote speaking honors for her expertise in disorders of language in multilingual populations.

Complete List of Honorees for 2008 Scholarship Lecture

Betty Nesvold Scholarship: Julie Jelf
Andrea O’Donnell Memorial Scholarship: Andrea Fields
Phyllis Hall Graduate Student Scholarship: Heidi Kone

Oliva Espin Graduate Student Scholarship: Lisa Covington and Natasha Douglas
Joanne Davis Scholarship in Women’s Studies: Kim Tran
Carstens/Wertz Graduate Student Sistership: Dalal Alfares
Susan K. Weber Graduate Scholarship: Michelle Garvey

Deb Pedersdotter Scholarships:
Fall 2007: Dalia Pimentel, Cynthia Ramirez, and Cynthia Reid
Spring 2008: Chanine Adams, Holly Korail, Alicia Raya, and Casey Vidovich

Outstanding Graduating Senior and her Most Influential Faculty:
Kim Tran and Debolenna Roy
Undergraduate Spotlight
By Ashley Daigle, Women’s Studies Major

With the end of my undergraduate career fast approaching, I am constantly confronted with people questioning what I will do after graduation. I respond by explaining that one of the wonderful things about obtaining a degree in Women’s Studies is that the knowledge gained can be used in any career. It is for this very reason that I want to go on to teaching at the high school level; I want to incorporate some of the concepts addressed in our Women’s Studies courses into the general curriculum. I chose to major in Women’s Studies after taking only two courses in the field because the information I learned through these classes was more fulfilling to me than the courses I had taken in any other discipline. The aspects of Women’s Studies that initially drew me in were the relevance of the concepts across all fields and how it challenges each student to question the concepts and ideas we have grown up learning through the media, educational system, our family, and peer groups. In our classes, we are taught not to accept what we read as fact, but are instead asked to analyze why it was written and what implications it had and continues to have on our society.

While each class I have taken has been enlightening in its own way, the most powerful learning experiences I have had were a direct result of the many opportunities for involvement within the community the program provides. The opportunity to mentor with the Young Women’s Studies Club at Hoover High School is my most memorable experience as a Women’s Studies major. Through this Club, I have had the opportunity to mentor young women and men from many diverse backgrounds about issues such as relationship violence, the portrayal of women in the media, and preparation for college and life after high school. Working with these students has impacted me both personally and professionally by bringing to life the concepts taught in my classes and in helping me to better focus my future career goals of becoming an educator.

Between the information covered in the classes, the opportunities to see the concepts played out in society, and the network of professors who are genuinely intent on helping their students to succeed, majoring in Women’s Studies has been a more empowering experience than I ever expected to have in college. I am looking forward to furthering my education in Women’s Studies and Secondary Education in graduate school so that I may continue to grow in my own understanding of the issues women face and to gain more experience in sharing that knowledge with others.

Over 100 students currently major or minor in Women’s Studies. For information on the major/minor or to learn more about the undergraduate program, contact Professor Irene Lara at ilara@mail.sdsu.edu.

GTA Experience
By Katie White, M.A. 2nd Year

The Women’s Studies department affords graduate students entering their second year of study the unique option to apply to teach a section of WMNST 101 or 102 autonomously. Many graduate students worldwide have the opportunity to assist with teaching, but very few are named instructors of record, which sets the program at SDSU apart. It is an honor to be among those selected as Graduate Teaching Associates (GTA) for the 2008-2009 academic year and, each day I step in front of the classroom, plan a lesson, grade a paper, or hold office hours, I am grateful for the experience. In the past two semesters I have learned a great deal about the logistics of teaching, but I have also learned a tremendous amount from my students. A 9 a.m. class sounded like torture at the beginning of this process, but my students have helped me realize the energy that can come from loving your job. My fellow GTAs and faculty mentors have been another source of inspiration, providing consistent support, conversation, pedagogical ideas, and even remedies for problems that emerge. Processing in a feminist space is another excellent aspect of the GTA experience, which has only served to enhance my two years in the program.

Over 100 students currently major or minor in Women’s Studies. For information on the major/minor or to learn more about the undergraduate program, contact Professor Irene Lara at ilara@mail.sdsu.edu.
An Academic Family: Reflections of M.A. First Year Students
By Melissann Herron (Co-Editor) & Jenna Stephenson, M.A. 1st Years

As San Diego State’s Women’s Studies Department prepares for 40th Anniversary celebrations, the Master’s class of 2010 prepares for the end of their first year of graduate school. This group of 12 students represents diverse locales, academic interests, and backgrounds. While individuals chose SDSU for different reasons, all agree that the decision to enroll in graduate school in the nation’s oldest (established in 1970!) Women’s Studies program was a good one.

With a wide array of departmental class options to choose from and support for academic interests outside of the department (as Women’s Studies itself is interdisciplinary), the Master’s program offers students an opportunity to fashion their own unique programs of study. Added to this, the Women’s Studies Department at SDSU stands alone in offering students the opportunity to apply to teach their own autonomous introductory classes in their second year, an invaluable experience for students interested in pursuing a teaching career.

Yet, the first-year cohort’s satisfaction with the program goes beyond unique departmental opportunities. As Nick Franco says, “I couldn’t be happier with how our cohort has developed and bonded. It was a pleasant surprise and reaffirmed my choice to come here.” While students overall express a satisfaction with their undergraduate experience, all remain somewhat awed by the almost instant bond that formed between cohort members. Joni Redmond adds to Franco’s statement, “I think our cohort is one of mutual respect and is supportive of each other. I enjoy spending time with everyone, and I’m glad to be on this intellectual journey together.”

Graduate school is an opportunity very few are privileged to experience, but it is also an exhausting and extremely stressful time for students. Trying to fit in a few minutes of free time, a workout, or even five hours of sleep often seems like a fruitless endeavor. On top of all this, in coming to graduate school, one leaves everything behind—friends, family, jobs, security—and moves to a new place to embark on a solitary journey to higher education.

Usually, walking into class on the first day is a terrifying moment—one knows no one—but for us, this was not the case. As Jenna Stephenson explains, “In August, I received an e-mail about a meet-and-greet at Melissa’s apartment. I expected a brief and awkward event; however, four hours later, I remember feeling that my classmates were going to play a huge part in my happiness in the program. As we had sat in a circle that evening getting to know each other, our common experience in dealing with feminist resistance and the thrill of having the opportunity to pursue our passion bonded us. Our cohort seemed to have an instant bond, an intellectual chemistry I hadn’t expected.”

In the end, the cohort will graduate and disburse to new jobs, locales, and PhD programs across the nation; yet that bond will glue us together. Already, we talk about guest lecturers in future classes (when we’re the professors), and tired or not, we look forward to dragging ourselves out of classrooms, off of couches (where all we do is read) to weekly gatherings, to feminist events, even to work on collaborative projects. We left one family behind and were fortunate enough to find another. We look forward to meeting next year’s cohort and wish them the same fortune.

New LGBT Minor at SDSU
By Kimberly Burke, M.A. 1st Year

Fall semester of 2009 at San Diego State University will mark the inception of the LGBT Studies minor. Program advisor and Women’s Studies professor, Esther Rothblum, says that there has been talk for years of putting together an LGBT minor. Two years ago, that talk turned to action as Dr. Rothblum, along with other faculty members, began the paperwork to make the LGBT Studies minor a reality. The interdisciplinary minor in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Studies will consist of a minimum of 15 units of courses ranging from Gay and Lesbian Literature to Media and Sexuality. This program aims to analyze the rise and influence of LBGT studies in the U.S. and the world through the use of theoretical, historical, psychological, political, and cultural constructions of sexuality and gender identities.

America Islas, a second year student at SDSU majoring in psychology, has expressed interest in the LGBT Studies minor. America believes that the minor will help her better understand the mental health issues that are specific to LGBT communities and that she will be able to use knowledge about sexual identity, gender, and sexual orientation in her future career of psychology. Justin Knepper is a graduate student who plans on minoring in LGBT Studies. He hopes to use his academic involvement with LGBT issues as a bridge to political and social activism. Indeed, Dr. Rothblum states one of the goals for the minor “is to propose and advocate for laws, regulations, policies and ethical issues regarding LGBT communities and organizations.” The creation of an LGBT Studies minor at SDSU is part of a growing trend within U.S. academies of recognizing LGBT issues as a specialized field distinct from yet inclusive of other disciplines.
the guidance of Dr. Kimala Price and Dr. Anh Hua, organized numerous workshops, lectures and symposia on the topic to packed audiences that created intense debates and discussions. Kalyani Menon-Sen, a feminist researcher and activist from India, kicked off the series with her talk on gender, slums, and urban planning in India. Ronnee Schreiber, from the Political Science Department, gave us a brilliant analysis of right-wing women’s groups in the USA. Other fascinating speakers were Amy Denhart from Planned Parenthood, Rosemary Radford Ruether, a feminist activist theologian, Ana Castillo, an internationally acclaimed poet and novelist, and Jennifer Fitzgerald, a retired professor from Queen’s University in Belfast, now living in the San Diego area, who talked about an early Irish activist from the Revolutionary Era.

Last semester I taught Women’s Studies 601, Foundations of Feminist Scholarship. This gave me the perfect opportunity to welcome the entering graduate class and to come to know them. This class of 12 students is a diverse, motivated, enthusiastic, and extremely bright group of individuals. Under the stewardship of Dr. Susan E. Cayleff, the graduate student advisor, our graduate program continues to thrive. The past few years have seen a 100 percent acceptance rate to Ph.D. programs of our M.A. students. Many of our M.A. students have gone on to teach in community colleges and join activist organizations. We are extremely proud of the successes of our students.

Simultaneously, Dr. Irene Lara, our undergraduate advisor, has done an excellent job this year in mentoring the undergraduates and encouraging students to join the Women’s Studies family. We are thrilled to announce that we have nearly 100 undergraduate major and minor students.

Currently we are in the midst of putting together an exciting program for 2010 to celebrate 40 years of Women’s Studies at SDSU! The Department will offer a range of stimulating events ranging from monthly colloquia on the theme of Feminist Futures, to a workshop on Women, Holistic Health, and the Humanities, along with films and parties! We are also planning the launch of a feminist research center, the Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Women and Gender, in September 2010. The success of this Center will depend on collaborative research between many departments on campus and institutions nationally and internationally. Most importantly, the success will be determined by our fund raising efforts. Through this newsletter we are sending out an appeal to the community to support us through generous donations to create an excellent interdisciplinary feminist research center. Please refer to Bonnie Scott’s article on the 40th anniversary in the newsletter for our plans.

Our students and faculty continue to benefit from liberal donations to enhance research, subsidize fees for graduate students, attend conferences, and spend on special projects in our department, which would otherwise not have been possible. We are appreciative of and very grateful to Deb Carstens, Deb Pedersdotter, Oliva Espin, Susan Cayleff, Bonnie Zimmerman, Barbara Watson, Kathleen Jones and Phyllis Allen for sustaining the department through their continued monetary support and faith in us.

The past year has been an interesting year in trying to adjust to the loss of a very valued faculty member, Deboleena Roy, to Emory University. We wish her all the best in her new location in life and region. Her presence is missed, but we are also delighted to have a new faculty member on board, Anh Hua. You can read more on her in this issue.

In conclusion, I cannot thank Teddi Brock, our Administrative Coordinator, enough for all her help and mentoring that has made this temporary transition to Chair possible and enjoyable.
The fifth annual Women Peacemaker’s Conference, Crafting Human Security in an Insecure World, was held at the University of San Diego’s Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice from Sept. 24-26, 2008. This international working conference invited scholars, survivors of gender-based violence in war and post-conflict settings, peacemakers and actors in the peace-building process, and students from around the globe to gather to discuss ways to end the global acceptance of gender violence as a tool of warfare. Former U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, The Honorable Louise Arbour, opened the conference, declaring human security a necessity to life and charging the delegation with addressing gender violence as a weapon of warfare and confronting the mindset that allows it to perpetuate.

Panels and working discussion groups focused specifically on the experiences of delegates and presenters who work “on the ground” in affected regions as policy makers and monitors for global entities such as the United Nations, as well as non-government organizations and as individual actors and survivors. The recurring theme was that, although policy and international laws are in place to address gender violence in conflict areas, little is done to enforce them. Women from areas currently under siege discussed the impotence of international legislation which has been virtually ignored and rendered merely symbolic, such as United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace, and Security. These resolutions call for mainstreaming women into the peace-building process and call upon all parties in armed conflict to respect the rights of women and children, goals that are not only poorly enforced but about which governments and peacekeeping forces know little.

The conference was not without stories of success and hope. Attendees were introduced to Liberian Woman Peacemaker, Leymah Gbowee, of the Women, Peace and Security Network, and to her amazing story of a victory that brought her country to peace. Caucuses for Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and South and Southeast Asia discussed tactics and their relative effectiveness in real world settings. Viewpoints from the military, government, NGO, and private actors contributed to the open working-session discussions, bringing a holistic perspective of the detrimental effects of the practice of sexual violence as a weapon of war and destabilization of societies.

Without doubt, the greatest success was the joining of women from around the world in the pursuit of lasting solutions to the systemic sexual violence that targets women and children in times of extreme peril and upheaval. The shared experiences of these women melded with the reports of efforts by professional women as advocates and agents for change. They formed one voice that demands the end of sexual violence as a tool of war and calls for justice against those who perpetuate such practices. The
Last Lecture Honoree, Dr. Patricia Huckle

By Stevie Seibert, Co-Editor, M.A. 1st Year

This year’s Third Annual Henry L. Janssen Last Lecture Series honored our very own Dr. Patricia Huckle, Emerita Professor of Women’s Studies. The goal of the Last Lecture, or the lecturer in this case, is to pass on the “lasting” wisdom of an esteemed life. As the 2009 Distinguished Last Lecture Honoree, Dr. Huckle gave a lecture titled “The Crooked Path: Living Life Forward.”

As her lecture title indicates, Dr. Huckle’s path to the here and now has been “a series of detours and roundabouts.” After returning to school as a single mother and earning her Ph.D. at the University of Southern California in Urban Studies, she was hired on at San Diego State University (SDSU). During her time at SDSU, she has held many different positions in administrative and teaching capacities. Looking back on her accomplishments at SDSU, Dr. Huckle is not so much proud of one identifiable contribution, but of her participation in a “time of tremendous change.”

With her background in social activism and the Women’s Movement, Dr. Huckle pioneered a sexual harassment policy on campus to address the lack of recourse for women when she arrived at SDSU in 1975. The community of “nervy” women that Dr. Huckle mingled with provided a support system not so different from the bridges that we are still trying to build and preserve now. From her background as a professor of Women’s Studies with a specialization in law and politics, Dr. Huckle recognizes that challenging popular culture’s construction of women is a formidable obstacle for future generations.

Currently, Dr. Huckle is the SDSU Fulbright advisor. After receiving her own Fulbright grant in 2002 to go to Oaxaca, Mexico, she felt pulled to this position. She says that her “heart is in Oaxaca.” The life changing opportunity of living abroad is one that Dr. Huckle wants as many students as possible to experience. Though she is said to be retiring, she has definite plans to stay through the next year of Fulbright applications.

Thank you Dr. Huckle, for all your years of dedication to social movements, our university, and the Women’s Studies Department!

Dr. Huckle is trying to assemble a Celebration Book out of the personal writings and experiences of Women’s Studies alumni for our upcoming 40th anniversary. If you are interested in contributing, please contact her via email at: huckle@mail.sdsu.edu.

Women Peacemakers Conference published summary of these discussions and events can be found online at http://peace.sandi-ego.edu/events/womenpeace/info.php.

There are many moments in life that we acknowledge as noteworthy, momentous, or profound. But if we are paying attention and are lucky, there will also be a handful of rare points in time that signify the precise instants in which we were changed forever, in which the path to our destiny veered inexorably and undeniably. This was my experience as an undergraduate student privileged to attend the 2008 Women Peacemakers Conference at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. I was/ am awed by the caliber of the women who attended this meeting and humbled beyond words by their courage, single-mindedness, and determination. These were not women in a textbook or on the television news in some faraway place, and I was not learning of the situation as if it had ended and was now the matter of historical text. These women are living this issue right now, and they are effecting change now. Their message is that there is a moral imperative for us to act if we are able, and I am able. Are you?
The Restoration of Optimism and the Obama Presidency
By Kimala Price, Professor

On the cold, gray morning of January 20th, I was among the throngs of two million well-wishers who gathered on the National Mall to witness the inauguration of Barack Obama. It was nearly impossible to not be swept up by the excitement among the crowd, an excitement that had been steadily building across the nation and the world since the November election. In the weeks that preceded the big day, poll after poll confirmed this widespread public optimism as Obama’s approval rating ranged from 69 to percent.

Part of this optimism is definitely due to the undeniable historic nature of this election. We had just elected the nation’s first African American president—a moment that many older African Americans, including my parents who had experienced segregation firsthand, never thought they would live to witness. Perhaps this moment means that this country is moving that much closer to dealing with its prickly relationship with race.

The optimism is also a sign that the majority of the country was relieved that the Bush Administration was finally coming to an end. After eight years of Republican governance, we were left with two demoralizing wars, compromised civil liberties, a deep recession, and strained relationships with our global neighbors. No opinion poll could have captured the waves of intense boos and jeering of the inaugural crowd when George W. Bush and Dick Cheney entered the grandstand on the U.S. Capitol. If Bush was in denial about his low approval ratings beforehand, his vast unpopularity was acutely revealed that morning, unfiltered and non-diluted.

In conversations with friends, family, students, and colleagues, the same descriptors of Obama repeatedly emerge: smart, eloquent, calm, patient. One Washington insider friend remarked, “It is so refreshing to have a president who does not act like a petulant child….Bush often had a silly grimace on his face whenever he was asked a tough question. [Obama] actually makes thoughtful, insightful comments. He actually knows what he is talking about.” These sentiments reflect a collective optimism that Obama will restore a long-neglected and much-needed sense of civility and intelligence in public life and political discourse.

Even in the midst of our nation’s serious economic crisis, the American public still has strong confidence that Obama’s calm leadership capabilities will usher us into better times. He ran his presidential campaign on the principles of hope and change. He has definitely delivered the hope. Only time will tell if his leadership will truly have a transformative effect on this nation.

Permanency Across Centuries: Collaborative Faculty-Student Publications
By Melissann Herron, Co-Editor, M.A. 1st Year

The Master’s degree in Women’s Studies at San Diego State University is a terminal degree, with a two year time-to-completion. Regardless of future career, this degree is crucial to the education and development of stronger individuals and citizens more capable of working toward necessary social change. While students will go on to diverse careers, publication is important for all, not just those who want to pursue doctoral degrees. Yet, with so little time from start to finish, it can be difficult to navigate the publication and conference processes. Joni Redmond comments, however, “The professors are amazingly willing to take time out of their days to talk to us and give guidance.”

Professor Esther Rothblum is particularly driven to guide students in this process. She says, “Mentoring students to publish is my form of activism. Women are still under-represented when it comes to publishing. It is hard to destroy the published word, so it’s a form of permanency across centuries.” She adds, “I also want to show that publishing is easy and fun. So I try to talk about publishing in classes and invite students to collaborate on book reviews and encyclopedia entries.”

Last year, Transformations published a poster with covers of the books Rothblum reviewed with students, as well as some of the collaborative encyclopedia entries. This year Rothblum once again extended an invitation to Master’s students wishing to collaborate on book reviews.

Several teams worked together to review four books. Kimberly Burke (first author), Nicholas Franco, KB Bowman, and Rothblum reviewed The N Word: Who Can Say It, Who Shouldn’t, and Why by Jabari Asim. Katie White (first author), Jenna Stephenson, Lisa Covington, and Rothblum reviewed Shout Out: Women of Color Respond to Violence by Maria Ochoa and Barbara K. Ige. Anjali Nath (first author), Melissann Herron, Kirstin Oesterle, and Rothblum reviewed War and Terror: Feminist Perspectives by Karen Alexander and Mary Hawkesworth. Finally, Amber Guthrie (first author), Christy Arrington, Kesser Mohammad, and Rothblum reviewed Women in Iraq: The Gender Impact of International Sanctions by Yasmin Hussein Al-Jawaheri. For many, this was the first opportunity to publish, and as Rothblum probably hoped, students are already looking forward to the next chance to write, to publish, and to leave an imprint.
In the last couple of years, Fat Studies has become a growing interdisciplinary field in universities across the United States. Fat Studies looks at the ways in which our society critiques, stereotypes, stigmatizes, and discriminates against fatness and fat bodies. The discipline questions mainstream definitions of beauty and body ideals in American culture; what is considered “healthy” in terms of weight; what being fat means in a society fixated on a standard of thinness; and what the ramifications there are for individuals’ bodies that do not fall within boundaries of “mainstream beauty.” Scholars of Fat Studies come from diverse academic backgrounds, such as the social sciences, health, law, and humanities. These scholars are creating a radical discourse to not only discuss how fat individuals experience institutionalized discrimination, but also to produce methods that combat the stigmatization of being fat and promote a fat positive cultural attitude.

A prominent figure in Fat Studies is our very own Professor Esther Rothblum of the Women’s Studies department at SDSU. Rothblum has been involved in the discipline since the early 1990s, publishing articles that deal with the psychological aspects of being fat and female in a society that over-emphasizes thinness. In addition to publishing articles, she has co-edited the Fat Studies Reader with Sondra Solovey, who is a diversity attorney. The anthology contains scholarly work on a wide range of topics that include cultural stigmas of weight, women’s sexuality and fatness, health and dieting (or not), social inequality and weight oppression, resistance, popular culture and literary representations of fat, and the epidemic of obese youth. The Fat Studies Reader will be ready for publication in fall 2009 and will significantly add to the emerging Fat Studies discourse.

Rothblum is also the editor of the Journal of Lesbian Studies; the journal serves as a form for lesbian scholarship, including interviews, fiction and poetry, art, book reviews, theory, research, and letters to the editor.
Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Women’s Studies at SDSU
By Bonnie Kime Scott, Chair of Women’s Studies

Our 40th Anniversary Celebration, which will commence in September 2009, not only marks a milestone for our department, but also commemorates the birth of Women’s Studies as a discipline. SDSU is the proud home of the first Women’s Studies Department in the nation. Fittingly, the celebration will be local, national and international in scope. We want to use the occasion to get back in touch with alumnae, whether they took a few influential classes or completed the major as a B.A. or an M.A. degree, and to network with our allies in the community. There is still time to put in your word on what you would like to see happening. Here are some anticipated events:

• Kickoff Reception: “How Far We Have Come.” Mingling, with brief panel discussion designed to bring together the Women’s Studies community, past and present. Former faculty and feminist faculty throughout the campus are warmly invited to participate, as are current students and organizations such as the Women’s Resource Center. September 2009.

• 2009–10 Colloquium Series, “Feminist Futures.” Interdepartmental collaboration in such seasonal commemorations as Black History Month and International Women’s Day will provide an important dimension.

• Mini-conference, “Women, Holistic Health and the Humanities.” April 2010, coinciding with our annual scholarship lecture. Topics include: public health approaches to women’s health in a global perspective; education, counseling and social change; reproductive justice and related concerns over sex and sexuality; women reuniting mind/body/spirit, including decolonial perspectives; and environmental justice.

• Love Library exhibit on Women’s Studies at SDSU, in the context of an array of ethnic and racial studies programs and contemporary social movements for racial justice, civil rights, and peace. A sister exhibit focused on community connections is anticipated for the Women’s History Museum.

• Celebratory Dinner involving alumnae, students, present and past faculty, and friends of Women’s Studies in the community. On a Saturday in September 2010. We seek ideas on what would be most attractive as exhibits and activities clustered around this event, to be set in the outdoor atrium of the Arts and Letters Building.

continued on next page
Why We Are “Figuring Them Out”

By Nicholas Franco, M.A. 1st Year
with input from Jeff Bucholtz (M.A. alumnus) and Brodie Reynolds, M.A. 3rd Year

San Diego State University’s Women’s Studies department has students across all disciplines and identity intersections taking an interest in courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In more recent years, male bodies have begun placing themselves in undergraduate classrooms, both challenging and inspiring professors and classmates. This trend has carried over to the Master’s program, where Jeff, Brodie, and I—the only males admitted thus far—have made and are making journeys through these feminist spaces. This article encapsulates, albeit briefly, our responses to my generally posed question, “Why a Women’s Studies Master’s program at SDSU?”

As we began our discussion of what content would be included in this article, there was a clear distinction between how we viewed ourselves in relation to masculinity and manhood. Although we recognized our perceived gender status as men and the resulting privileges and power, none of us closely associate with that gender category and instead embrace (gender) identities such as “queer”; hence my use of “male bodies” instead of “men” in this article.

This (dis)association with masculinity, largely developed at our undergraduate institutions, helped inform our academic and activist pursuits within and toward Women’s Studies. Jeff specifically mentioned how, in his work with domestic violence victims and policies, something was ultimately missing; a “foundation” upon which to base his theoretical and experiential knowledges. For Brodie and me, discovering Women’s Studies, and feminism more generally, placed us in spaces where our identities were not only recognized but flourished. In discovering these missing links and (safer) spaces, the program here at SDSU spoke to our needs. Not only are there the past and present accounts of activism by faculty and students, but the multiplicity of identities supported by the department allows for diversity of thought and soul.

The man question—analyzing how, why, and when men enter feminist spaces—has been a hotly debated topic for decades among feminists and nonfeminists alike. Indeed, each one of us have been approached by our friends and family with “Are you trying to figure them out?” and “What do you expect to do with that degree?” Despite these doubts and concerns, we are confident in our choice of Master’s program. In particular, we wanted to mention our wonderful cohort groups who provided us with an incredible source of motivation and inspiration. Our hope is for more male bodies to also realize their potential and goals through feminism, feminists, and the SDSU Women’s Studies department. The man question—analyzing how, why, and when men enter feminist spaces—has been a hotly debated topic for decades among feminists and nonfeminists alike. Indeed, each one of us have been approached by our friends and family with “Are you trying to figure them out?” and “What do you expect to do with that degree?” Despite these doubts and concerns, we are confident in our choice of Master’s program. In particular, we wanted to mention our wonderful cohort groups who provided us with an incredible source of motivation and inspiration. Our hope is for more male bodies to also realize their potential and goals through feminism, feminists, and the SDSU Women’s Studies department.
Internship Opportunities in Women’s Studies
By Irene Lara, Professor

Undergraduate and graduate Women’s Studies students have the opportunity to participate in the Women’s Studies Internship Program (WMNST598). Students receive academic credit while learning and working for organizations on and off campus. These apprentice-style placements allow students to gain on-site experience in the field of Women’s Studies. Students also write three reflective journals about their experiences throughout the semester. There are eight students participating in internships in spring 2009. The internships entail working 120 hours throughout the semester (8 hours for 15 weeks).

Two students, Kimberly Wright and Natalie McKenna, are interning with the soon to be renamed Women’s Resource Center on campus. In addition to maintaining office hours, participating in weekly meetings, and helping to coordinate all of the WRC events, such as Take Back the Night, they are working with their director, Amber Guthrie, and fellow members, to make the organization a permanent, well-funded center. Natalie is also the Associated Students Council Representative for the WRC.

Having previously volunteered with SDSU’s Safe Zones program as a community based service-learning project, Janelle Fejeran was inspired to become an intern with Safe Zones this semester. Safe Zones, co-coordinated by Women’s Studies Professor Susan Cayleff, “provides an accepting and pro-active environment for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender fluid identified and questioning) students, faculty, staff and administrators and their allies” (http://www.safezones.sdsu.edu/).

Jessica Winet and Brittany Lewis are combining their interests in Women’s Studies and Psychology by interning with Shakti Rising, an "organization providing holistic, gender-specific and trauma-informed services to young women, ages 15–30, who are dealing with multiple issues including substance abuse, body-image issues, interpersonal violence, and depression” (http://www.shaktirisising.org/). Jessica has focused on recruiting young women into the Shakti Transformational Recovery Program, and Brittany’s work has centered on promoting Shakti Rising’s Education and Community Wellness program and enrolling students. She also helped to coordinate a “Love your Body, Love your Life” day of free classes and speakers. Taylor Sonksen is interning with the San Diego Family Justice Center, a resource center for battered and abused women and children. Her initial experiences of sitting in on case intakes with clients and learning about the field in general have provided Taylor knowledge that will be helpful as she considers pursuing a Master’s degree in Social Work.

As an intern with the local office of the Girl Scouts of America, Nicole Peterson is putting her academic training to good use by helping the Girl Scouts—who want their membership to be reflective of the population—gather demographic information in the San Diego/Imperial Valley region. Nicole will be helping the Girl Scouts learn if they are representatively serving ethnic/racial communities in general and the underserved Latina youth community in particular.

Melissann Herron is interning with the Women’s Studies department as the Transformations newsletter co-editor. Her work so far has included gathering quotes for publication costs, recruiting writers, writing articles as necessary, editing all articles submitted, and preparing documents for publication. This newsletter is itself a reflection of her work over the course of the last few months.

As you can see, there is a wide array of learning opportunities available. I encourage you to investigate internship possibilities and consider taking WMNST598 in fall 2009 or spring 2010. For more information, please review “Internships” under the Women’s Studies homepage, http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/wsws/Internships.html, and e-mail Dr. Irene Lara, Internship Coordinator, at ilara@mail.sdsu.edu.

Reflections on Study Trip to South Africa
By Babs Grossman, M.A. 2nd Year

The Alternative Spring Break (ASB) trip to South Africa was a mixture of cultural and historical immersion, academic inquiry, tourism, and service learning. For 10 days, from March 27 to April 8, 2008, students from the Women’s Studies department joined students from the Africana Studies Department, community members, and high school students, on an introductory trip to South Africa. The course focused heavily on the history of race relations in South Africa, and we were all privileged to attend the many apartheid monuments and museums that commemorate the recent struggle to end the apartheid regime. During our fast-paced trip we had time to tour the famous neighborhood of Soweto, visit Cape Town and Johannesburg, and enjoy local music and food.

The course challenged each student to reflect on their own position and complicity in social inequity both through written assignments and through group dynamics. South Africa’s recent apartheid history brought the United States’ ongoing—though more hidden—history of racism to the forefront. As difficult as some discussions were, it was an invaluable experience in addressing race, privilege, and the future of both domestically and abroad. One particular highlight occurred when several students spoke with a woman living with HIV/AIDS who ran a sewing business for other HIV positive women. Her moving speech about the importance of empowerment through projects such as hers left a lasting impression on the students. The ASB was a wonderful and intense experience, and certainly worth the investment.
Yes! I will support the efforts of Women's Studies

Donations to The Department of Women's Studies can help support our many worthy students, research, and community activities. We very much value your continued commitment and generosity. Below are listed areas of need; you are welcome to designate where your contribution should go.

Friends of Women's Studies
We welcome donations of any amount. $40.00 or more and you become a Friend of Women's Studies and receive notices of lectures, colloquia and special events.

Scholarship Funds
We welcome donations of any amount.

Betty Nesvold Scholarship
Awards an annual scholarship to an outstanding Women’s Studies undergraduate scholar.

Andrea O’Donnell Memorial Scholarship
Honors the student whose academic and activist work most closely embodies the contribution of the slain Women’s Studies student leader.

Graduate Student Sisterships
Supports the most deserving incoming graduate students. A $4,000 donation will fund a Sistership. Smaller donations will go toward partial funding.

Faculty Professional Development Fund
Contributions allow faculty to pursue research ideas and conferences not funded through state funds.

Graduate Student Fund
Contributions support graduate students as they conduct research in archives nationwide and travel to conferences to deliver scholarly papers.

International Travel Fund
We have implemented travel/study programs to various countries including South Africa, India, and China. Contributions to this fund will allow increased student participation.

Women’s Studies Events
The department hosts a variety of events each year including our annual Scholarship event, celebrating the accomplishments of Women’s Studies students, Commencement, held each May, and our speakers series, the Feminist Research Colloquia.

Bread and Roses Center
The center envisions bringing to SDSU a rich variety of activists, artists, and scholars recruited from around the world. Your support will help us make this vision possible. Please contact Bonnie Scott at: bkscott@mail.sdsu.edu for further information.

Please make checks payable to: Campanile Foundation, Women's Studies Department and make a note of which fund you support. Send it, along with your contact information including e-mail address, to:

Department of Women's Studies
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-6030

Thank You!
Newsletter Production Team

Faculty Advisor: Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, Interim Chair
Editors: Melissann Herron, 1st Year M.A. Student
    Stevie Seibert, 1st Year M.A. Student
Assisted by: Teddi Brock, Administrative Coordinator
Department Structure: Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, Interim Chair
    Susan Cayleff, Graduate Advisor
    Irene Lara, Undergraduate Advisor
    Teddi Brock, Administrative Coordinator
Graphic Design: Melodie Tune
Department: Department of Women’s Studies
Telephone: 619-594-2952
Web site: www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/wsweb
E-mail: tbrock@mail.sdsu.edu
    Transformations.sdsu@gmail.com
Address: Department of Women’s Studies
    San Diego State University
    5500 Campanile Drive
    San Diego, CA 92182-6030