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A Message from the Chair

By Bonnie Kime Scott, Chair of Women’s Studies

The Department has been alive with activity this year, commemorating the 40th anniversary of this, the oldest Department of Women’s Studies in the nation, and quite likely the world. We have been energized at a time when we might have been deflated by what is now being called the “great recession,” and its impact on education. Large student demonstrations against the budget cuts and compulsory furloughs brought on by the education crisis in California reminded me of the 1970s era. One of the causes we marched for then was women’s rightful place in the curriculum. We insisted that the personal is political, and that community concerns, cutting across normal divisions, belonged in academe. The women’s movement was a popular, grassroots effort, deriving some of its tactics from other initiatives for social change—civil rights, the peace movement, and the Stonewall riots. Other new knowledge took root at SDSU at about the same time as Women’s Studies, in sister departments such as Africana Studies, Chicana and Chicano Studies and Native American Departments. This was a university that dared to introduce difference.
Faculty News

For Susan E. Cayleff, the 2009 academic year was enriching and demanding. She is the campus co-chair of Safe Zones/SDSU, a campus-wide initiative that makes SDSU welcoming, informative, supportive, and safe for all members of the community. Cayleff was awarded the Educator of the Year Award by The LGBTQ Center in Hillcrest, 2008. In addition, her students are doing community-based service learning internships with Safe Zones/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 Outreach Association. Graduate student coordinators’ excellent work is essential to these efforts. She is working on a related research project with several graduate students: “Girls’ Voices” charts the coming-of-age of some YWSC members. She has also completed biographical and popular culture research on Christine Jorgensen, mid twentieth-century entertainer and celebrity, and internationally known transsexual. In April 2010, she will present “Naturopathic Medicine as Cultural Critique,” at the American Association for the History of Medicine, Rochester, MN.

This past year, a professional leave offered Elizabeth Colwill an opportunity to travel to Haiti on two separate occasions. The people who welcomed her there left an indelible imprint both personally and professionally, and introduced her to the contemporary contours of a nation whose history she has studied for over a decade. The impact of those visits is evident in a new article entitled “Gendering the June Days”—a study of the impact of gendered tropes of race and citizenship during the Haitian Revolution on concepts of citizenship—just published in the Spring/Fall 2010 issue of Journal of Haitian Studies. An earlier essay, “Fêtes de l’hymen, fêtes de la liberté: Matrimony, Manhood, and Emancipation in Saint-Domingue,” appeared in fall 2009 in The World of the Haitian Revolution, ed. David Geggus and Norman Fiering (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 2009). She welcomed the opportunity to integrate her experiences in Haiti into a new incarna-

Back row, from left: Esther Rothblum, Anh Hua, Susan E. Cayleff, Doreen Mattingly, Bonnie K. Scott. Front: Teddi Brock

This academic year finds Huma Ahmed-Ghosh away from San Diego. She is currently serving as the Endowed Chair of Women’s Studies at Brooklyn College, N.Y. However, her cross-country move did not stop her from leading the annual Travel Study Abroad to India for SDSU students and community members, which took place between December 29th 2009 and January 16th 2010. She has also been given the position of Guest Editor of the Special Issue on Gender and Islam in Asia for the Journal of International Studies, Vol. 11, no.1 November 2009.

Anh Hua’s research focuses on Anti-Racist Feminism, Diaspora Studies, Cultural Studies, and aesthetic texts (contemporary literature and independent film) by women of color. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on memory, cultural trauma, identities, home, migration, nationhood, and cultural resistance by women of color in Euro-America. Recently, she completed an article entitled “Gathering Our Sages, Mentors and Healers: Women of Color and Narratives of Healing.” She just received the Critical Thinking Grant to do further research in Toronto, Canada, in order to rewrite her Ph.D. dissertation into a book manuscript. At San Diego State University, she teaches: Sex, Power and Politics; Women and Violence; Women’s Experience of Migration; and Women in Asian Societies. She has many interests outside of academia including photography, watercolor painting, drawing, dancing, mountain hiking, swimming, running, writing poetry and fictional stories. She hopes to one day publish a traveling memoir, combining life narratives, war stories, and travel tales of the women in her family, a montage of research, creative writing, autobiographical narratives, poetry and her own paintings and photography.

Irene Lara has been busy teaching several new courses this year: “Women of Color in the U.S.,” a course she designed as a humanities GE course and one she looks forward to teaching again in fall 2010, and the graduate seminar “Feminist Pedagogies.” She presented some of her latest work “Sensing the Serpent in/as the Mother: Chicana Motherhood, Spiritual-

ity, and Sexuality” at El Mundo Zurdo: The
First International Conference on the Life and Work of Gloria E. Anzaldúa at UT San Antonio and plans on using her SDSU Critical Thinking Grant in the Humanities and Social Sciences to visit the Gloria Anzaldúa archive at UT Austin this summer. She continues to co-facilitate “Panocha Pláticas: Healing Sex and Sexuality in Community” workshops, most recently at Cal State San Marcos’ Women’s Center and for SDSU’s Association for Chicana Activists. As a co-chair for the Feminist Scholarship Colloquia, she helped to organize a three-day visit by the luminary woman of color writer Cherrie Moraga and is working on the “Feminist Crossroads: Holistic Health, Healing, and the Humanities” symposium. This academic year was her first as a mentor in the Faculty-Student Mentoring Program, whose mission is to support student engagement and development through undergraduate research, scholarship and creative initiatives. She traveled to U.C. Berkeley’s “Decolonizing the University” conference to introduce and support several of her students who presented on “Curanderas [Healers] in the Academy.” In addition to the undergraduates she is mentoring, Irene is very proud of the many graduate students she has worked with or is currently working with on completing their master’s theses or comprehensive master’s exams. With more teaching and service commitments and the joyous busyness of mothering two growing daughters (Xóchitl is two and Belén six this spring), post-tenure life is busier than ever!

Doreen Mattingly has been working on a book with Midge Costanza about Midge’s life in the White House. The project has her sorting through boxes of White House documents, meeting Lily Tomlin, and learning more about the Carter administration that she ever wanted to know. In Fall she took a group of students to Mexico City to work on a “voluntourism” project with Los Niños International, which was an amazing week and gave her a lot of chances to practice her Spanish. She continues to read and teach about women in economics and politics, a particularly fascinating topic during the global crisis.

With financial support from the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Kimala Price was on a research leave this year. While on leave, she completed her book manuscript entitled A Tale of Two Pills: How Storytelling Influences Reproductive Health Policy, which chronicles the troubled regulatory histories of mifepristone (formerly known as RU-486) and emergency contraception (also known as the morning-after pill). She also began research for her new project on women of color and the reproductive justice movement, which includes interviewing activists and examining archived organizational records. She recently joined the advisory board of WAM! (Women, Action and the Media), which is an activist organization dedicated to gender equity and justice in the media. Before joining the board, Kim served as a member of the steering committee of WAM!’s annual conference for five years. To learn more about WAM!, visit their web site at http://www.womenactionmedia.org/.

Esther Rothblum’s edited book The Fat Studies Reader (New York University Press, 2009) appeared in print, and Esther’s talk about the book is part of the Women’s Studies 40th anniversary celebration. The book was reviewed in The New Yorker, the New York Times, MS Magazine, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and many other media. Esther also has articles and book chapters in press on fat studies, lesbian and bisexual women’s communities, lesbian relationships, and use of online surveys in teaching. She is in her fourteenth year as editor of the Journal of Lesbian Studies. Esther received a Lesbian Health Fund grant from the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association that focused on U.S. lesbian and bisexual women’s butch/femme roles in the 21st Century. Seven graduate students were paid to transcribe the interviews, and Esther is currently writing up this research for publication. Esther continues to co-author book reviews with graduate students. During this academic year she submitted five book reviews with fifteen graduate students; all book reviews have been accepted for publication and are currently in press. Six book reviews co-authored with a total of seventeen graduate students from last year all appeared in print in 2009. And Esther continues to play racquetball. She is going to the Gay Games this summer in Cologne, Germany, but only as a spectator (there is no racquetball in Germany). She hopes to compete again in racquetball when the Gay Games are back in the U.S. in 2014. Esther’s lover Penny will be teaching Aikido workshops at the Gay Games in Germany.

Bonnie Kime Scott has given a lot of attention to the 40th Anniversary of Women’s Studies at SDSU—enjoying all the new connections these activities bring. New discoveries came in teaching “Women and the Environment” for the second time and a new Virginia Woolf seminar. Scott has turned a corner in her research, completing a book manuscript on Virginia Woolf’s uses of nature, and beginning a study early 20th century anticipations of transnational feminism. She published the essay, “First Drafts for Transnational Women’s Writing: A Re-visitng of the Modernisms of Woolf, West, Fauset and Dark” in a special number of the Australian feminist journal, Hecate, which she co-edited. The issue and a related conference came from her Spring 09 sabbatical in Brisbane at Queensland University. In June, she will be a keynote speaker at the 20th Annual Woolf Conference, this year’s theme: “Virginia Woolf and the Natural World.” Also completed this year: “Modernist Women Transforming the Novel” for the Cambridge Companion to Women’s Modernism, and “Virginia Woolf and Consciousness” for the Oxford History of the Novel.
**Lecturer News**

**Sue Gonda** has left her post as History Department Chair at Grossmont College and is currently wearing two hats on the job: Acting Dean of the Division of English and Social/Behavioral Sciences and College Curriculum Co-Chair. In December, she worked with Women's Studies intern Sarah Clement to create a new multi-media exhibit at the Women's History Museum & Educational Center: "The Road to Suffrage: Highlights and Heroes." Hopefully, you'll get a chance to stop by and see the connections between the San Diego, California and national movement for women's right to vote.

**Barbara Shaver,** Ph.D., lecturer since 1984, has taught Women's Studies 572 (Women and Violence) and WS 340 (Women in Modern European History) during the past academic year, and in addition has taught WS 375 (Sex, Power & Politics) and WS 310 (Women in Cross Cultural Perspective) at the Imperial Valley Campus. As Executive Director for the Center for Family Solutions, a full-service shelter for victims of domestic violence, she has been named by Valley Women Magazine as their Woman of Distinction in its December 2009 quarterly issue for her work "making a difference for women and families." The Center for Family Solutions has two emergency and fourteen transitional shelters supported by a wide range of legal, social and educational services for people in need of them. One of the programs offered by the Center for Family Solutions is Healthy Border Women, which is being offered in San Diego for the first time through the Department of Women's Studies at SDSU's Imperial Valley Campus.

**News from Graduate Teaching Assistants**

**Christy Arrington** is currently a Graduate Teaching Associate facilitating her own Women's Studies 101 class, where she has enjoyed the unique opportunity to construct an individualized course and bring her creativity and passion for Women's Studies to undergraduate students. She is also working on her thesis, "Exploring the Emergence of a New Identity: A Qualitative Inquiry into the Multiplicities of Queer Identity within the Y Generation," and recently presented a workshop on the etymology and political viability of "queer" during her internship with the San Diego LGBT Center. Over winter break she took part in the Women's Studies Department's study abroad trip to India, a life-changing experience allowing her to explore the culture's feminist movements, complex societal structures, and incredible cuisine. After graduation, Christy is excited to travel the United States in an RV with her partner and dog while working on independent projects.

**Kim Burke** is currently teaching a section of Women's Studies 102: Women: Images and Ideas. She is finishing her thesis, which explores Abercrombie and Fitch, identity constructions, representations of self, and subjectivities. She presented a chapter of her thesis research at San Diego State University's Student Research Symposium and received a Presidential Award. Kim has enjoyed incorporating her research interest in the area of sexualities and has continued her guest lectures on intersexuality and genital surgeries. Her love of performance has also been reflected in the classroom; she has integrated her own spoken word and hip-hop pieces and continually seeks to question which voices and expressions of experience are valued as knowledge within the academy. The GTA experience has solidified her commitment to teaching and the pedagogical knowledge she has gleaned will undoubtedly benefit her in future careers. Kim will spend the upcoming year applying to PhD programs in or related to Women's Studies and will also be pursuing her interests in performance arts.

It's been a busy year for **Melissann Herron**, who is actively engaged in two major research projects. She's currently working on finishing her thesis, entitled "Patronymy as Taken-for-Granted Discourse? An Analysis of Marital Names" and will be presenting her research at the Pacific Sociological Association's conference in April. In addition, she's working with Professor Susan Cayleff and a team of researchers on the Girls' Voices project, a project about which she's very passionate. Herron is also honored to be teaching her second Women's Studies 102 class. This amazing opportunity has allowed her to share her knowledge and zeal for Women's Studies with her students and to contribute to the expansion of their consciousnesses. Teaching has certainly been the highlight of her year! In addition to her research and teaching, Herron has spent much of the year applying doctoral programs in sociology. Her hard work and stress have paid off as she's been admitted to several programs and has most recently been offered a fellowship at the University of California, San Diego. She's looking forward to finishing up her master's work and beginning the next phase of her academic journey as a doctoral student in the fall.

**Jessica L. Nare** is honored to be teaching Women's Studies 101: Self Identity and Society this year. She has learned more from teaching than she ever anticipated and would like to thank her students for sharing in this experience! Jessica has enjoyed bringing her political science background into the classroom to get students interested in current events. Jessica is finishing her thesis, “Wonder Woman Was Not A Delegate!: International Women's Year and Processes of Inclusion” and preparing to graduate this coming spring. She recently presented her research at ASU’s [En]gendering Social Inquiry and is preparing for an upcoming conference at Ohio State University Women's Studies Symposium on Contemporary Interdisciplinary Scholarship on Gender and Sexuality. Jessica is seeking employment after graduation. She looks forward to applying her feminist studies and pedagogy to real world issues next year.

**Joni Redmond** is from Kansas City, MO. She is excited to be teaching her second semester of Women's Studies 102 and loves being part of so many students' first Women's Studies experiences. Teaching has been one of the most rewarding parts of her graduate career, and she is honored to instruct such bright students. She is currently interning at the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, an organization that fights human trafficking and assists victims of forced prostitution. At BSCC, she works with survivors of prostitution and does outreach in the community. Joni is also working on an M.A. exam that will cover women of color theory, human trafficking issues, and grant evaluation. She is looking forward to May graduation and hopes to work in the non-profit sector in the future.

Co-chairs: Irene Lara and Anh Hua

Events held in 2009–2010 are part of the Women's Studies Department’s “Year of Celebration” to commemorate the program’s 40th year of community activism, scholarly excellence, and international programming. The colloquium series, “Feminist Crossroads: Bearing Witness and Building Social Change,” featured a wide array of speakers active in both academia and the community. The series ended with the 2010 Scholarship Lecture and Awards Presentation where Women's Studies faculty presented scholarships to deserving undergraduate and graduate students. All events were free and open to the public. Many thanks go out to Irene Lara and Anh Hua for their hard work co-chairing this year’s colloquium series. Stay tuned for more information on future departmental colloquium series and other events as the department’s 40th anniversary “Year of Celebration” continues!

Fall 2009

September 30
Kick Off Event:
Women's Studies: Look How Far We've Come!

Chair: Bonnie Zimmerman
Speakers: Marilyn Boxer;
Tanya Bakhru
Margaret Slaska
Performance: Theatro Chicana

October 21
War, Displacement, and Gendered Violence
Speakers: Huma Ahmed-Ghosh
Stephanie Chaban

November 18
Women’s Studies in the Community: Making a Difference in Local Activism
Panel: Susan E. Cayleff
Barbara Shaver
Lou Cruciani
Sue Gonda
Elle Vandermark
Emelyn de la Peña
Sophia Arredondo

Spring 2009

February 18
Decolonization, Gender, and Chicana/o Studies
Speakers: Adelaida Del Castillo
Cherrie Moraga

March 8
Kum-Kum Bhavnani’s The Shape of Water
Documentary Film Screening in Celebration of International Woman’s Day

March 24
Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women’s Studies
Speakers: Frances Smith Foster
Stanlie M. James
Respondent: Shirley Weber

April 7
Bodies out of Bounds: The Fat Studies Reader
Speakers: Esther Rothblum
Sondra Solovay
Bianca Wilson

April 21
Poto Mitan
Screening of film about empowered Haitian women

April 29
Scholarship Awards
Speaker: Loretta Ross, SisterSong

April 30
Symposium:
Feminist Crossroads: Holistic Health and the Humanities

40th Anniversary Kickoff Event Panel: From left: Marilyn Boxer, Tanya Bakhru, Margaret Slaska

Article compiled by Jessica Spain, M.A. First Year
Almost halfway through my first semester of teaching Women’s Studies 102, Women: Images and Ideas here at San Diego State University, one of my students came to me in distress. She told me that this class was making her realize the injustices that had seemed so natural in her life were in fact part of a larger system of oppression. She wanted to share her experiences of disempowerment with her classmates, but felt she could not vocalize them in class without being overcome with emotion. We worked out a system whereby students could send me any personal stories that they wanted to share anonymously and still receive participation points for them. I was able to witness this student’s move toward a feminist consciousness and participate in her newfound commitment to creating social change; she reminded me of the personal transformation that resulted from my first Women’s Studies course. Working together with her to create a space where everyone’s voice could be heard represented the sort of co-intentional pedagogy I had read about and was now experiencing first-hand. Basically, my experience with this student represented everything that is amazing and unique about being a GTA.

While not every classroom moment has been positive they have all presented an opportunity to grow as instructors and develop new teaching strategies. Jessica Nare, currently teaching Women’s Studies 101, shares an experience of a classroom interloper who spewed homophobic and sexist slurs on the first day of class in the spring semester. While nothing covered in the many GTA meetings or newly developed and comprehensive GTA Guide could have prepared her for that moment, Nare feels that the direct response and support from the Women’s Studies Department was more than she could have asked for. Her safety and the security needs of her class were addressed immediately. Jessica created a forum for her students to process this incident through dialogue and reflection; she states that it made the students especially aware of the need for Women’s Studies classes and exigency of feminist activism.

Our experiences as GTA’s, for better and worse, continually remind us to be grounded in our pedagogical methods and allowing our realities to shape our theories as much as our theories influence our everyday. Teaching for me has been a way to develop allies in the mission to achieve social justice by creating awareness in students. A special thank you to past GTAs, whose words of wisdom are featured in the GTA Guide, the community and support of present GTAs, as well as the entire Women’s Studies faculty and staff for always being available as mentors and guides.

The Conference Presentation: A Reflection
Nicholas Franco, M.A. Second Year

Presenting at a conference is at once exciting and intimidating. At least, this was my recent experience as Stevie Seibert and I, both second-year MA students in the Women’s Studies department, presented at the 20th Annual Western Regional LGBTQIA Conference held this year at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo. The conference serves to educate and encourage coalitions among student populations at high schools and universities across the state. Our presentation, “Balancing Needs and Wants: A Project in Writing Feminist, Queer Erotica,” was meant to inform participants of feminism, feminist issues, and queer identities and how these issues were or were not evident in our erotica while also dialoguing about possibilities for future erotic feminist, queer pieces. The erotica discussed in our presentation was a collaborative project we wrote for WMNST 701: Advanced Seminar in Sexualities. I had never given thought to the idea that continued on page 17
Putting Our Words in Print: Student Publications
Kim Burke, M.A. Second Year, GTA

Professor Esther Rothblum’s dedication to collaborative student publications has been well documented by Transformations.

In 2008, the newsletter featured a poster with the covers of all of the books she has reviewed with students as well as joint encyclopedia entries. Last year’s Transformations provided an account of Prof. Rothblum’s desire to support and facilitate student publications and listed the most recent publications. In 2010, Prof. Rothblum continues to demystify the publishing process with five new book reviews in press. The teams this year were as follows: Melissann Herron (first author), Cristina Dominguez, Ashley Greenwood & Esther Rothblum, When Gay People Get Married: What Happens When Societies Legalize Same-Sex Marriage; Bibeth-Pamela Libed (first author), Christy Arrington, Jessica Spain & Esther Rothblum, And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida’s Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers; Jessica Nare (first author), Kimberly Burke, Lisa Hastings and Esther Rothblum, Transgender Voices: Beyond Women and Men; Jenna Stephenson (first author), Nick Franco, Irina Chukhray, & Rothblum, E.D., Laid: Young People’s Experiences With Sex in an Easy-Access Culture; KB Bowman (first author), Kirstin Oesterle, Valerie Suffron & Esther Rothblum, Beyond Reproduction: Women’s Health, Activism and Public Policy.

The Ph.D. Experience: from Hell to Heaven

Melissann Herron, M.A. Second Year
Jenna Stephenson, M.A. Second Year

With the Women’s Studies Department at San Diego State boasting a nearly flawless acceptance rate for students applying to doctoral programs, the bar is set high for aspiring Ph.D. students. As obsessive, detail-oriented planners, we began the master’s program focused on our next step: applying to the doctoral programs that would allow us to fulfill our career objective of being professors. As much as we thought we understood the intensity of the application process, the past year has been a journey unlike anything we could have anticipated.

We spent countless hours researching programs, contacting faculty, crafting personal statements, preparing CVs, and revising writing samples. Despite all this preparation, one frightening thought remained: ‘What if no one accepted us?’ ‘What would we do if we couldn’t become professors?’ In late January, Jenna breathed a screaming sigh of relief and pure joy. She answered the phone to hear, “I’m calling to congratulate you on your acceptance!” Within two weeks, Melissann received her first acceptance. We were ecstatic. Our dreams would come true.

Although we thought acceptances were the most important thing, choosing the best program has proved equally important. Jenna was fortunate enough to get into her first choice in early February, the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Her visit—where she received an incredibly warm welcome by faculty and students alike—left her with a feeling that this was a supportive community in which she could thrive. She cannot wait to begin her Ph.D. in Communication Studies this fall. Melissann too has been excited by the support and kindness students and faculty have offered. UCSD offered her a prestigious fellowship, and she had an enthusiastic reception at their open house in early March. Given this and their excitement over her work, she was delighted to accept their offer and will begin a Ph.D. in sociology at UCSD in the fall!

Throughout the last year, we have been truly blessed by each other’s support: sharing our worries over lunch, 2 a.m. emails, and exchanging good news. Added to this, we are both blessed with supportive partners, wonderful families, and incredible friends. We have both experienced remarks about our department’s great reputation and strongly feel that this has contributed to our success in having a choice of doctoral programs. As we look forward to the future as colleagues and lifelong friends, we will continue to be grateful for the support and quality preparation we received from the Women’s Studies Department. The bonds we formed and the friendship of our cohort will always be a special part of our San Diego memories. We know we will be better scholars, teachers, and professors for our solid grounding in Women’s Studies, and we wish to end with a thanks to our incredible mentors: Susan Cayleff, Anne Donadey, and Esther Rothblum.

Graduating M.A. student, Nicholas Franco will also start a PhD program this fall, at the University of San Diego in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences. Franco’s personal research areas while at SDSU—pedagogy, theory and transgenderism—will likely influence his doctoral work and future career as a university professor and Student Affairs professional.

Degrees Awarded in 2009

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Sabbatical Exploring Women’s Studies in Australia

Bonnie Kime Scott

Sabbatical leaves provide an invaluable opportunity to explore new projects and territories, and mine was no exception. I was invited to join Queensland University’s Centre for Research on Women, Gender, Culture and Social Change as George Watson Visiting Professor. I came with the goal of increasing my knowledge of transnational feminisms. I also wanted to let them know more about us and see what sorts of exchanges of students and ideas might be possible.

The campus of the University of Queensland is set on the winding riverside of the attractive city of Brisbane. Women’s Studies there goes back to the 1970s, when famously, faculty members chained themselves to the bar of an all male pub. A succession of administrative structures have never granted Women’s Studies departmental status, but the Centre and a major give it enduring presence. The Centre publishes a venerable journal, Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women’s Liberation, founded in 1975, and edited throughout its run by a remarkable scholar and activist, Carole Ferrier, who also heads the Centre. The gender studies title for their major is a recent revision, aimed at attracting more majors. Women remain central to its description—a specialized field that “brings innovative theory and research techniques to the study of women’s lives, their status in society, and the dilemmas and contradictions in gender relations and sexualities.”

There were some special events during my visit—the first being a colloquium titled “Transitions: Forty Years of Women’s and Gender Studies and Still Striving,” where we made a three nation comparison: Ireland, Australia, and the US, Carole and I joined by Irish scholar Rebecca Pelan. For the Departmental Colloquium Series I could share recently completed work in the talk “Virginia Woolf, Eco-feminism, and Modernist Uses of Nature.” There were also class visits where I exchanged ideas about comparative studies of authors such as Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, and the strategies behind writing an article. Our mutual work culminated in an international conference: “Women Writers/Artists and Travelling Modernisms,” which allowed me to try on new transnational connections, including the ways that early 20th century women writers of the settler culture related to the culture of indigenous Australians. Hecate has just published selected papers in its Fall 2009 issue.

Australia is of course a terrific place to explore. Brisbane was once dismissed as a cow town, but it has a lively downtown scene; many of its sites can be visited by city-cat—a catamaran that bounces back and forth on the shores of the Brisbane River. The provincial library has terrific resources on indigenous Australians and there is a fine art museum, and even a koala sanctuary. I had time to visit Sydney, where I enjoyed an eco-tour over a weekend to the Blue Mountains, then settled into the archived papers of Eleanor Dark in the beautiful Mitchell Library. We also went north to Magnetic Island, offshore of Townsville, where we met koalas in the wild.

I have family in Brisbane, my son Ethan and daughter-in-law Margie, who joined the faculty of UQ in the biological sciences in 2008. Their unheated Queenslander house is built high on stilts to catch summer breezes, but it being winter in May–June, I went equipped with heavy sweaters. A grandson born to Ethan and Margie in November 2008. Their unheated Queenslander house is built high on stilts to catch summer breezes, but it being winter in May–June, I went equipped with heavy sweaters. A grandson born to Ethan and Margie in November gives me all the more reason to keep up this fine connection! I met lots of American students doing semesters abroad, and would strongly recommend that experience.

Reinstating Women’s Community in Uganda

Jenny Woudenber

Women’s Studies Undergraduate

The “Let’s Go Home Project,” in which I was involved during study abroad, is not about charity, but solidarity. It seeks to help one widow at a time leave the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp and return to her homeland in Uganda, so she may be able to finish her life with dignity. Since there is now peace, and people are allowed to return to their homelands, most of the NGOs are leaving the IDP camps, which has left the most vulnerable widows still stranded. Because these women have lost their sons and husbands due to the conflict, society has ignored their cries for help. This is an atrocity. Their cries must be heard because every human has the right to proper shelter. The “Let’s Go Home” project model benefits all of society, and most importantly helped the most vulnerable return to their homes. In also empowers the community to be self-reliant - not NGO dependant – and is reinstating the Acholi culture of community interdependence that was lost during the war. We all see millions of dollars being poured into fancy NGO cars, offices, and staff, so why not use a little of that money to help real beneficiaries’ human interests at the grassroots level? Since late February four families have gone home, and currently a few members of this project are collecting data for the Parliamentary Performance Scorecard to assist the work of the elected Members of Parliament at constituencies in the districts of Kitgum, Pader, Abim and for the Africa Leadership Institute. Apwoyo! (Thank you for your presence!)
Faculty Research in Haiti: Witnessing Women’s Strength in the Face of Destruction

Elizabeth Colwill

In 2008–2009, I twice visited Haiti, the country that has been the focus of my research for many years. During a first visit, in the wake of four destructive hurricanes, three colleagues and I met in Cap Haitien in the northern part of the island, a key site in the eighteenth-century histories of slave emancipation and the revolution that led to the founding of the independent nation of Haiti in 1804. Participating in the Haitian Studies Association conference in Montrouis, and speaking with women and men from Haiti and the diaspora—including young activists, a government minister, and public historian Ari Nicolas—opened new perspectives on Haitian history and contemporary society, and revealed the multitude of ways in which women have sought to organize in the context of economic hardship, natural disaster, and political turmoil.

A second visit during Spring 2009 extended those opportunities for conversation. Staying in the guesthouse of an orphanage outside of Port-au-Prince (now destroyed), colleagues and I traveled mostly by “tap-tap” (local vans), visiting museums and monuments, contacting archivists with the help of Haitian friends, and briefly exploring several public and private archives and libraries. The global economic crisis and subsequent cutbacks had sharply constrained funding for archives and libraries in Haiti, often limiting public access. Nonetheless, through the generosity of several archivists including Patrick Tardieu of the Bibliothèque Haitienne des pères de Saint-Esprit (BHPSE), our group took dozens of photographs of rare documents and left DVD copies of some of these photographs with archivists in Port-au-Prince in the interests of historical preservation.

The destruction on January 12, 2010 of nearly half of the public buildings of Port-au-Prince—including the major universities—and structural damage to several of the archives and libraries that we visited last spring, as well as the incalculable loss of more than 200,000 lives, have permanently altered the social, political, urban, and intellectual landscape of Haiti. Despite the scope of the disaster and inadequate access to international aid, reportage from Haiti finds Haitian women and men, individually and collectively through grassroots organizations such as Partners in Health, Fonkoze, the Lambi Fund, and KOFAVIV, fully engaged with the tasks of both immediate survival and long-term reconstruction. Women have been instrumental in the provision of food and emergency services, taking in orphaned children and refugees from Port-au-Prince, and organizing to contain gender-based violence. Even while the women’s advocates mourn the deaths of leading feminist activists, including Myriam Merlet, Magalie Marcelin, and Anne Marie Coriolan, hundreds of women on International Women’s Day gathered outside of the ruins of the building that once housed the women’s ministry to honor the dead and to express their hope under a plaque that reads: “We remember, we advance” (Beverly Bell, “A History of Haitian Women’s Political Involvement, International Women’s Day, Part II). A new global solidarity initiative called “Poto Mitan: Rebuilding Haiti” has been launched by members of the Haitian diaspora and other women’s advocates to support Haitian women, girls, and organizations in Haiti engaged in democratic rebuilding efforts.

On April 21 at 1 p.m., the Women’s Studies Department will screen 2009 documentary entitled “Poto Mitan: Haitian Women—Pillars of the Global Economy,” in which five Haitian women analyze the impact of globalization on their lives. Edwidge Danticat’s poetic narrative, honoring women’s storytelling traditions, provides a backdrop for their voices. Funds raised at this event will go to support Haitian women’s efforts to recover, reorganize, and rebuild.

Travel Study Trip to India

Pam Libed, M.A. Second Year

This past winter break (December 2009/January 2010), Professor Huma Ahmed-Ghosh lead a group of SDSU students and San Diego community members on a travel-study trip to India. The group visited the cities of Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. Over the course of three weeks, the group heard a variety of speakers and lecturers such as feminist filmmaker, Shohini Ghosh (Tales of the Night Fairies, 2002), and environmental activist and eco-feminist, Vandana Shiva. In addition to the lectures, the group went to Kanodia Girls College in the city of Jaipur, where SDSU students enjoyed lovely dance performances put on by the college students and later enjoyed a dinner where all the students could interact. The group also visited non-government organizations (NGOs) such as the Naz Foundation, which provides care, community education and health services to children with HIV/AIDS. Another organization the group visited with was Ma Dham Guild of Service, an organization that provides a home for widows in the city of Vrindavan. Students and community members did not only enjoy the academic aspects of the trip, but also got to see and experience some of India’s historical and architectural sites. The group got to see the great Taj Mahal; ride elephants up to the Amber Fort; see the vibrant colors of the city palace of Jaipur; learn about the Bahai’ faith at the Lotus Temple in Delhi; and saw the Mughal architecture while exploring the...
If you asked me what sprinklers, bags of concrete, homemade pastries, and really angry bees all have in common, I would tell you they all have to do with Mexicali, Mexico. Dr. Doreen Mattingly took me and eight other students from all different majors to work with a group called Los Niños that is based in Mexico. The mission of Los Niños is to, “improve the quality of life by creating opportunities for children and their families to realize their human potential through participation in the development of their communities.” They are a non-profit organization that is completely self-sustained through "voluntourism" where groups like us and other schools come and learn about the programs that Los Niños implements in the community.

In a very short time, we were able to do so much and learn even more in the process.

We Welcome Visiting Faculty from Costa Rica!

Interview by Stevie Seibert, M.A.
Second Year

Name: Adriana Jimenez Rodriguez

Educational Background:
B. A. in English UCR (University of Costa Rica)
M. L. in English Literature UCR

Current Location:
Tenured professor Lenguas Modernas, UCR, Costa Rica

What brought you to our campus?

Well, I was offered a month by the UCR to go somewhere in the U.S. and sort of have a brief academic update in feminist theory, which is my interest. So, I looked up Women Studies programs online and found San Diego State. It is the oldest program and it seemed very solid, so I wrote an email and hoped you would have me for a month. I’m looking to put together a course on feminist theory and a course on LGBT literature for our Masters in English Literature here in the

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De Mis Hermanas
Creative Writing by Carolina Prado, Women’s Studies Major, Undergraduate

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I left my natal city of Atenco, Mexico. My home was occupied by the government to build an airport. My hometown, once full of trees, shrubs and community is now concrete landing pads for commercial airplanes importing/exporting our labor exploitation.

Atenco is now home, not to me, but to police brutality, political prisoners and economic activity.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I made a stop in Guadalajara on my way to the border city of Tijuana. This place, which is the ground below my sisters feet is nothing like the way I left it years ago. Forests, plains and grazing fields in the outskirts of Zapopan are now one stadium. The ranchero family I used to buy lunch from off the highway is now a memory to the tract of homogenous “residence oasis” homes that will undoubtedly drown most of its inhabitants in debt.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I arrived in Tijuana to a closet as a room to live in a neighborhood with no electricity, running water or proper plumbing. The day before I arrived, a 10 year old girl was electrocuted to death by stepping on the power lines that run on the ground, while it was raining. My landlord’s children sport red marks on their body from walking through the toxic river to and from school.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I started my job as a Maquila worker. I work making batteries for Sony. After my shifts, I have to wash my hands for an hour to get the itch out of my hands. One of my co-workers was discharged from the job for being pregnant. She tried hiding it by being absent on the day of the pregnancy tests. A few months later I visited her at the hospital, her baby was born dead. Her doctor told her it was a defect caused by the battery fluid. Her husband did not believe him, she was found dead in her bathroom days later.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I crossed the border into San Diego. I crossed the border secured into the dashboard of a Cadillac. For days, my lungs ached from long exposure to car fumes. I arrived to my new home in Barrio Logan, off the Harborside trolley stop. I live less than a mile from the shipyard. The constant noise has given me a migraine every day. The fumes from the heavy use of paint, all reach my home by mid day. I bring in the children around that time, they all have some stage of asthma.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I visited the Mid-City Planned Parenthood clinic. I was told that the responsible choice is to take the depo povera shot or the pill. I don’t want to use these because I am afraid. The nurse rubs my shoulder and says “You’ll be okay.”

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I lived my everyday. The urine I flush down the toilet is ridden with chemicals my body has excreted from the Depo Povera toxics, my migraine medicine and the pesticide residue I eat off of fruit. These chemicals will end up in the tissues of a dozen tuna fish, intoxicating their nerve systems. My throat is itchy every few days from the air pollution that the shipyard produces behind my home.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Yesterday, I was a poor, immigrant womyn of color. I am a poor, immigrant womyn of color. My body is violated for the gain of others. My environment has been used against me.

**Today I am Esperanza.**

Tomorrow, there is hope.
Passion into Practice: The Women’s Studies Internship
Nicholas Franco, M.A. Second Year

One essential dimension to the field of Women’s Studies is praxis. In other words, our knowledges should inform our activism, and our activism should inform our knowledges. For undergraduate and graduate students in the Women’s Studies department at San Diego State University (SDSU), the WMNST 598 course, Internship in Women’s Studies, offers incredible opportunities for learning outside the classroom. Coordinated this year by Doreen Mattingly, many students utilize this course to ground their academics in practical, hands-on contexts.

Brittney Foster, a Women’s Studies minor, is one student who took advantage of this opportunity, enrolling in the course during the Fall 2009 semester. Brittney worked with the Women’s Outreach Association (WOA), an on-campus organization that aims to promote and pursue the diverse needs and issues of female student populations at SDSU. Within the organization, Brittney served as the Multicultural Caucus representative and co-chair for the WOA High School Conference. Through these experiences, she not only developed deeper understandings of feminism but also established more connections to the campus community: “In having a better understanding of feminism, I was inspired to connect with the San Diego State community and take a more active role in approaching issues related to underrepresented populations.” Brittney strongly recommends WMNST 598 other students in Women’s Studies who “has a passion to impact their community and gain further insight as they look through a feminist lens.”

Organizations like WOA, VOX, Center for Community Solutions, and the San Diego Women’s History Museum are some more typical places where students seek internships. But there are many other possibilities, and the department does an excellent job supporting students who pursue internships that speak to their individual needs. For example, I wanted an internship experience that expanded the skills and knowledges I have gained in my work with residential campus communities. The Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, SDSU’s judicial affairs office, offered such an experience. Although the adjudication of student conduct violations is not inherently feminist, I made certain to clarify with my supervisor how I would be able to employ a feminist framework in my interactions with the various aspects of the university’s judicial process. Echoing Brittney’s thoughts, I feel my internship has provided me a way to put my passion for and advocacy of feminism into practice, and I hope more students see the potential benefits of an internship in Women’s Studies.

Preserving a Lifetime of Valuable Work: The Midge Costanza Project
Jessica L. Nare, M.A. Second Year, GTA

Over the past year, students have had the unique opportunity to become involved with an interdisciplinary project combining history, politics and feminism. Under the direction of Dr. Doreen Mattingly, women’s studies students have been working with primary sources from Margaret “Midge” Costanza’s personal papers.

Midge was the first ever-female advisor to a President of the United States. Born in 1932, Midge came from a working class, Italian family. After becoming involved in local Rochester politics, she was elected to the City Council and served a three-year term as the first female Vice Mayor of Rochester, New York. Later, President Jimmy Carter appointed Midge as Assistant to the President for Public Liaison. Midge was responsible for addressing international human rights, domestic human rights, women’s rights and issues involving religious and ethnic minorities. She was one of the first politicians to support pardons for Vietnam draft dodgers, the first person to invite and receive a LGBTQ group in the White House and a major “insider” feminist politician. After her time in the White House, Midge helped with Barbara Boxer’s campaign and served as the Women’s Liaison to Grey Davis.

Midge has hundreds of boxes from her political career, including her time in the White House. Since January of 2009, Dr. Doreen Mattingly has been working with students to sort and organize her papers. Dr. Mattingly is currently in the process of writing a book weaving together the political history of the Carter Administration and Midge’s personal experiences. During the spring and summer of last year, several women’s studies students including: Stephanie Zuzack, Natasha Ballard, Laura Becker, Jennifer Wong, Catherine Vogt, Ashley Boyd, Allie Tarantino, Andrea Olivera and Cristina Dominguez completed internships at the Midge Costanza Institute working with on the project. Dr.

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Time Travel in Women’s Studies: Finding the Fervor of a Movement

Stevie Seibert, M.A. Second Year

The task of making the trek back to the 1970s has been given to me. While sifting through hundreds of issues of the campus newspaper, The Daily Aztec, I have come across an era different from my own. There are articles of beauty queens, advertisements for fringed clothing, and documentations of a time when women's rights were on the forefront of news coverage. In the archives I relive the feminist colloquia that sought to open dialogues on such subjects as sexism, sexuality, birth control and violence against women. It is a time traveling trip, indeed.

More specifically, I am going back to chronicle our roots. As the first Women's Studies Department in the United States of America—in the world even—we were first institutionalized at San Diego State University in the spring of 1970. Though the fervor of social movements, such as the Civil Rights, Chicano/a, and Women's Movements, had begun much earlier in San Diego and elsewhere, gaining the status of a department was a momentous occasion for all involved. Amidst a slew of cultural movements addressing pressing social issues, the zeal of SDSU students and supportive faculty and administrators produced change.

And 40 years later, we are still celebrating those and ongoing efforts. As both an academic and activist community, we recognize how far we have come since our inception and how far we have left to go. The ability to look back and see our roots is as important as the ability to look forward to see the remaining challenges for our future. Embracing our successes while continually questioning our paradigms and progress is what keeps Women's Studies in a constant state of transformation.

This is at least what I believe, and where else would my voice, as a student, as a researcher, be recognized? Women’s Studies has worked to recognize voices that were not formerly privileged in university settings, or other settings for that matter. Strength for diverse identities has emerged from the shared history of our foundation. Thanks to many faculty, staff, students, and activists, we now have a department and academic discipline that extends beyond the locale of San Diego.

If you have been a part or would like to take part in our history, please visit our web site for more information on the Memoir Project and our 40th Anniversary Finale events taking place on October 1–2, 2010.

On March 23, 2010, Margaret “Midge” Costanza died after a battle with cancer. Midge was a tireless advocate and impassioned speaker for equality, justice and human rights. When President Jimmy Carter appointed her to the position of Assistant to the President in 1977, she became the first woman to ever hold that high office. For the first 20 months of the Carter Administration, she received national media attention as Carter’s link to a wide range of groups who previously had limited access to the White House, including women, youth, seniors, minorities, gays and lesbians, and the disabled. She was particularly active in the fight for women’s equality, advocating for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, the protection of women’s reproductive rights, and the appointment of more women to high office. After leaving the White House, Midge moved to California, where she remained active in progressive politics. From 2000-2003, she was Special Assistant to California Gov. Gray Davis, serving as a liaison to the Governor for women’s groups. She was a great supporter of SDSU Women’s Studies, lending her speaking skills to department events, co-teaching a section of “Sex, Power, and Politics,” and employing Women's Studies interns at the Midge Costanza Institute. Thank you, Midge, for your inspiration and fighting spirit. You will be missed.
Finding Girls’ Voices Through the Young Women’s Studies Club

Sarah Wheeler, M.A. First Year

Building on a fifteen-year legacy of community outreach and mentorship, the Young Women’s Studies Club (YWSC) continues to be one of the Women’s Studies department’s most astounding examples of feminist activism in action. Coordinated through the collaborative efforts of Dr. Susan E. Cayleff and graduate student coordinator Sarah Wheeler, the weekly club meetings take place during the lunch hour at nearby Hoover High School. Undergraduate mentors are carefully selected from two upper-division Women’s History classes, trained in cultural competency, and go on to form meaningful bonds with the Club members they mentor. They also receive course credit for completing community-based service learning hours as a way to encourage feminist activism and community involvement.

With an average attendance of 40–50 high school students per meeting, this year’s club has expanded not only in size, but in enthusiasm as well. While students have critically reflected on women’s portrayal in the media, undergone workshops in self-esteem and goal-setting, and received guidance about college applications from their SDSU mentors, they most heartily embraced the club activities that allowed them to express their creative voices. Self-expressive endeavors such as quilt-square making, designing feminist advertisements, and photographing their female role models has given the students the space necessary to develop their creative voices. To continue building on this vital theme, first-year M.A. student Jessica Spain is interning with the club this semester in order to develop a project that will collect and publish the Club members’ poetry, art, and writing in a distributable ‘zine (self-made publication).

This year’s club was further enriched by the presence of the Girls’ Voices research team, comprised of Dr. Cayleff, second-year M.A. student Melissann Herron, graduate Public Health student Chelsea Cormier, community activist Alicia Chavez-Arteaga, and first-year M.A. students Cristina Dominguez, Sarah Wheeler, and Jessica Spain. The Girls’ Voices project was developed by Dr. Cayleff in order to identify and analyze the themes and major issues of young women’s lives today, particularly within the context of an urban San Diego high school. After completing participant-observation research during YWSC meetings, and conducting in-depth interviews with participants, the research team is now in the process of writing a paper on their findings for journal and conference submission.

Taking It to the Streets: Activists in Our Community Fighting for LGBTQ Rights

Cristina Dominguez, M.A. First Year

October 11th 2009, the National Equality March for LGBTQ rights in Washington, was a day I had been waiting for much of my out, adult, feminist, activist life. Despite the work I had done as an activist on my campus, in my heart I was not really an activist, I had not marched and now, finally, was my time. Over the course of the weekend there were many events raising awareness about the myriad of social justice issues faced by the gay community. I attended two, one of which was a memorial for a disparably discharged Vietnam Veteran and gay activist Leonard Malkovich that sought to raise awareness and pay tribute to many gay servicemen and women how have been unjustly discharged. The other event was an imperial court drag show, which honored the gay activists whose work had made the weekend possible and also benefitted the Matthew Sheppard Foundation. That weekend enlivened my passion for my community and strengthened both my commitment as an activist to fight the social justice issues we face. Despite the opinion that marches are largely symbolic, the momentum of the movement electrified that weekend. More than the embodiment of a message, the march was the signaled the active potential and promise of new directions and new developments for the U.S. LGBTQ community and nation as a whole.

October 11, 2009 National Equality March for LGBTQ rights in Washington DC [Photo by Cristina Dominguez]
Safe Zones: Fostering a Supportive Environment for LGBTQ Individuals and Allies

KB Bowman

Safe Zones at San Diego State University (SDSU), formed in Fall 2007, is a multi-faceted program. The program’s central mission is to ensure a campus atmosphere that is welcoming, informative, and safe for all members of the campus community. As such, it seeks to provide an accepting and pro-active environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students, faculty, staff, administrators, and their allies. As a campus-wide initiative, Safe Zones has become a diverse coalition of individuals from various offices, departments, and organizations across SDSU. The coalition includes, but is not limited to, Counseling and Psychological Services, Health Services, Public Safety, the Office of the President, Residential Education, Student Activities and Campus Life, the Cross-Cultural Center, and the Department of Women’s Studies.

Each semester, Safe Zones offers several Ally Certification training programs, free of charge, to students, staff, faculty, and other interested parties. Participants in the training program are provided a very personal and interactive space in which to dialogue with others and learn about LGBTQ issues, support, referrals, and how to work more effectively and efficiently to improve the campus climate. The training program also offers a safe space in which to explore one’s role as an ally, what being an ally means to the LGBTQ community, and how one’s role as an ally fits into the larger process of creating a campus community that is culturally competent and sensitive. Participants who complete the Ally Certification program are identified through the use of both Ally lapel pins and office door stickers.

Safe Zones also offers community-based service learning opportunities for SDSU students enrolled in the Women’s Studies 341 A and B courses: “Women in American History.” Each student fulfills 20 hours of service with Safe Zones and participates in a mandatory cultural competency training program. Students are encouraged to engage in projects that utilize their skills and talents. Approximately thirty students a year participate in this service learning option. They help promote the program through tabling, participating in the Big Gay BBQ, attending LGBTQ-related events, the Ally Certification training program, undertaking LGBTQ-themed research, and helping with the Safe Zones website.

During Spring 2010 semester the program hosted an LGBTQ and Allies Resource Fair, targeting the LGBTQ community and its Allies—the first of its kind on the SDSU campus. The March 18th event brought together a variety of campus organizations, LGBTQ-friendly businesses and organizations, live entertainment, and guest speakers. The fair was followed by the ever-popular Big Gay BBQ, hosted by the LGBTQ Student Union.

For more information about Safe Zones, how to become an Ally, Safe Zones related events, LGBTQ resources, and more please visit the Safe Zones website: www.safezones.sdsu.edu.

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Healthy Border Women Program

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Healthy Border Women will serve the University community and the public. It consists of two educational sessions delivered by trained facilitators in a community-based setting; they include behavioral skills practices, group discussions, lectures, role plays, an educational power point presentation, and other exercises.

Women’s Studies Liaison Committee members are Susan Cayleff, Ph.D., Mary Kelly, Ph.D., and Doreen Mattingly, Ph.D. Additional faculty include Barbara Shaver, Ph.D. and Donna Castaneda, Ph.D. Program staff are Frank Marquez, M.S., Erike Apolinar, M.A., Becky Moreno-Estrada, B.A., Louis Cruciani, B.A., and Enrique Gomez, M.D., M.P.H.

The Healthy Border Women’s Program office is located in Arts & Letters 334; office hours are Wednesdays 1:00-5:00 pm and by appointment. Email is: luigee5@sbcglobal.net with subject line “HBW.”

Mexicali Magic

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We put in a sprinkler system for a kindergarten, we worked with a bee project where we put on bee suits and also mixed concrete for their driveway, we planted cacti and even ate some. We also learned about programs offered to people who are deported from the US, and we were taught how to make tortillas and pastries. Along the way, we got our butts kicked by a group of children in a game of soccer; we gained many new muscles from shoveling, we learned what an apathetic chicken might look like, we made new friends, and for me, I gained a new direction for my future. The trip to Mexicali was the best experience of my life, as well as one of the most insightful, and I can’t wait to go back!

For more information on Los Niños visit: http://www.losninosenternacional.org/
Women’s Studies Graduate Student Wins Prestigious Award at 2010 Student Research Symposium

Kimberly Burke was given one of ten President’s Awards at this year’s Student Research Symposium at SDSU. Her presentation featured one of her chapters from her thesis: “That’s So Abercrombie: Fashioning Identity and Representing the Self.” Kim will be continuing on to compete in the California State University Research Competition on May 1st, 2010.

CONGRATULATIONS KIM!!

Below you can find the description of her award winning research.

Excessively Manipulated: Cornrows in the Courtroom

Kimberly Burke

Hair seems to be such a little thing. Yet it is the little things, the small everyday realities of life, that reveal the deepest meanings and values of a culture, give legal theory its grounding, and test its legitimacy (Caldwell 370).

This paper is an analysis of the court transcripts of Mr. Gbajabiamila’s suit against Abercrombie and Fitch, Inc. through the California Department of Fair Employing and Housing. Gbajabiamila was terminated from Abercrombie Company’s Hollister branch for wearing cornrows. I am approaching this project from a postmodernist viewpoint that our conceptions of the world are always mediated through discourse. Juana Rodríguez states that “discourse provides the context and the methodology through which both identity and this ‘horizon of meanings’ can be interrogated” (Rodríguez 7). The court transcript represents a discourse through which “subjects are continually involved in negotiating the accumulated narratives of identity that circulate within these localized ‘horizons of meanings’ and the contradiction revealed within their articulations” (Rodríguez 7). This chapter draws on feminist legal theory and critical race theory to explore the intersections of race and gender within Gbajabiamila’s trial. I highlight past court cases dealing with black hair in the workplace, such as Rogers v American Airlines, and situate Abercrombie’s defense within the historical treatment of blacks in the US justice system. I find that the defense employs several strategies historically used to justify racist and discriminatory laws. I address significant implications the strategies and findings of this case have for social and cultural meanings of race and gender.


Travel Study Trip to India

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Humayun Tombs. Students and community members had the opportunity to experience the local cultures first hand by navigating the cities and bartering with merchants for good deals at the various markets. Sampling the local cuisines was also an adventure for the group, with all the rich and spicy flavors to liven the palate. Even with a few colds and upset stomachs, the travel-study trip was quite a success with students and community members seeing the many facets of India while making new friends at the same time.
The Conference Presentation: A Reflection
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Stevie and I meticulously crafted our lecture and slideshow in order to be as accessible as possible to potential participants. The theoretical aspects of our presentation (“Feminism and Erotica,” “Queer Theory and Identities”) were simplified as much as they could be, and we made sure to set enough time aside for questions and dialogue. Our presentation had approximately 40 attendees, something we had not anticipated. Most of our audience was also female—there were only three individuals who identified as male. Though we tried to provide complex information in the simplest ways possible, we had not considered how the term “feminist” in our presentation title might have been off-putting to a conference population that appeared heavily male/gay.

For me, the experiences I encountered at the Western Regional LGBTQIA Conference were positive and full of learning opportunities. The intimidation I initially experienced was put to rest as I navigated my way through the application process and the anxiety of presenting to an eager audience. I was also able to establish new connections with other professionals affiliated with the conference committee and Cal Poly itself, something I had not anticipated. I would encourage any student to pursue opportunities to present at conferences.

The Andrea O’Donnell Women’s Outreach Association: A Status Update
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zation does it’s best to promote awareness and resources for the SDSU community. This semester the WOA has formed a movement to end the distribution of the Koala at SDSU. The main reason for this call to action is because the group feels that the Koala promotes racism, sexism, hate, discrimination, and educates their readers how to commit rape and violence against women. This movement has already begun to make progress and hopefully everyone will join in the fight by telling others and recycling a Koala. The organization will be proudly hosting its annual High School conference in March, providing outreach and workshops for at risk teenage women. The WOA will also be marching and speaking out at their annual event Take Back the Night on April 29; please attend and help break the silence!
Forging new connections and re-establishing old ones have been hallmarks of the year. Under the capable guidance of Irene Lara and Anh Hua, we have had an outstanding colloquium series titled “Feminist Crossroads: Bearing Witness and Building Social Change,” its various events described separately in the following pages. Helping us make connections to the 1970s in our “Kickoff” event was Marilyn Boxer, who stepped in at a critical time of redefinition for the program. Panels have included many of our recent graduates, working in the community, such as Margaret Slaska, or doing research on “War, Displacement and Gendered Violence,” such as Stephanie Chaban. One panel examined “Women’s Studies in the Community: Making a Difference in Local Activism,” noting connections made to the San Diego County Women’s Hall of Fame, the Women’s History Museum and Educational Center, LGBTQ archives, the Safe Zones Program, and the “Healthy Borders” program for HIV/AIDS prevention. We have featured the documentary film, The Shape of Water, helping us celebrate International Women’s Day; the film Poto Mitán enabled us to lend support to Haitian women surviving the current crisis, after the earthquake. We featured two new books Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women’s Studies, presented by two of its editors, Frances Smith Foster and Stanlie M. James, and The Fat Studies Reader, by editors Esther Rothblum and Sondra Solovay and contributor Bianca Wilson. In a memorable series of events and connections, Cherrie Moraga spoke on “Decolonization, Gender and Chicana/o Studies at SDSU, and read from her works at The Center, downtown.

At about press time, we will innovate what we hope will become an ongoing feature for the program. Panels have included many of our recent graduates, working in the community, such as Margaret Slaska, or doing research on “War, Displacement and Gendered Violence,” such as Stephanie Chaban. One panel examined “Women’s Studies in the Community: Making a Difference in Local Activism,” noting connections made to the San Diego County Women’s Hall of Fame, the Women’s History Museum and Educational Center, LGBTQ archives, the Safe Zones Program, and the “Healthy Borders” program for HIV/AIDS prevention. We have featured the documentary film, The Shape of Water, helping us celebrate International Women’s Day; the film Poto Mitán enabled us to lend support to Haitian women surviving the current crisis, after the earthquake. We featured two new books Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women’s Studies, presented by two of its editors, Frances Smith Foster and Stanlie M. James, and The Fat Studies Reader, by editors Esther Rothblum and Sondra Solovay and contributor Bianca Wilson. In a memorable series of events and connections, Cherrie Moraga spoke on “Decolonization, Gender and Chicana/o Studies at SDSU, and read from her works at The Center, downtown.

At about press time, we will innovate what we hope will become an ongoing feature of our Bread and Roses Center, an annual symposium, “Feminist Crossroads: Holistic Health and the Humanities.” It begins April 29, with our Scholarship lecturer, Loretta Ross of SisterSong, a woman of color organization promoting reproductive health, continues with a day-long set of panels April 29 at Scripps Cottage for extending such a welcoming invitation to the University of Costa Rica.

We also want to draw as many as possible to our culminating events, October 1–2, 2010. Our celebratory dinner will be held at the Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center on October 2. The weekend will also offer the opening of the play, Labyrinth of Desire, a related exhibit in the University Gallery, workshops and panels. To keep the connections going, a memoir project will record the impact of Women’s Studies over the generations of its students, faculty and community allies at SDSU. To bring this all about, we have had unprecedented cosponsorship and related events from departments and offices across campus: Chicana and Chicano Studies; Africana Studies; English and Comparative Literature; Spanish and Portuguese; The School of Theater, Television, and Film; the University Art Gallery, MALAS, SDSU Cultural Arts and Special Events (CASE); the Intercultural Relations/Cross Cultural Center; Harvey Johnston Humanities Fund; and the Presidential Leadership Fund, Elaine Lipinsky, and especially Deborah Carstens. We go into the next 40 years confident that Women’s Studies has developed the connections and the understanding to take on new challenges, as they present themselves, and that the Department has the strong support of SDSU and the community. Let us see you in October! Full registration information for the symposium and the culminating events can be found on our website.

We Welcome Visiting Faculty from Costa Rica!

Adriana Jimenez Rodriguez, visiting faculty from the University of Costa Rica

UCR, especially because we try to make our classes as interdisciplinary as possible.

What were your most useful experiences while at SDSU?

Sitting in classes, mostly. The professors were very kind in giving me their reading lists, pointing me in the right direction in terms of books to buy and articles to read, etc, and just learning how classes are run there, students’ reactions to the materials, all that was incredibly useful. Profs Scott, Rothblum and Donadey were really kind and welcoming, and recent M.A. grad Monica Bradley was particularly helpful in the sense that her class is on LGBT literature, which is exactly what I want to work on here at the UCR this year.

How is women studies taught in your home university?

I like to think I do it through literature! My filter is always feminism, and I focus on how a woman-oriented approach can usefully analyze the intersections between sexism and misogyny and all other forms of oppression, especially in the context of a homophobic, racist, neo-colonial, classist late capitalist world, which can be evident in the least expected settings, as we all know.

Is there anything else you would like to add? Well, I would like to add that all the professors and graduate students are more than welcome here at the University of Costa Rica, and I would like everyone to keep that in mind. We are open to all possibilities of academic exchange, be it for co-teaching, class observations, conferences (we are hosting our II International Congress this December), research, etc. Feel free to contact me at any time and I will do my best to make it all happen!

Thank you, again, Professor Adriana Jimenez Rodriguez for visiting us and for extending such a welcoming invitation to the University of Costa Rica.
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.

**Women's Studies Historical Marker**
$3,000 to purchase official plaque for first Women's Studies department in nation.

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

**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.

Thank You!
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