



WOMEN'S STUDIES BULLETIN

August/September 2006

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EVENTS

NIU 2006 CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG WOMEN

The 2006 NIU Conference for Young Women will be held Tuesday, October 24, from 8:15 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. Sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Women's Studies Program, this conference introduces young women in their sophomore through senior years of high school to a variety of career areas, including professions where women have been historically underrepresented. The conference will include a panel discussion on career opportunities for women, presentations by faculty on topics related to women's collegiate experiences and career options, and tours of the NIU campus and campus facilities. This year's speakers will focus on career opportunities in fields ranging from systems engineering and graphic design to athletics and counseling. Please encourage high school women to register for this exciting opportunity. To register, call 1-800-345-9472. For additional information, call (815) 753-1038, or visit www.niu.edu/clasep/Young_womens/. The registration fee is \$33 before October 17, with a \$5 additional late charge after that date. Limited scholarships are available. If you wish to contribute to a scholarship, please send a check to the Women's Studies Program made out to NIU.

WOMEN'S STUDIES FALL SOCIAL

Our fall social for faculty associates and affiliates will be held on Tuesday, September 12, from 4:00-5:30 p.m. in

the Thurgood Marshall Gallery. We hope all new and returning Women's Studies faculty will join us to kick off the fall semester with stimulating conversation over wine and hors d'oeuvres.

NWSA 2007 CONFERENCE

The National Women's Studies Association is holding its 2007 conference, "Past Debates, Present Possibilities, Future Feminisms: A Women's and Gender Studies Conference—Celebrating 30 Years of NWSA," at Pheasant Run in St. Charles. We are pleased to announce that NIU will be a general conference co-sponsor in addition to administering credit for a concurrent Girls' Studies Institute. NWSA is currently seeking conference paper proposals for the conference. Proposals must be submitted electronically via the conference site or to nwsaoffice@nwsa.org by November 1, 2006. For additional information, visit <http://www.nwsaconference.org/proposal.html>.

"THIS IS WHAT A FEMINIST COOKS LIKE!"

Do you have a favorite recipe that you would like to share? The Women's Studies Program is planning to create a "This is What a Feminist Cooks Like" cookbook CD-ROM, which we will sell to raise money for the Mothers Memorial Scholarship. We are looking for all types of recipes. Whether it's a recipe for a simple grilled cheese or a recipe for a fabulous feminist party, if you are a feminist—male or female, young or not-so-young—we want your recipes. If you have an original recipe that you would like to share, please email it to rkohli@niu.edu, or bring it by the Women's Studies office in Reavis 103 by Friday, October 27.

CRAFTY WOMEN HOLIDAY SALE PREVIEW

Once again, the Women's Studies Program will be hosting CRAFTY WOMEN, a holiday gift sale to benefit the Mothers Memorial Scholarship fund, in late November. Last year's sale was a real success, and we hope to make this year's sale an even bigger event. We will need small craft items to sell; so, if you're a crafty woman (or man), it's time to start crafting! Watch for updates in our future bulletins.

"THIS IS WHAT A FEMINIST LOOKS LIKE" STICKER DAY GOES NATIONAL

An NIU Women's History Month activity has caught the attention of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA). For the past few years, the NIU Women's

Studies Program has designated one day in March to wear stickers proclaiming, "This is What a Feminist Looks Like." The event has proven successful. On the designated day, hundreds can be seen displaying their feminist pride on the NIU campus and beyond. Amy Levin, director of Women's Studies at NIU, provided information on the activity that is now posted on the NWSA Web site at <http://www.nwsa.org/work.php>, where other universities can find details if they would like to adopt the spring ritual. "What's important and gratifying about the event for us," Levin says, "is that it shows our community that individuals with a range of beliefs consider themselves feminists and consider it cause for pride."

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PREVIEW

The theme for this year's Women's History Month will be "Re-Defining Motherhood," a critical examination of the way the "institution" of motherhood and its relevance to women's lives are changing. Our programs and activities will investigate all forms of motherhood, including mother-figures and what Patricia Hill Collins terms "other mothers." To further complicate the discussion, we will be including discussions of women who are not mothers as well. We are currently seeking ideas for topics and speakers for this yearly event. Also, we encourage faculty to discuss the theme of motherhood in spring courses and to develop relevant assignment options. We look forward to receiving your ideas for events and programs. Please contact Rebekah Kohli at 753-1044 or rkohli@niu.edu to share any ideas that you might have. You may also visit <http://www.clas.niu.edu/wstudies/whm2007.htm> to fill out an activity proposal form. We are looking forward to another great Women's History Month this year.

PEOPLE

WELCOME WS TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Once again, we have three full-time TAs this year. Welcome back to Austin Sawicki, whom we are thrilled to have for his second year as a Women's Studies TA. Welcome also to our two new TAs, Ashleigh Burge and Christine Haskill. Ashleigh is a graduate student in Philosophy and a Women's Studies concentrator. Christine is our "student in the spotlight."

STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Christine Haskill, one of our new Women's Studies teaching assistants, is currently pursuing an M.A. in English, with an emphasis on British and American Literature. She is also a Women's Studies graduate certificate student. She hopes to complete her graduate program by summer 2007 and then go on for a Ph.D. in

literature. Ultimately, Christine wants to teach at the university level.

Christine came to NIU after receiving her B.A. in English from Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, MI. A professor at Cornerstone introduced her to feminist philosophies, which sparked Christine's interest in Women's Studies. She then went on to complete an independent study in feminist theory. When she came to NIU, she discovered the Women's Studies Program and decided that she "wanted to find out more about it and get involved."

Christine is an accomplished student. While in her undergraduate program, she was involved in the English Society, and she received the undergraduate English department award. Since coming to NIU, she has been a member of the English Graduate Student Association and she is a graduate mentor for incoming teaching interns in the English department. This summer, she presented a paper at the "Southern Writers, Southern Writing" conference at the University of Mississippi (see "Awards & Accomplishments").

From a literary standpoint, Christine believes that Women's Studies is valuable because it "gives a voice" to many women and minority writers who have been ignored in the past. In general, she says that Women's Studies is important because it provides an "often overlooked perspective for looking at the world." In closing, Christine offers this excellent advice to other students, "Don't be afraid to ask questions, and actively seek out people who can help you succeed."

FACULTY ASSOCIATE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Alexandra Bennett, Associate Professor of English, came to NIU in the fall of 1999. She received her Ph.D. from Brandeis University in Massachusetts, after studying at Oxford University in England during the final year of her program. She received her M.A. from the University of Western Ontario in Canada, and her B.A. (Honours) from Queen's University in Canada. Prior to coming to NIU, Bennett taught English at Concordia and McGill Universities in Montreal, Canada.

Bennett is an accomplished professor who has received numerous honors. Last year, she received a one-month fellowship to study at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. Her research at the library resulted in an article, "'Now let my language speak': The Authorship, Rewriting and Audience(s) of Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley," which won the *Early Modern Literary Studies* 2006 Literature Online Prize in May. Most recently, Bennett was named one of the "25 Amazing NIU Women."

Bennett is, indeed, an amazing woman who wears many hats. As an English professor, she specializes in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English drama, and she enjoys teaching a wide range of courses, from Shakespeare and Renaissance literature to twentieth-century American and British drama. She also leads occasional workshops in verse drama for the Theater School. Not only is Bennett an accomplished professor, but she is also a talented actor and playwright. In spring, she played the title role in Christopher Marlowe's "Dido, Queen of Carthage" for the Camenae Ensemble Theater Company in Chicago. More recently, two short plays that she wrote were staged at the Abbie Hoffman Died for Our Sins Theater Festival in Chicago.

Bennett has long been interested in "the experiences and writing of women," which is evident in her research, writing, and teaching. Like our "student in the spotlight," Bennett also appreciates "the way in which Women's Studies courses...encourage students to look at the world from multiple perspectives." In closing, when asked about the value of Women's Studies, Bennett said that the "interdisciplinary crossovers in such programs are definitely of enormous value," and for this reason, she recommends that "anyone—indeed everyone—take at least one Women's Studies course during their educational careers."

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Alex Bennett has a chapter, "Testifying in the Court of Public Opinion: Margaret Cavendish Reworks The Winter's Tale," in the recently published book, *Cavendish and Shakespeare: Interconnections* (Ashgate, 2006).

Barbara Burrell's article, "Don't expect another 'Year of the Woman'" was published in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 14, 2006.

Sherra Carey was awarded a Graduate School Jeffrey T. Lunsford/Minority Fellowship for the 2006-07 academic year. In spring 2006, she showed a poster board presentation at the Illinois Council on Family Relations Conference. Sherra was also initiated into Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society in spring 2006.

Karen Castelein will be presenting "Rural Women Learning the American Way" at the Rural Women's Studies Association 2006 Triennial Conference in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, October 5-7, 2006.

Krystle Everett participated in the Illinois New Leadership Program as an intern, May 30-June 4, 2006 at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Deborah Holdstein presented a plenary address at the Association of Departments of English conference in

Knoxville, TN, in June, and a paper at the Council of Writing Program Administrators conference in Chattanooga, TN, in July. Her volume (co-edited with Andrea Greenbaum of Barry University), *Judaic Perspectives in Composition and Rhetoric*, has been fully accepted for publication and is forthcoming in 2007 with Hampton Press.

Amy Levin has edited a book, *Defining Memory: Local Museums and the Construction of History in America's Changing Communities*, which is due out from AltaMira early next spring (2007). The book is a collection of essays (including one by former faculty associate Beau Vallance) on local museums in the U.S., broadly defined. Levin's sections focus on museums in lower Manhattan, how they present or are linked to business interests, and what happened to them after 9/11.

Faculty affiliate **Diana Steele** published, "The Calculus of Differences: Effects of Psychosocial, Cultural, and Pedagogical Intervention In an All Women's University Calculus Class," with co-authors **Amy Levin**, Richard Blecksmith and Jill Shahveridan, in *Mathematics Education Research Journal* (December 2005).

Kei Nomaguchi co-authored an article, "Maternal Employment in Childhood and Adults' Retrospective Reports of Parenting Practices," published in *Journal of Marriage and Family* (August 2006).

Kathleen Renk has numerous forthcoming essays and book articles, including: "Myopic Feminist Individualism in A.S. Byatt's Arabian Nights' Tale: 'The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye,'" to be published in the *Journal of International Women's Studies* 8.1; "Jane Eyre as Hunger Artist" will appear in *Women's Writing*; "Debating Darwin: The Alchemy of A.S. Byatt and Pauline Melville" will appear in *Literature and Science*; and "Magic that Battles Death: Pauline Melville's Marvelous Realism" will be published in *Beyond the Islands: Extending the Meaning of the Caribbean*.

Lise Schlosser's article, "'The Answer of the Oracle': Reading Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* in the Context of Jane Ellen Harrison's Scholarship," was published in the journal *In-Between: Essays and Studies in Literary Criticism* (July 2006).

Randi Wolfe's article, "Choosing to include gay issues in early childhood teacher preparation coursework: One professor's journey," was published in the *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education* (2006).

OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Just what does a feminist look like?

As we look back on the history of Women's Studies at NIU and other universities, we realize that some of our current activities--the craft sale, a feminist cookbook, Women's History Month focusing on motherhood--would have been considered regressive or anti-feminist in the past. Is this still the case? What do you think? Is the definition of feminism expanding or are we just moving backward? We'd be happy to print good short answers in future bulletins. We also welcome student papers on this topic for our spring essay contest.

Women For Hire Career Expo will be held October 10, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the Lakeview Terrace on Navy Pier. Between 8:30-10:00 a.m. there will be an Early Morning Seminar featuring Women For Hire CEO and regular "Good Morning, America" contributor, Tory Johnson. The cost of the seminar is \$10. For additional information on the seminar or expo, visit <http://www.womenforhire.com>.

Women for Women International is seeking submissions that focus on "Engaging Men in 'Women's Issues'" for the winter 2007 issue of its bi-annual academic journal, *Critical Half*. Deadline is October 15. For submission guidelines and other information, visit <http://www.womenforwomen.org>.

Applications for the Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowships in Women's Studies are now being accepted. Fellowships support doctoral research about women that crosses disciplinary, regional, or cultural boundaries. Application deadlines are typically early-mid October. For the precise application deadline and additional information, visit <http://www.woodrow.org/womens-studies/index.php>.

Applications for NWSA scholarships for students in Women's Studies or related areas are available on the NWSA website. Scholarships include graduate scholarships for theses and dissertations, Lesbian Studies, Jewish Women's Studies, and Women of Color Essay Awards. For information, visit <http://www.nwsa.org/scholarship/index.php>, or email nwsaoffice@nwsa.org.

Marquette University's Women's Studies Program is accepting paper proposals for its 13th annual conference, "Women and Creativity." The conference will take place March 22-24, 2007/ at Marquette's Milwaukee campus. Proposals are due by November 30, 2006. For additional information, visit <http://www.marquette.edu/wstudies/callforpapers07.htm>.

Women's eNews is offering paid internships in its New York office. For more information, visit <http://www.womensenews.org/intern.cfm>, or email editors@womensenews.org with "Internship" in the subject line.

We invite submissions for future WS bulletins. If you know of any information that we should include in future bulletins, please email Rebekah Kohli at rkohli@niu.edu with subject heading "Bulletin." You may also call 753-1044.