



WOMEN'S STUDIES BULLETIN

October/November 2005

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EVENTS

CRAFTY WOMEN--HOLIDAY GIFT SALE AND SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT

The Women's Studies program, together with Women's Alliance, will be hosting CRAFTY WOMEN, a holiday gift sale to benefit the Mothers Memorial Scholarship fund. If you wish to donate small craft items to sell, please bring them to the Women's Studies program by the day before Thanksgiving. The actual sale will be on November 30 through December 2 in Reavis 103. A reception will be held during the sale; invitations will follow. Items on sale will include Women's Studies note cards, tote bags and T-shirts, as well as Amy Levin's Clean Girl soap, crocheted I-pod cases, and other goodies created by Women's Studies students, faculty, and staff. Tell your friends!

NIU 2005 CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG WOMEN

The ninth annual Conference for Young Women, held on October 19, 2005, was a success. The conference introduced young high school women to the academic side of college life and various career options that are non-traditional for women. The participants learned about a variety of career options and fields, including History, Political Science, Geography, English, Law and Marketing. They also toured the NIU Television Center and Barsema Hall. As one of the participants said, "It was a great experience," and they learned a lot. Thank

you to all our friends and associates who presented at the conference and helped to make it such a success.

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

An annual Take Back the Night march was held on Thursday, October 13, 2005. During this event, over 50 people marched to raise awareness of sexual violence on university campuses. The event was sponsored by NIU Women's Alliance, a student organization dedicated to addressing concerns and interests of all women. For more information, visit www.niuwomensalliance.com.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH UPDATE

Women's Studies graduate students were recently asked to voice their opinion regarding potential Graduate Colloquium speakers to bring in for Women's History Month, and the results are in. The Women's Studies Program has made tentative plans to bring Dr. Valentine Moghadam and Dr. Kelli Lyon Johnson to NIU as our Graduate Colloquium speakers this year. Dr. Moghadam is Chief of the Gender Equality and Development Section in the Social and Human Sciences Sector for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Her lecture and seminar will focus on the challenges facing contemporary feminists in the United States and the Middle East. Dr. Johnson is an Assistant Professor of Composition and Literature at Miami University-Hamilton in Ohio, and a recent NIU graduate with a Ph.D. in English. Johnson's lecture and seminar will focus on Chicana and Native American literature.

PEOPLE

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Krishna Desai, a senior Political Science major, is our student in the spotlight. Krishna will graduate with minors in Women's Studies and Economics, as well as a certificate in LGBT studies. After graduation, she hopes to enroll in Law School, possibly at UCLA. Ultimately, she hopes to enter politics, where she feels she will be able to make a difference. After speaking with Krishna for just a few minutes, you will see that she is articulate and bright enough to realize these dreams.

Krishna came to NIU after attending the College of DuPage (COD) for two years. A sociology class, which she took during her sophomore year at COD, sparked her interest in issues related to women and the LGBT community. She believes that there are important connections between Women's Studies and LGBT Studies. For instance, she argues that our society views men and women as binary opposites, both necessary in order to make a "complete set," and yet men are generally viewed as being superior to women. She believes that these normative notions of gender and sex are responsible for both gender-based and sexuality-based discrimination. As a future lawyer and politician, she wants to work towards ending this sort of discrimination.

In her free time, Krishna enjoys traveling. Growing up, she traveled a lot. When she was two, she moved to India, where she lived with her grandmother until she was five years old, and returned to the United States. When she was nine, she and her mother moved back to India until she was thirteen. She hopes to travel to India again sometime in the near future. She has also enjoyed traveling throughout the United States. This past summer, she went to Washington, D.C., for the Eighth International Women's Policy Research Conference. She also enjoys following international politics and analyzing popular culture.

Krishna urges other Women's Studies undergraduate students to pay attention to the concepts and theories introduced in their lower division classes. She says that once a student enters their upper division courses, she will see connections between many of these concepts and theories. She also says that it will make life easier when students get into their upper-division courses.

ASSOCIATE OF THE MONTH

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the Women's Studies Program at NIU, we thought that it would be appropriate to turn the spotlight on one of our joint appointment faculty members. Diana Swanson, Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies, is our associate in the spotlight. She is also the Coordinator for the LGBT Studies Program. Swanson came to NIU in 1991, after receiving her Ph.D. in English and a minor in Feminist Studies from the University of Minnesota. She received her B.A. in English from Amherst College in Massachusetts. She has taught numerous courses in Women's Studies over the past 14 years, including "Women Across Cultures and Centuries" (WOMS 235),

"Growing Up Female," "Feminist Theory," and "Weird Books by Women Novelists."

Swanson first became interested in Women's Studies while taking an English course and an Anthropology course during her senior year at Amherst. The Anthropology course focused on the relationships between men and women in a cross-cultural perspective. In the English course, she studied four women novelists whom she had read previously for enjoyment. The latter helped her to realize that women writers could be the subject of serious study. After graduating, Swanson started reading works by such women authors as Adrienne Rich, George Eliot and Virginia Woolf. Woolf's *Three Guineas* had an impact on Swanson's decision to go to Graduate School.

Two of Swanson's ongoing research interests are the representation of sexuality in literature and the cultural meanings of lesbianism. She has authored numerous texts that focus on the early 20th century British writer Virginia Woolf. Her most recent publication is a chapter on "Lesbian Approaches" in the forthcoming *Palgrave Companion to Woolf Studies*. She is also interested in ecofeminism and ecocriticism of Woolf's texts. Specifically, Swanson is interested in how authors like Woolf write about the non-human world in a way that is not simply a reflection of the human world. According to Swanson, Woolf's texts reveal her interest in the world outside of human consciousness and a recognition that the world is not entirely dependent upon humans. Last summer, Swanson presented a paper, "The Roar on the Other Side of Silence: Paying Attention to Nonhuman Nature in Virginia Woolf's Short Fiction," at the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment's (ASLE) 2005 Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

Swanson enjoys gardening and bird watching in her free time, as well as reading. Right now, she is reading *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* by John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed. Since she is an English professor it is not surprising that reading is one of her passions. Dr. Swanson encourages students to follow their passions, too. She also says to "study hard, be generous, and don't make assumptions about other people."

WELCOME OUR NEW STUDENT WORKER

Katie Breitenbach is our new student worker. Katie is a sophomore English Education major and Women's Studies minor. Katie enjoys reading and singing in her

church choir in her spare time. Currently, her favorite book is *Wicked* by Gregory Maguire.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Carole Minor co-edited a new book, *Experiential Activities for Teaching Career Counseling Classes and for Facilitating Career Groups-Volume Two*, with Mark Pope. Minor is a Presidential Teaching Professor in the NIU College of Education's Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education, as well as a Women's Studies Faculty Associate.

Kristen Myers' new book *Racetalk: Racism Hiding in Plain Sight* was published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers in August 2005. This book examines the ways that people of all races help to reproduce racism through everyday interactions.

Luz Gonzales, a Women's Studies Minor, was recognized as a 2005 Orientation Leader by the NIU Orientation Office.

OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NIU offers minors and certificates in various interdisciplinary areas, including Asian American Studies, Black Studies, Latino and Latin American Studies, LGBT studies, and Women's Studies. For more information visit or call:

Southeast Asian Studies: www.niu.edu/cseas; 753-1771
Black Studies: www.cbs.niu.edu/; 753-1709
Latino & Latin American Studies: www.clas.niu.edu/latino; 753-1531
LGBT Studies: www.niu.edu/lgbt/lgbtstudies.htm; 753-LGBT
Women's Studies www.clas.niu.edu/wstudies; 753-1038

The American Association of University Women Leadership Training Institute is accepting proposals from teams for action projects to address campus sexual harassment. Deadline for submission of proposals is November 15, 2005. Visit www.aauw.org/campus_connection/cap.cfm for more information.

The Martha Cooper Journalism Award is open to all NIU students and alumni who have written and published about women's issues at NIU since March 1, 2005. The submission deadline is March 17, 2006. For further information, visit www.niu.edu/women/PCSWjounhis.shtml.

Seal/Avalon Press seeks submissions for *We Don't Need Another Wave: Dispatches from the Next Generation of Feminists*, an anthology of young feminist

writers. Deadline for submissions is January 15, 2006. For additional information, email the editor, Melody Berger, at HowlingHarpies@gmail.com. Berger also recommends that you visit www.thef-wordzine.com.

The Thomas C. Wiegele Interdisciplinary Dissertation Completion Award is offered annually to Ph.D. candidates at NIU whose dissertations bridge two distinct academic disciplines. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2006. Applications are available from the Wiegele Award Committee, Department of Political Science, NIU.

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is accepting applications for a full-time tenure-track teaching position in the Department of Women's Studies. Deadline for application submission is December 1, 2005. For further information, visit www.uww.edu.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Passed in the Senate. On Tuesday, October 4, the U.S. Senate voted unanimously to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. VAWA now moves to a House/Senate conference committee. You can go to www.now.org to sign a petition urging that a conference committee be formed immediately to reauthorize the act. More information about the VAWA can be found at www.vawa2005.org.

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.