

Gender and Women's Studies Newsletter

Fall 2008



A letter from the Director:

This quarter saw the first 'run' of our new GWST Foundations course, SOCS 1112. Twenty-seven students enrolled and twenty-seven stayed the course. We had a lively class (not always as in the picture below including dogs—part of our last class 'treat') and, I think, amply proved the worth of having a GWST Foundations course. Indeed, in future we might like to think about running two Foundation courses a year.

A major event this quarter that certainly helped to create a sense of togetherness was the lecture/class organized by Jennifer Reich this term, *Gender, Politics, and Power* which involved a series of talks on issues highly relevant to the election. The speakers' were funded by a Marsico grant for which we are very grateful. This course was an exciting new development, with lectures attended not only by students from Jennifer's class and from Geoffrey Bateman's *Rhetoric, Suffrage, and U.S. Women's Writing Class*, and my own Foundations class but by the university community in general. I certainly found the talks on the various amendments to the Colorado Constitution very informative and helpful. We would like to repeat this format of class/lecture/visiting speakers/Marsico grant next year—on another topic of course—so any interested faculty please contact me for more details!

Finally, I would always like to hear from affiliated faculty and urge faculty who do regard themselves as part of the Gender and Women's Studies program and faculty to join us for our many talks, and workshops. Your help is needed to develop the program, for instance, we currently wish now to embark on a policy of regularly cross-listing, or actually GWST numbering, those courses involving examinations of gender taught in other departments, and, in particular, those courses that are regularly taught. Please let me know of any such courses taught in your departments. Finally, I wish us all every sort of happy holiday,

Jessica Munns



SOCS 1112: Foundation in GWST Class Fall 2008

GWST Workshop: Teaching Difference & Diversity: Developing the GWST Program

The teaching development workshop was held on November 7, 2008 in the Garden Room of The Women's College located in the lovely Chambers Center. Faculty further discussed how to shape and deliver the GWST Major and Minor. The main issue ahead of us is to construct a degree that includes variety, consistency and progression. Following a survey carried out last academic year by Lisa Martinez and David Shneer we are aware that GWST students regret the lack of a sense of disciplinary identity and program cohesion. We hope that the Foundations course itself helps here and are bearing these comments in mind as we think about improvements, including working on the idea of a two credit Capstone class which would bring students together again in their 3rd or 4th years.

Winter Quarter 2009 Courses

<p>GWST 2700 CRN 4146</p>	<p>Topics in GWST: Geisha: Myths and Realities 2 p.m.-5:50 p.m., Wednesdays, 4 credits, Elizabeth Owen This course combines art, history, and literature in its exploration of images of Geisha in history and in contemporary popular culture. We will employ a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, from art historical visual analysis, material culture studies, historical, sociological, and gender studies, among other disciplines, as we attempt to understand the complex and changing nature of Geisha.</p>
--------------------------------------	--

GWST 2982 CRN 4147	Colloquium in GWST: Poetry, History, and Gender <i>10 a.m.-11:50 a.m., Tuesdays, 2 credits, Scott Howard</i> A lively encounter with a robust gathering of poems, narratives, prose fictions, and historical documents from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries. Special attention will be given to poetic theory, historiography, and gender politics. Within and against those larger contexts, the class will engage closely with the works of Katherine Philips and Ben Jonson, Margaret Cavendish and Francis Bacon, Aemilia Lanyer and John Donne, among other writers.
-------------------------------	---

Also Listed Courses

SOCI 2220 CRN 3192	Sociology of Childhood <i>10-11:50 a.m., Monday and Wednesday, 5 credits, Jennifer Reich</i>
-------------------------------	--

Courses of Interest

CORE 2531 CRN 4013	Culture of Desire: Queer Theory <i>4-5:50 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 credits, Luc Beaudoin</i>
CORE 2565 CRN 3042	Men and Masculinities <i>2.-3:50 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 credits, Lisa Pasko</i>

Events from the Fall Quarter and Upcoming Events

Fall Lecture Series: Gender, Politics, and Power

The Gender and Women’s Studies Program, the department of Sociology and Criminology, and the department of Political Science partnered together to sponsor the Marsico lecture series with additional support from the Center for Multicultural Excellence and Partners in Learning.

“No Pink Tea”: Margaret Brown, Women’s Suffrage and the 1908 Denver Convention kicked off the lecture series on September 17, 2008. In 1908, politics embroiled the nation, women pushed for the right to vote and Denver shone in the national spotlight by hosting its first ever national political convention—the Democratic National Convention. Anne Robb Levinsky, Director of the Molly Brown House and Kelly Rasmussen, Curator of Collections for the Molly Brown House, spoke about the exhibit currently at the Museum, “No Pink Tea” (named for a Margaret Brown quote). The exhibit recreates the controversies and passions of the day, with special focus on women’s role in the political arena as they campaigned for the right to help select the American

president, regardless of party affiliation. In 1908, women in Denver and elsewhere grew increasingly avid in their desire to cast ballots. The Molly Brown House Museum exhibit recreates the tools they used in their pursuit of suffrage, including an intimate suffrage tea setting, a lecture-style luncheon common in the movement and even the sashes, signs, and banners that marked a truly grassroots effort.

On September 24, 2008, Lynn Paltrow, the Founder and Executive Director of National Advocates for Pregnant Women (NAPW) presented a lecture titled Danger on the Ballot: How the "Human Life Amendment" threatens the wellbeing of women, children, and families. Ms. Paltrow has served as a senior staff attorney at the ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project, as Director of Special Litigation at the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, and as Vice President for Public Affairs for Planned Parenthood of New York City. She has worked on numerous cases challenging restrictions on the right to choose abortion as well cases opposing the prosecution and punishment of pregnant women seeking to continue their pregnancies to term. Ms. Paltrow conceived of and filed the first affirmative federal civil rights challenge to a hospital policy of searching pregnant women for evidence of drug use and turning that information over to the police. In the case of *Ferguson et. al., v. City of Charleston et. al.*, the United States Supreme Court agreed that such a policy violates the 4th amendment's protections against unreasonable searches and seizures. The focus of her lecture addressed the legal ramifications of the proposed ballot initiative, which would alter the state constitution to define all individual rights guaranteed in the Colorado state constitution as beginning at conception.

On October 1, 2008, Nick Syrett from the University of Northern Colorado presented on the topic "The Equal Rights for Which Women?: The E.R.A. of the 1920's and 1970's and debates over American women's roles." After achieving the right to vote in 1920, some feminists focused their sights on gaining an amendment to the constitution that would guarantee women's equality at the federal level: the Equal Rights Amendment. They failed. The movement to pass the ERA gained widespread support again in the 1970s and came very close to being ratified by the required number of states. Once again, however, it failed to pass. In both cases, while there was clearly much opposition by men, there was also a vigorous movement by women to combat the ERA. The two groups of female ERA opponents were very different, however, and their

differences have much to tell us about what was at stake for different kinds of women in considering the passage of an ERA. Dr. Syrett's lecture focused on those differences, paying special attention to the ways in which the ERA struggles revealed fault lines in the notion that American women have so much in common and what ERA debates can tell us about gender roles, ideals, as well as examining the so-called "mommy wars" of the contemporary moment.

On October 15, 2008, Melissa Hart from the University of Colorado Law School presented Understanding the Colorado Affirmative Action Initiatives. As voters were asked this November whether or not to amend the state constitution to ban affirmative action programs by state governments, Melissa Hart discussed the potential impact of the Colorado Civil Rights Initiative (COCRI).

On October 22, 2008 Dr. D. Sunshine Hillygus from the Department of Government at Harvard University presented her lecture titled Persuadable Voters in 2008: Campaign Effects and Candidate Strategies. Dr. Hillygus is the Frederick S. Danzinger Associate Professor of Government and director of the Program on Survey Research at Harvard University. Her work examines recent and historical campaigns using a wealth of data from national surveys, experimental research, campaign advertising, archival work, and interviews with campaign practitioners. With a rigorous multi-method approach and broad theoretical perspective, she offers a timely and thorough understanding of voter decision making, candidate strategy, and the dynamics of presidential campaigns.

The sixth and final lecture was presented October 29, 2008 by Faith Winter from the White House Project. The White House Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization that aims to advance women's leadership in all communities and sectors— up to the U.S. presidency— by filling the leadership pipeline with a richly diverse, critical mass of women. Faith Winter, the National Field Director and former politician, present her lecture, Women in Politics, which addressed the barriers women face in getting elected and the opportunities that exist once they take office.



Announcements/Professor Information

Sarah Gjertson: Art & Art History, was recently promoted to Associate Professor and has received tenure at the University of Denver.

Jessica Munns, English & Gender and Women's Studies: "Aphra Behn's Cosopolitanism" in *Aphra Behn in and of her Time*, ed. Barnard Duique and Annamaria Lamarra, Paris: Sorbonne, 2007-08

Jessica Munns, *Le Misanthrope* at the Comédie-Française, Season 2007-08, *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research*, vol. 22:1&2.

Dr. Sheila E. Schroeder: Mass Communications, A new film by Digital Media Studies Program Assistant Kate Burns and Assistant Professor, Sheila E. Schroeder was picked up for distribution by First Run Features. The film, *SoleJourney* tells an inspiring and true story of courageous families confronting the anti-LGBT rhetoric and political policy-making of the fundamentalist mega-organization Focus on the Family. A November 1, 2008 Denver premiere screening and fundraiser drew over 200 people and the post-screening talkback was conducted by *Denver Post* Film Critic Lisa Kennedy. More information about the film can be viewed at www.solejourneythemovie.com

Patrick Dodge (HCOM doctoral student) and **Elizabeth Suter's** (HCOM faculty) essay that examines the interrelationship between naming practices in the People's Republic of China and changes to Chinese population control policies and laws has just been published in the journal *Women and Language*. Through the method of visual textual analysis, Dodge and Suter consider Chinese billboards and provide various "readings" of the latest campaign that now tells Chinese audiences that it is okay to have a girl pass on the family name.

Dodge, P. S-W., & Suter, E. A. (2008). "It's okay to have a girl": Patronymy and China's one-child policy, *Women and Language*, 31, 13-22.

N. Eugene Walls: Graduate School of Social Work

On June 1-2, 2009, the University of Denver will host a national conference, Pedagogy of Privilege: Teaching, Learning, & Praxis, in Craig Hall. The day and a half long conference will examine the issue of privilege from various perspectives including those of educators, students, and community activists. Becky Thompson, PhD, Director of Women's & Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado/Colorado Springs and author of *A Promise and Way of Life: White Antiracist Activism and A Hunger So Wide and Deep: American Women Speak Out on Eating Problems*, will give the opening plenary on the evening of June 1st. Robert Jensen, PhD, Professor of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin and author of *Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism, and White Privilege* and *Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity* will give the closing plenary on the evening of June 2nd. A national Call for Papers, Presentations, and Workshops will be going out soon.

The conference is cosponsored by the Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning, Center for Multicultural Excellence, Center for Teaching & Learning, Gender & Women's Studies Program, Gender Violence Education and Support Services, Graduate School of Professional Psychology, Graduate School of Social Work, Office of Graduate Studies, Student Life Division, The Women's College, and the National Association of Social Workers – Colorado Chapter. For more information, contact N. Eugene Walls, Graduate School of Social Work at 303-871-4367 or by email at ewalls2@du.edu