

Voices and Visions

A Newsletter of the UW-Eau Claire Women's Studies Program | Spring 2012

Director's Corner

By: Dr. Theresa Kemp (Program Chair)



Perhaps the most visible change to report since last spring is our new location on campus. On June 18th, 2011, about eight inches of standing water and silt flooded the basement of Brewer Hall, where the Women's Studies offices had been located. It was hard to feel anything but trauma after rescuing our

belongings and cataloging the thousands of dollars' worth of damaged items. On the bulletin board outside my office door, you will find a slip of paper from a fortune cookie that says, "Any day above ground is a good day." Due to the goodwill and collaborative spirit of several department chairs in Hibbard Humanities Hall, now every day is a day above ground. We are happy to announce that Women's Studies is now located in Hibbard Humanities Hall Room 607, sharing the sixth floor with Philosophy and Religious Studies, along with a number of colleagues in English and Math, whose offices are also located on this floor.

Over the summer, big changes also occurred with our office staff. Judy Gray was offered a new position in the publications office for Theater and Music Arts. Although the Women's Studies Program was sad to see her leave after nine years, we wish her all the best in her new job. We were able to find a wonderful new Academic Department Associate, Lucy Lee (pictured right), who works mornings in Women's Studies and afternoons in American Indian Studies. We also have two new student workers, Cynthia Yang and Hannah Lee, who joined the office this fall. Both are first-year students that we hope to have working with us for a few years.

There have been changes in our faculty as well, thanks to a number of successful Blugold Commitment proposals. In August, the Women's Studies Program was able to convert Dr. Barbara Kernan's position to full-time tenure-track after ten years of award-winning teaching as an adjunct instructor. Blugold Commitment has also enabled us to "borrow" affiliated faculty from other departments, including Dr. Sanjukta Chaudhuri (Economics), Dr. Asha Sen (English), and Dr. David Jones (English). We've also

had the great fortune to work with Dr. Ryan Murphy (Sociology), who joined us in 2011-2012 on a 1-year Visiting Assistant Professor position.

In addition to the new LGBTQ Studies certificate program, we have made significant changes to the core curriculum of the major and minor programs. The Women's Studies Curriculum Committee received a small grant this summer to support committee members Mary Hoffman, Audrey Fessler, and myself to undertake a major revision of the scope and sequence of courses in both programs.

Among the major changes was the transformation of the capstone into a group externship project based in social justice. The rest of the curricular changes will be introduced next year as they become official in UW-Eau Claire's 2012-2013 Catalog.

Continued on Page 7...



Contents	Page
Director's Corner	1,7
A New and Better Person	2,3
Maria Elena Cuadra Internship	2
LGBTQA Studies and Eau Queer Film Festival	4
NEW Women's Leadership Institute	4
Publications, Presentations, and Projects in Women's Studies	5
<i>Feminist Teacher</i> Mini Conference	6
2011 Award Winners in Women's Studies	6
Alumnae Updates	7

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A New And Better Person

By: Hope Tyson

The six weeks I spent in the Women Lives and Experiences in Nicaragua program were transformative. Through insightful readings, I gained a broad but thorough understanding of Nicaraguan society, and through conversations with women's movement leaders and other inspiring women, I gained an intimate understanding of Nicaraguan women's lives. Without this course, I would not have had access to some of the essential tools for understanding the lives of women in developing nations, specifically in Nicaragua.

Economists, lawyers, maquiladora workers, and revolutionaries traveled to the Maria Elena Cuadra in Granada, where our women's studies class was held, to teach us about the realities of women's lives in Nicaragua. Whether acknowledged or not,

women shape Nicaragua's society, economy, politics, and culture. Of the visitors, I was most deeply impacted by three maquiladora workers who risked their jobs to share their experiences with our class. What I have learned about Nicaraguan society in general is summed up most perfectly by one of these three women's description of Nicaraguans: "We are fighters to the death. We are

*"I will never cease to be amazed by the steadfast happiness and curiosity of Nicaraguans in the face of deep poverty and hopelessness."
- Hope Tyson*

sociable and humanitarian. We want to share with others and we can smile and suffer."

The class (pictured top of page 3) readings clarified certain aspects about Nicaraguan women's lives. "If Women Counted" by Marilyn Waring, for example, brilliantly complemented the visit by Carla, Jennifer, and Erminia. The three women worked in the formal workforce, specifically a maquiladora factory, but also spent hours of their day caring for children, doing housework, and making other people's lives possible. Waring's work elo-

quently highlights the necessity of women's work in the home. Without it, men's work would be pointless and impossible. Waring argues that despite the informal nature of women's housework, it is essential to all our lives and it holds up the global economy.

While the readings and guest speakers were inspiring, spending time with Nicaraguan women living in poverty was the most rewarding experience of the program. Argentina, the woman I spent a day with at her home in el Pantanal, exemplified Erminia's definition of Nicara-

Continued on Page 3...

Maria Elena Cuadra Internship

By: Kelsey Switters

I had the opportunity to intern at the Maria Elena Cuadra (MEC), in Granada, Nicaragua. MEC's programs provide job training and income-generating opportunities to unemployed women, as well as sensitize women to gender issues, such as domestic violence and reproductive health, while teaching them about their rights. While I was in Granada, I was able to help MEC with some current projects in the area. The first week, I went with the outreach coordinator of MEC to a poor neighborhood and discussed the prevalence of domestic violence with the local women. We discussed the cycle of violence and where they could go for help if they or someone they knew was being abused. One of the women present had a busted lip and remained silent for the entire presentation. Her silence was explained to me later as being part of the machismo culture in Latin America. I also accompanied the coordinator to another neighborhood to talk to teenage girls about birth control options. The girls listened

with open ears to these options, even though for many of them it was too late. For a week, I helped with a project set up by MEC and another organization called FUPROSOMUNIC. Together, we built solar stoves for ten women in a nearby neighborhood. I was an observer, but I was also helping facilitate and work on these projects. I was constantly struggling to balance the line between being a white outsider and caring insider, while trying to avoid both extremes. This internship gave me an insider look at the lives of women in Nicaragua, an experience that I would not have been able to obtain on my own. While participating and helping with these projects, I was able to expand my understanding of a global feminist perspective. This was a transformative trip for me in my own journey through feminism. I am very excited to continue to seek to understand other cultures from a global perspective.



A New And Better Person ... continued

By: Hope Tyson

guans as fighters and people who smile through suffering. She told me candidly of the hardships of her life: she has lost a child, been abused, and endured life in a home with dirt floors and no running water. Yet, she smiled and played with her daughters. After my interaction with Argentina and her family, I will never be the same person I was before. Argentina's life was a personal window into the reality of life in Nicaraguan for women living in poverty.

When I first arrived in Nicaragua, I noticed hungry animals, impoverished people, and a lack of necessary resources. Throughout my time there, however, I began to notice something else: Nicaraguans are not self-pitying; generally, they do not complain but rather seek to improve their lives. People are helpful, even to strangers. They are friendly and sociable. Nicaraguans chatted with me on sidewalks and in buses. They willingly shared their stories, and they kindly asked questions about mine. I will never cease to be amazed by the steadfast happiness and curiosity of Nicaraguans in the face of deep poverty and hopelessness.

Though I was frustrated by my external perspective and my difficulty understanding life as Nicaraguan women do, it helped me achieve a higher level of learning than I would have in classrooms back in the United States. Sharon's visit to class was especially inspiring to

me. She revealed to us the extent of the United States' involvement with Nicaragua and the consequences of our oppressive economic and political policies; I was horrified. I am connected, by our mutual humanity and by our countries' involvement, to every Nicaraguan citizen. My actions impact them; when I buy clothes made by maquiladoras, I affect the lives of Nicaraguans. When I vote for policymakers, I affect their lives. During Sharon's discussion, I decided that it does not matter how small my footprint may be—it is not fair or acceptable for it to land on someone else's back. I will learn how to walk the world and live my life in a way that does not oppress others.

Women's Lives and Experiences in Nicaragua presented me with tools to build my knowledge of women's realities all over the world. Sharon's conversation with us created in a need to learn how to live free from oppressing others. The women who told us about their jobs in the

maquiladoras reframed my understanding of choice and controlling your future. My day in Argentina's life in el Pantanal changed my understanding of poverty and luxury. Now that I have returned to Wisconsin, I hope that I can maintain the curiosity, respect, empathy, justice, and love for others that I learned while in Granada. I hope—I know—that the new person I am is a better one.



Dr. Rose-Marie Avin with guest speaker Luz Marina Torres

LGBTQA Studies and Eau Queer Film Festival

In June, Rachel Ellen Mahaffy and Pam Forman taught the second iteration of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and Allied (LGBTQA) Studies: San Francisco Travel Seminar. As part of the course, Mahaffy and Forman traveled with 14 students (pictured middle) to San Francisco, where they attended the 41st Annual Gay Pride Celebration & Parade and Frameline's 35th International LGBT Film Festival. The students also worked in three groups to produce documentary films about their experiences, culminating in three films: *Hear Me Now*, *Our Town*, and *With Open Arms*. The films were featured in the second annual Eau Queer Film Festival (EQFF) held last October,



which the students also helped produce. EQFF celebrates the diversity of the LGBTQ community through the screening and discussion of riveting documentaries, awe-inspiring features, quirky comedies, and compelling short films. The Festival celebrates difference, promotes equality, and educates through the powerful medium of film. Last year's EQFF featured over a dozen captivating films from the Frameline Film Festival. Mahaffy and Forman will be leading a third group of students in June 2012, and plans are underway for the third annual EQFF. For more information, stay tuned to the EQFF Facebook page: facebook.com/EQFilmFest.

NEW Women's Leadership Institute

By: Katrina Leonard

In June 2011, I attended the NEW Women's Leadership Institute at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, an intensive six-day program for college women to develop skills necessary to become great leaders. There were about 20 participants in the program. Each of us had unique backgrounds and reasons for attending. I was recommended to this program by a friend and I would recommend it to any woman that is passionate about women taking a larger leadership in our community and world.

During the six-day program, we participated in leadership activities, listened to excellent speakers, and developed leadership skills. Some of the workshops included public speaking, making business cards, writing thank-you letters, and anti-bullying. We also heard from Mt. Mary professors, as well as from politicians such as Sandy Pasch and Jason Fields, who are representatives from the offices of Herb Kohl and Gwen Moore. We attended the 2011 State Democratic Convention, where we heard from numerous politicians, including Wisconsin representatives Ron Kind, Gwen Moore, and Tammy Baldwin.

Each year, the NEW Women's Leadership Institute focuses a set of its sessions on a specific theme. The theme for 2011 was human trafficking. We had a panel of law enforcement officers, community activists, and Department of Homeland Security officers that addressed us on this issue. We also had a final project to complete for this theme. We were separated into groups and had a mock legislative hearing for a piece of legislature regarding human trafficking. I think it was one of the most valuable parts of the program because we learned how to lobby for a bill that we wanted to pass in the legislature.

I would love to see more students from UW-Eau Claire attend the Mount Mary NEW Women's Leadership Institute. The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire community needs more women leaders. I know we have many talented and passionate women and I would love for them to experience this wonderful program just as I did. This program truly is a once in a lifetime experience, and participating in it was one of the best decisions I have made in my college career. I hope that others will consider participating in this fantastic experience.

Projects, Publications, and Presentations in Women's Studies

Publications

Sanjukta Chaudhuri (Economics)	"Does Gender Discrimination Contribute to India's Population Imbalance? A Household Level Analysis," in <i>International Journal of Economic Policy in Emerging Economies</i> (Volume 4, Issue 4 2011); "Female Infant Mortality Disadvantage in India: A Regional Analysis" in <i>Review of Radical Political Economics</i> (forthcoming 2012); "Women's Education, Work Outside Home, and Marital Violence: The Case of Bangladesh," in <i>International Journal of Public Policy</i> (forthcoming 2012)
Audrey Fessler (English/Women's Studies)	An article on Charlotte Mary Yonge's novel <i>The Pillars of the House</i> (1873) in <i>The Charlotte M. Yonge Fellowship Journal</i> (2011)
Patti See (Academic Skills Center)	"Bucket Lists" and "Joyful Mystery," in <i>Five for Women: Chippewa Valley's Premiere Women's Magazine</i> (Nov/Dec 2011; Jan/Feb 2012)
2011 graduate Andrea Nelson, with Jennifer H. Muehlenkamp (Psychology)	"Body Attitudes and Objectification in Non-Suicidal Self-Injury: Comparing Males and Females" in <i>Archives of Suicide Research</i> (Jan 2012)
Christina L. Huber and Heidi Potratz, with Jenny Shaddock (English)	"Domestic Soldier: Kitty's Secondary Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in West's Return of the Soldier" in <i>The Oswald Review</i> (Fall 2011)
2011 graduate Catherine Emmanuelle	"The Awakening of Mamie Till-Mobley" in the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture Collections vertical files

Presentations

Students Carly Michelle Hanson and Rebecca Leigh Hubbard, with Sanjukta Chaudhuri (Economics)	"Economic Development, Women's Status, and Missing Girls of India" at the 2012 National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) at Weber State University
2010 graduate Petra Mohr, 2011 graduate Catherine Emmanuelle, Betty Rae Nikia, and Tuesday Wustrack, with Theresa Kemp (Women's Studies/English)	"Feminist Editing: Another One of the 'Master's Tools'? Or Can It Transform the Academy?" at the 2011 annual conference of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) in Atlanta

Projects

Rose-Marie Avin (Economics) and Laurelyn Wieseman	"Maria Elena Cuadra, Globalization, and Women's Empowerment in Nicaragua" (forthcoming)
Casey Coughlin and Meghann McKinnon, with Theresa Kemp and Erica Benson (English)	"Gendered Language in UWEC Documents" (ongoing)
2011 graduates Jillian Phillips and Catherine Emmanuelle	Summer internship with <i>Feminist Teacher and</i> Editorial Collective's 2011 summer retreat

Feminist Teacher Mini Conference

The UW-Eau Claire Women's Studies Program hosted "Feminist Teacher on Location: A Mini Conference" on campus on April 14-16, 2011. Three members of the Feminist Teacher Editorial Collective, Dr. Monica Barron (Truman State University), Dr. Gail Cohee (Brown University), and Dr. Wendy Gunther-Canada (University of Alabama at Birmingham) interacted with faculty and students about topics related to feminist pedagogy, including editing as feminist praxis. They also conducted two workshops, one on self-care habits for feminists and another on women in political science and politics. In addition to attending these planned events, our Vice

Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dr. Beth Hellwig, our LGBTQ coordinator from Women's and Gender Equity (WAGE), Christopher Jorgenson, and members of the Dean of Students Office were able to meet with Dr. Cohee, who is also director of the Sarah Doyle Women's Center. The program also inspired two summer student/faculty collaborative research projects. The event was made possible by funding from the UW-System Office for Professional and Instructional Development (OPID), UWEC's Office for Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP), the College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Education and Human Sciences.

2011 Award Winners in Women's Studies

<i>Award</i>	<i>Recipient(s)</i>
University-wide Outstanding Senior Award	Diana Eisenberg and Elsa Kraus (Women's Studies Majors)
UW-System Outstanding Woman of Color in Education Nomination	Debra K.S. Barker (English and American Indian Studies)
Helen X. Sampson Undergraduate Research Paper Award	Jamie Browning
Helen X. Sampson Undergraduate Project Award	Chelsea Kufalk
Helen X. Sampson Graduate Project Award	Patty Greiner
Donna C. Turell Award	Christopher Jorgenson
Mary Catherine & Caroline Kessler Award	Stephanie Jarvais
Mickey Crothers Award	Dan R. Johnson.
Virgiline & Joseph See Award	Brenna Ehster, Dylan Jambrek, Christine Johnson, Roxanne Schmidt
Tillie Olsen Award for Fiction or Creative Nonfiction	Jacci De Wolfe
Ailish Frances Barcelo Award	Crystal Kazik
Feminist Teacher Award	Pam Forman (Sociology), Ellen Mahaffy (Communication and Journalism), Barbara Kernan (Women's Studies and English)
Feminist Mentor Award	Mary Hoffman (Communication and Journalism)
Women's Studies Scholarship Awards	Theresa Kemp (Women's Studies and English), Erna Kelly (English)
Women's Studies Service Award	Eva Santos-Phillips

Alumnae Updates



Amy (Oldakowski) McNeely, a UW-Eau Claire graduate of the first Women's Studies class, writes, "I'm pouring my feminist passion into my work as a grant writer at Mount Mary College—a small, Catholic women's college in Milwaukee. Mount Mary College has a great female-centered environment and is really beginning to establish its reputation as a center for important discourse on women's leadership and women's issues. Thank you for continuing the good work of Women's Studies at UW-Eau Claire. I smile now thinking of all the people who asked, 'What are you going to do with a Women's Studies degree?' because I apply the lessons from my women's studies classes to my life every day."

Jamie Browning, a 2011 UW-Eau Claire graduate, and his wife Dr. Manda Rheil (Mathematics), recently had a baby! Jamie writes, "Helena Jo Browning, who Manda and I mostly call Leni, is a small person. Leni's favorite things are drinking milk, snuggling, smiling, staring at the ceiling, and napping. Sometimes, Leni makes eye contact and gives you a huge lopsided smile. It is pretty great. We also really like the noise that Leni makes while abruptly transitioning to contentment half way through a spirited cry. Leni lives in the moment. Manda and I are really enjoying her company." Leni pictured at Left.

Julie (Beerntsen) Phillips, a 1995 UW-Eau Claire graduate, writes, "I absolutely loved the Women's Studies Program [at UW-Eau Claire]. After college, I moved to New York to attend a Master of Arts Program in Counseling Psychology at New York University. I lived and worked in New York City as a counselor and health educator at Seton Hall University, Barnard College, and Columbia University. I obtained a Master of Social Work from Columbia University in 2005 and worked for five years in the New York City public school systems as a school social worker and also as a yoga instructor for kids. After 15 years in New York City, I moved with my husband and newborn daughter to Philadelphia. I am currently home with my daughter, Chloe, who is two years old. I also teach yoga to preschool and elementary school students part-time.

Justin Vernon, a 2004 UW-Eau Claire graduate, has made all of Eau Claire proud with his double Grammy Awards, as well as achieving the Number One Artist spot on *iTunes* the week his latest album, *Bon Iver, Bon Iver*, was released. UW-Eau Claire's Women's Studies program is especially proud, however, of his disclosure on *The Colbert Report* and elsewhere that he has a minor in Women's Studies. His sold-out concerts both nights in Zorn Arena were a testament to the Chippewa Valley's admiration and pride in his accomplishments, as well as his desire to give back to his Alma Mater. Vernon's lyrics bridge gendered separations in the current music scene, and numerous critics have remarked on how his work with various musical genres opens up new avenues of expression and collaboration. Justin and Justine Vernon pictured right.



Director's Corner ... continued

By: Dr. Theresa Kemp (Program Director)

As you can see, UW-Eau Claire's Women's Studies Program is in excellent shape, thanks to the marvelous faculty, staff, affiliates, and students who contribute their time and talents to the program. Next time you happen to be in Hibbard Hall, please come on up to the sixth floor to see the new office space and to say hello. It is true, "any day above ground is a good day."

Please consider supporting the Women's Studies Program by using the form included in this newsletter to make a tax-deductible gift to the UW-Eau Claire Foundation. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated. Even small amounts can help sustain the work we do, including such wonderful and transformative learning programs as Women's Experience in Nicaragua!, LGBTQA Studies in San Francisco, and the Civil Rights Pilgrimage.

Help Us Continue Our Tradition of Excellence!

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Women's Studies

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