

Gender Studies News

Letter from the Chair



A number of exciting events have occurred since our last newsletter: Our name change has been accepted by the university's administration and SCHEV; our graduate certificate was approved at the same time, and we've completed a move two doors down to our new, and we hope permanent, home in the historic Crenshaw House at 919 W. Franklin.

The Department's new name went through the process without a hitch as did the new 15-credit hour graduate Certificate in Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies. We have about 8 Certificate students at this point, and are expecting several to become our first graduates in December 2011 and May 2012. It takes one full year to earn the Certificate since the courses are offered only once a year.

We invite all of our alumni, former students, students and friends to visit our new home. It's quite grand with interesting architectural detailing. I'm told that the exterior paint is similar to

that used in the late Victorian period when the house was built (1891). It was formerly the home of Anne Clay Crenshaw, a founder of the organization that later became the Richmond League of Women Voters.

Our success in the past year has been validated by the Dean's office with permission to hire a new Assistant or Associate Professor (tenure track) for the term beginning fall 2012. This is momentous on several counts: first, to be given this opportunity when budgets are extremely tight and competition for positions is great is a vote of support for our mission and goals; second, the position is fully dedicated to the department. This is important to us since all of the current tenure-line positions are shared with other departments. Third, it is an opportunity to add balance to our faculty's diversity. We are desirous of mirroring, as best we can, our diverse student body.

I am so very proud of our GSEX faculty (that's the acronym our students have given us), our outstanding students, and our warmly supportive departmental friends.

I hope you will come by to visit when you're in the neighborhood, attend our several art opening receptions each year, our three brown bag lunches each semester, and our sponsored

speakers, usually one a semester.

If you are able, we would also encourage you to support our students by adding your donations to the Jean Helmuth fund. Additional donations to the Jean Helmuth Fund are deeply appreciated and can be made at any time. The Fund is used to support students in the Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies program.

To donate, mail checks payable to the VCU Foundation/Hellmuth Fund, PO Box 842026, Richmond, VA 23284-2026. For more information about the fund, or to learn about other ways to give back to the program, contact Lois Badey, Director of Development and Alumni Relations for the College of Humanities and Sciences, labadey@vcu.edu (804-827-0856).

This year's scholarship recipient was Morgan Krug. The \$1,000 award paid for a portion of Morgan's tuition in exchange for a graduate teaching assignment in one of the introductory women's studies course sections. We would very much like to extend this opportunity to other graduate and undergraduate students in our program, and with your help, we may be able to do so.



Quick Fix

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We will bring you up to date once again in our spring newsletter.

*Until then ...
Janet*

Workshop on Gender and Violence

In partnership with The Conciliation Project, the Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies department conducted a workshop on gender and violence. The workshop was co-facilitated by Dr. Archana Pathak and Mr. Trey Hart.

The workshop utilized creative dramatic techniques and invited students to share through dramatic work what gender vio-

lence is. The workshop also allowed students to work on building new language for responding to potentially violent moments in their day to day experiences.

The workshops were open to all WMNS 201 students, majors and minors. We hope to make these workshops a regular semester event.

~*Archana Pathak*



Publication News from Dr. Gretchen Soderlund

Gretchen Soderlund completed revisions on her book manuscript, *Reported Innocents: Sex Trafficking Scandals and the Transformation of Journalism, 1885-1917*, which will be published by the University of Chicago Press. She also published an article for the journal, *Hu-*

manity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development, titled "The Rhetoric of Revelation: Sex Trafficking and the Journalistic Exposé." Soderlund continues to organize the monthly Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies' Research Lunch-

eons, hour-long events that showcase the research of affiliated faculty across the university.

~*Gretchen Soderlund*

GSEX takes over Ottawa!

This summer GSEX faculty members Archana Pathak and Liz Canfield led a Study Abroad trip to the Women's Worlds international conference in Ottawa, Canada, which is one of the largest conferences about gender issues in the world. We brought ten students with us and split our time between Ottawa and Montreal. GSEX alum Cole Cridlin and Liz Canfield presented a paper they co-authored on queer rurality and social justice, and GSEX students were active attendees at the conference, attending diverse panels on topics ranging from Boalian theater to food security. Concerned about the paucity of panels and dis-

ussion around queer and trans issues, GSEXers organized a lunchtime "queer/trans convergence" discussion group at the conference, which brought over fifty conference attendees from all over the world to the table to discuss these issues. This is testimony to how GSEX students are not only geared toward theorizing problems, but also forming solutions. We walked all over Ottawa and Montreal, exploring art museums, jazz festivals, cultural events, local bookstores, activist libraries and community centers. At the end of our trip, students created multimedia projects and academic papers

based on what they learned at the conference and on our travels. To see additional photos and posts from our trip, visit and join our Facebook group at

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/228049890549531/>.



Art Openings

Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies has always placed building community at the center of the department's mission. When first arriving in the department in 2008, Liz Canfield and her student at the time, Cassie Mulheron, began to curate art shows in the department with the help of GSEX students and faculty. Since Cassie's graduation, a small group of artists and GSEX students have curated the shows. The art shows vary on theme from radical portraiture to theorizing social justice, but the work we display always attempts to visualize and imagine the concepts we teach in our courses. Students, VCU faculty, alumni, and community members contribute art for our shows. We also often utilize and borrow from the Anderson Gallery's extensive and wonderful art collection. To celebrate the

art shows each semester, the department holds an open house, which invites VCU students, staff, and faculty, as well as community members to come by, have a snack, have a conversation, and look at the art. This Fall, we are featuring a collaborative project directed by Jamie Mahoney from the School of the Arts and Liz Canfield from GSEX, that puts designers/printers and poets together to create a letterpress book around a theme. This year's theme is "Multiple Voices, Multiple Histories: Reimagining the Civil War," where poets and designers have worked together to create broadside letterpress prints of poems that interrogate the legacies of the Civil War and the Civil War's impact on Richmond. Our Spring show will be two fold: for the first half of the semester we will host the Action Alliance's

exhibit "The Art of Surviving," which explores the effects of intimate partner violence and sexual assault; the second half of the semester will highlight art that is inspired by the exhibit. To show your work or to help with the art shows, please contact Liz Canfield at ercanfield@vcu.edu.

~Liz



Collaborative Teaching

In keeping with our collaborative mission and our dedication to mentoring, three GSEX faculty members Janet Hutchinson, Archana Pathak, and Liz Canfield engaged in collaborative teaching projects this year. Janet Hutchinson is currently mentoring a graduate student, Morgan Krug, and is co-teaching Introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies with her. Archana Pathak is mentoring a GSEX undergraduate, Jane Harwell, in her Politics of Race, Class, and Gender course, and Liz Canfield is also mentoring a GSEX undergraduate, Shawn McNulty, in her Introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies course. These students get the opportunity to see feminist pedagogy first-hand, and to work in a collaborative environment where their contributions to teaching and learn-

ing are rewarded. In Spring of 2011, Liz Canfield co-taught Queer Cinema with Professor Emeritus Walter Coppedge from the English Department. This collaboration exposed students to an inter-generational take on theory, literature, and film while fulfilling a departmental priority of conducting interdisciplinary academic and creative work. Because one of our goals is exploring how theory and action are intertwined with our students, expanding our collaborative teaching mission to include other faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates in order to highlight how academics/pedagogy is not solitary work is something that we are proud to highlight.

Our time. Right now.

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www.has.vcu.edu/wst/

Meet our Faculty!

Faculty

Janet Hutchinson, Ph.D., Chair

Elizabeth Canfield, MFA

Catherine Ingrassia, Ph.D.

Archana Pathak, Ph.D.

Diana Scully, Ph.D. Professor Emerita

Gretchen Soderlund, Ph.D.

Affiliate

Sarah Jane Brubaker, Ph.D.

Laura Chessin

Susan Cokal, Ph.D.

Gretchen Comba

Deirdre Condit, Ph.D.

Leigh Ann Craig, Ph.D.

Elizabeth Cramer, Ph.D.

Kathleen Ingram, Ph.D.

Jennifer Johnson, Ph.D.

Judith Lewis, Ph.D., Professor Emerita

Sarah Meacham, Ph.D.

Bernard Moitt, Ph.D.

Charlotte Morse, Ph.D.

Karen Rader, Ph.D.

Jill Rowe-Adjibogoun, Ph.D.

Lynda Weaver-Williams, Ph.D.

Tarynn M. Witten, Ph.D.