

From the Coordinator

Greetings from Southside House! We've had a number of changes in Women's Studies recently. Eudora Chikwendu has retired and we miss her profoundly. She developed and taught "Women, War and Peace" and "Gender and Development," courses which made a valuable contribution to our program. Amy Kesselman is on sabbatical, and Suzanne Kelly, who has worked part-time in our program for eight years, is serving as our full-time Women's Studies faculty member for the year. Suzanne has a Ph.D. in Comparative Studies from Florida Atlantic University, where she wrote her dissertation, "Enduring Relationship with the Dead: The Corpse, the Feminine and Popular Cul-

ture." She is currently working on a book entitled "Dead Bodies That Matter."

I'm pleased to announce some exciting events during the fall semester. Feminist economist Susan Feiner, author of *Liberating Economics: Feminist Perspectives on Families, Work, and Globalization* (U. of Michigan, 2004), will be coming to speak on Monday, October 13. In anticipation of the big day at the polls in November, we'll be hosting a panel on Wednesday, October 29, entitled "Countdown 2008: The Electoral Politics of Gender, Race, Class, and Age." We also have a range of other speakers and events on the calendar and in the works... come check them out!

—Heather A. Hewett

Can Feminism Save the Economy?



Susan Feiner

Susan Feiner, Director of the Women and Gender Studies Program and Professor of WGS and Economics, University of Southern Maine, will give a presentation entitled "Standing Economics on Its Head: A Feminist View of 'What is to be Done.'" Professor Feiner makes the case for an explic-

itly feminist approach to economics. Going beyond critique, she argues that gender is relevant to all economic activities—production, distribution, and consumption. Using historical, political, and cultural examples, she shows how much Women's Studies needs feminist economics—and how much feminist economics needs Women's Studies! Her talk, co-sponsored by the Women's Studies Program and the Economics Department, will be held on Monday, October 13, 2008, 4:30-6pm, in JFT 1010.

Welcome to New Faculty Member Erin Newcomb

Erin Newcomb comes to SUNY New Paltz after completing a Ph.D. in Women's Studies and Literacy Education at The Pennsylvania State University and spending a year "off" writing.

Although Erin's areas of expertise include feminist theories and literacy studies, she also incorporates literature and theology into her scholarship. Currently, Erin teaches first-year

composition, a survey of early American literature, and Women: Images and Realities. Next semester, she looks forward to another round of Women: Images and Realities as well as a thematic composition course on "Magic and Power."



Faculty-Student Research Collaboration – Studying the “Ex-Gay” Phenomenon

During summer 2008, with funding from a SUNY New Paltz “Summer Undergraduate Research Experience” (SURE) Award, Women’s Studies minor Ellice Litwak (’09) and professor Karl Bryant studied a slice of the contemporary U.S. “Ex-Gay” movement. While the “Ex-Gay” phenomenon is largely religion-based, Ellice and Karl’s research explored an understudied aspect



Ellice Litwak

of the movement—the role of scientists and other experts.

Although treating homosexuality as a pathology has been discredited for many years, today there are still pockets of mental health practitioners whose work is designed to “cure” homosexuals. Ellice and Karl studied one such group by examining

the work of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), a professional organization that ar-

gues for the legitimacy of conversion therapies for homosexuality. By examining texts produced by NARTH members (including materials from NARTH’s website), Ellice and Karl were able to track the “public face” that NARTH puts on the work it does. They found that NARTH members legitimate their work via three inter-related processes: (1) leveraging “science” to bolster their own claims and to discredit their detractors; (2) drawing on a model of homosexual development that stresses fluid notions of sexuality, thus opening the door for change; and (3) co-opting contemporary multicultural discourses that stress tolerance and diversity (here arguing that true tolerance and diversity should include people who want to “leave homosexuality”).

Ellice presented findings from the summer project at the Fall SURE Research Symposium and will present more of their findings at the Marist Women & Society Conference in October 2008. The project is ongoing, with Ellice and Karl planning to continue their collaborative research throughout the academic year.

For more information on the SURE program (and other SUNY New Paltz programs that support faculty-student collaborative research), go to <http://www.newpaltz.edu/research/usr.html>.

Women’s Studies Colloquia

Countdown 2008: The Electoral Politics of Gender, Race, Class, and Age

Wednesday, October 29, 2008

3:30-5:30pm, Honors Center, College Hall

Gowri Parameswaran, Educational Studies

Suzanne Kelly, Women’s Studies

Danielle Wallace, Black Studies

Rickie Solinger, Historian and author of

Pregnancy and Power (NYU, 2005)

What do we see when we analyze the narratives of gender, race, class, and age in the stories and images that have been generated over the course of the election season? What do we learn when we look at how stereotypes have been deployed and redefined by journalists, pundits, bloggers, voters, and the candidates

themselves? What does all this suggest about our country and U.S. Presidential politics at the start of the 21st century?

Irish Travellers: A Discussion of Women’s Rights in a Cultural Context

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

3:30-5pm, Honors Center

Clare Kelly-Barra, Educational Opportunity Program Advisor

Irish travellers are an indigenous minority group in Ireland. Clare Kelly-Barra will describe Irish traveller culture and nomadic life, focusing on Irish traveller women, the discrimination they face, violence against traveller women, media stereotypes and perceptions, and the role of women in the Irish traveller movement.

Faculty News

Karl Bryant (Sociology and Women's Studies) guest co-edited a special issue of the journal *Sexualities* on "Re-theorizing Homophobias" with Salvador Vidal-Ortiz of the Sociology Department at American University in Washington, D.C. The August '08 issue includes an article by Bryant, "In Defense of Gay Children? 'Progay' Homophobia and the Production of Homonormativity."

Katherine French (History) has been promoted to Professor.

Anita González (Theatre Arts) received a Visiting Scholars Exchange Grant from the American Society for Theatre Research for her project, "Liverpool Trading: Theatrical Exchanges of Afro-Caribbean, African American, and British Performances." Gonzalez is collaborating with James Frieze of Liverpool John Moores University in the UK.

Heather Hewett (English and Women's Studies) published an essay in *Mothering in the Third Wave*, out this month from Demeter Press. When she is not on campus at New Paltz, she is participating as a Global Scholar in an interdisciplinary seminar, "The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture," sponsored by the Rutgers Institute for Research on Women. The seminar gathers 21 scholars and activists to discuss research projects examining the multiple intersections of women's human rights and culture.

Benjamin Junge (Anthropology) published an article, "Heterosexual Attendance at Gay Events: The 2002 Parada Livre Festival in Porto Alegre, Brazil," in the June 2008 edition

of *Sexuality and Culture*.

Suzanne Kelly (Women's Studies) wrote an op-ed piece, "The Sensuous Classroom: Focusing on the Embodiment of Learning," in the July 25 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

With the support of a labor/management professional development award, **Amy Kesselman** (Women's Studies) participated in a week long program at the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women, located in Cambridge, MA. The program, entitled "Sequels to the 1960's," combined keynote speakers about various social movements with seminars in which scholars working on the movements of the 1960's and 70's discussed their work.

Susan Lewis (History) has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Anne Roschelle (Sociology) presented her work, "Welfare Indignities: Homeless Women, Domestic Violence, and Welfare Reform in San Francisco," at the American Sociological Association meeting.

Margaret Wade-Lewis (Black Studies and Linguistics) won the 2008 Book Award for Creative Scholarship from the College Language Association for her biography, *Lorenzo Dow Turner: Father of Gullah Studies* (U. of South Carolina, 2007). She also published a bibliographic article on the Black woman linguist, Beryl Loftman Bailey, in the *African American National Biography* (Oxford University, 2008).

On July 29, **Sarah Wyman** (English) welcomed Clio Wyman Miller into the world. Clio is the muse of history.

In Memoriam: Toni Adams, 1964–2008

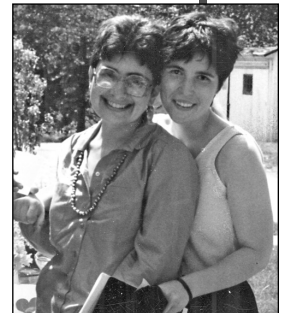
Toni Adams was one of my most brilliant students. She lived and studied with great intensity and related to other students and faculty with a sweetness and generosity that I will always remember.

Toni's perceptive comments in class discussions often made us consider the subject in new ways. Her class projects were always ambitious. In the senior seminar, she chose to research Guatemalan women's weavings, create a slide show of their work, construct a back strap loom like the ones the weavers use and weave a piece of cloth. She completed every-

thing except the weaving and dazzled us all with her slide show and interdisciplinary research.

Toni graduated in 1987. She was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in January 2006 and died on August 15, 2008. I saw Toni only occasionally since she graduated but always felt enriched by our visits. I will miss her.

– Amy Kesselman



State University of New York at New Paltz
Women's Studies Program
Southside House
1 Hawk Drive
New Paltz, New York 12561-2443

www.newpaltz.edu/wmnstudies/

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