Students Against Human Trafficking

A presentation by Students Against Human Trafficking (SAHT) involved designing denim patches in support of “Denim Day,” April 25, 2012. Why denim patches? In 1999 a convicted rape offender was released from his jail sentence by the Italian Supreme Court. In a statement by the Chief Judge, he argued, “because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by remov- ing the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex.” Every year since 1999 an organization called Peace Over Violence has organized Denim Day in LA & USA. It is a rape prevention education campaign, where community members, elected officials, businesses and students are asked to make a social statement with their fashion and on this day wear jeans as a visible means of protest against mis-conceptions that surround sexual assault. UMass SAHT has been promoting this day by making denim patches on campus at several events.

SAVE THE DATE
Women’s Works: A Celebration of the Creativity of Women
Holiday Art & Craft Fair
Thursday, November 29, 2012
2:00 pm-7:00 pm
UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center
50 Warren Street, Lowell, MA
This event will be part craft fair, part performance art, and large part fundraiser for the Center for Women & Work. Come find unique art work and hand crafts—all created by UMass Lowell women and other talented regional artists. Entrance is free & everyone is welcome!
To participate as a vendor or for more information: email us at cww@uml.edu

Letter from the Editor

This newsletter is focused on the theme that was also the theme for our Gathering at the Well Forum this year—what is feminism and what does it look like in the twenty-first century? In this edition, you will hear more about that Forum, and also about other ways in which CWW is engaged in supporting research, dialogue, and change advancing women’s equality. Among other things—we are honoring the history of women’s activism, talking to young women about how to move forward, and doing research on how to advance women in fields in which they are underrepresented. As always, let us hear from you your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, questions, stories—about feminism or about anything else.

On a personal note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Meg Bond and the CWW community for allowing me the privilege of leading the Center this year. This is an amazing group of people—the Association, the staff, the students. It has been a real joy to work with such a passionate and dedicated group, and I have had a great time this year doing it. We know Meg had a wonderful sabbatical, and we look forward to welcoming her back in the fall. Happy Spring to all!

Mignon Duffy
Acting Director

Celebrate the Bread and Roses Centennial!

On October 25, 2012, we will join the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of the Bread & Roses strike in Lawrence, MA with an exciting public event on campus. Ardis Cameron, author of Rootless of the Worst Sort: Laboring Women in Massachusetts, 1860-1912 will discuss the important role women played in the historic strike. Her presentation will be integrated with student projects, a photo exhibit and musical entertainment to create an evening of celebration and reflection in honor of this historic event. On January 11th, 1912, textile workers in Lawrence, MA opened their paychecks and found that their pay had been cut. Polish women weavers were the first to stop their looms and take to the streets, shouting “Short Pay, All Out!” During the next few days they were joined by over 20,000 workers, most of them immigrant women. This marked the beginning of the Bread & Roses strike, one of the most significant events in U.S labor history. Over a period of three months, the striking workers, aided by the IWW (the Industrial Workers of the World), fought for better wages, working conditions, a decent life, and opportunities. The workers’ demand for respect and dignity resonated with people across the country. This, along with the violence employed by the Lawrence police and mill owners towards women and children, got the sympathy and attention of people across the country and eventually prompted the national government to act in favor of the workers. On March 12, 1912, mill owners agreed to the strikers’ demands for a 17½% pay raise, double pay for overtime, and amnesty for strikers. With income inequality in the United States continuing to rise, the spirit of strength and solidarity shown by the strikers continues to inspire people today to push for a more just world.

Visit Our Web site! www.uml.edu/centers/women-work
ADVANCE GRANT SUBMISSION

In November 2011, UMass Lowell and UMass Worcester submitted a grant proposal for the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE-Institutional Transformation grant. The grant centers on the advancement of women academics in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields by understanding how subtle biases create micro-inequalities for women and may potentially prevent their advancement. The project seeks to (1) understand how subtle gender biases impact women’s academic lives and hinder their advancement in both subtle and overt ways, (2) use these empirical findings to address biases that create inequities within women’s academic settings, and (3) construct a dynamic online platform for both men and women to network and find support. CSW will serve as the intellectual center for the social science research component of the grant. As part of the project, CSW Associates will meet to discuss research findings and help to shape programs, preparation, and intervention programs for both universities. The UMass Lowell team consists of Julie Chen, Nellie Tran, Paula Rayment, Meg Bond, Ivy Ho, Brita Dean, and Jill Lohmeier. Grant results are expected later this spring.

Forum Wrap Up

Jaclyn challenged us to think about bodies and sex in relation to feminism, and the next panel challenged us to think about how women engage in political action around the world. Deina Abdelkader (Assistant Professor of Political Science) showed powerful images of women’s participation in the Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt. We saw women in Sri Lanka’s fight for rights through the presentation of Chamalika K. Seya (Associate Professor of Psychology, Worcester State University). And the images of women participants in paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland that Sandy McEvoy (Associate Director of the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights at UMass Boston) showed raised provocative questions about the relationship of feminism to violence.

There was also a lot of great student participation and energy at the Forum, including a presentation by our own Students Against Human Trafficking about this very important issue. A group of students from Wellesley, a comedy troupe called “Dead Serious” also provided a fabulously funny ending to a wonderful day.

Find out more

http://www.jaclynfriedman.com
http://denimdayinla.org/about/history

Associate News

Individuals selected for membership have distinguished themselves by improving the quality of research, administration, or policymaking in one or more of these areas. New members are nominated by current Academy members. NASP is a nonprofit, nonprofit organization that contributes research and expertise to the social insurance policymaking process.

Jena Sleskova will be teaching a Mini Summer Term Abroad at the Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic. The course is entitled Immigration Issues in the U.S. & Central Europe (in English). Congratulations to Rebb Teed on her new Ph.D status! Congratulations to Yi Yang on the birth of her daughter, Tianya Yang, born on April 19th.

IDEA Community on Feminism

The IDEA community (Community for Interdisciplinary Exchange and Advancement) initiative is a structure meant to support the creation of groups of faculty across department and across rank who share common interests. CWW provides the infrastructure support for the initiative, building on our own experience with our Associates’ program. We are particularly excited that this year a new community was formed focused around the theme of feminism. The purpose of the Feminists IDEA Community is to explore the feminist connections in the work of an interdisciplinary group of UML faculty. Current group members come from the Philosophy and Psychology departments. John Kaag (Philosophy), Christina Hodgeng (Philosophy), Carol Hay (Philosophy), Ivy Ho (Psychology) and Andrew Hontetler (Psychology). One day, we hope to combine our work into an edited volume that will feature chapters that highlight historical, theoretical, and practical approaches to feminism and gender studies, with a particular focus on highlighting an intergenerational dialogue between second- and third-wave feminists. The interdisciplinary nature of our group, comprised as it is of both humanists and social scientists, makes the collaborative possibilities here particularly exciting.

Our meetings so far have primarily been spent getting to know each other’s research projects and identifying areas of common interest. To this end, we have also chose to run a few of our meetings as “book clubs.” This fall we read Peggy Orenstein’s Cinderella Ate My Daughter (an accessible discussion of the now ubiquitous princess culture that has overtaken young girls’ childhoods), this spring we will be reading Judith Butler’s new book Giving an Account of Oneself (a—ahem—somewhat less accessible discussion of the possibility of leading an ethically ‘‘under vaxed social and linguistic conditions’’). We are excited to be fostering these relationships and to see what emerges.

Celebrate the Bread and Roses Centennial!

In honor of those early women activists in our own community, enjoy food, music and photo exhibits and hear Prof. Cameron speak in O’Leary 222 on Thursday, October 25th from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Event sponsored by UMass Lowell’s Center for Women & Work; Work, Labor and Society Program, Honors Program, Labor Extension Program, and the Gender Studies Program.

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Associate News

Meg Bond has been named to the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest, for a two-year term. The 10 members of this national board guide APA’s work in applying psychological knowledge to issues of social justice and the public interest.

Monica Galaz has been invited to join the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI). Academy members are recognized experts in Social Security, Medicare and health coverage, workers’ compensation, unemployment insurance and related social assistance and private employee benefits.

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THE SPLASH AWARDS

For the third year the Gathering at the Well Forum included honoring special guests with a “Splash Award.” This year the committee sought nominations for women who have worked to advance women’s rights and/or feminist values in their workplaces, schools, families, and/or communities. The distinguished recipients of this year’s awards were Analissa Iversen, Student, Sociology; Anna Mulvey, Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology, S.I.S.T.E.R.S.; and Students Against Human Trafficking.

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Splash Award Recipient S.I.S.T.E.R.S. (From left to right: Imogene Stulken, Susan Pulido, Analissa Iversen, Tracey Moore, Marlowe Thrisha Heaven, and Tracey Moore)

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DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A FEMINIST?

Below are a few quotes on feminism from representatives from our pioneer group of Emerging Scholars.

This program provides students with a unique year-long opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge gained from courses at UMass Lowell to a faculty member’s on-going research. Learn more about our Emerging Scholars Program at: www.uml.edu/centers/women-work/Eme...html.

Danielle Cole
Undergraduate Student, Sociology

I do consider myself a feminist, but I identify as a Black feminist. I identify as a Black feminist because this feminist perspective is more inclusive in my life experiences and addresses the issues I find most important. This label fits me because I believe in fighting for the rights of women and girls of color and exposing the disparities that affect their lives on a daily basis. Feminism has often created a “universal” fight for women, but all women do not face the same issues. In addressing that, Black feminism focuses on how Black women in particular are denied proper access to housing, healthcare, education, and also experience sexual violence and domestic violence at different rates than other women. It also addresses how the prison industrial complex affects Black women as well as the various stereotypes we face that vary from other women. I also think this form of feminism is important because it fights for the rights of LGBTIQ Black women and transgendered Black women, who face violence at the highest rate of anyone in those categories.

I am a feminist who calls for the recognition and appreciation of the equally valuable qualities different sexes bring to the table.

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