



WOMEN'S STUDIES

INVIGORATING, EVOLVING, TRANSFORMING

A GRAD STUDENT INITIATED PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2

“SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL”: A RECAP

On October 5, 2016, Southern students, faculty, and five Connecticut congressional candidates and representatives participated in a panel discussion on the climate of gender and sexual diversity and equality in Connecticut. The forum was organized as a means of gauging how incumbent and running Connecticut congressional leaders and candidates, as Dr. Rosalyn Amenta said, “envision their role and the role of local government in ensuring justice for all.” The panel covered topics such as each candidate’s proposed plans to prevent violence against LGBTQA citizens in Connecticut and sexual diversity and inclusion within the workforce. During the forum, the audience expressed dissatisfaction with the answers and further challenged the speakers while students articulated their anger frustration and sense of urgency on LGBTQIA+ issues. Southern News reported on the forum, as well as the New Haven Register.



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- *Crockpot Cook Off, November 9, @6-8pm ASC SAGE Center
- *Winter Clothing Drive throughout the month of November. Donations can be dropped off at EN B229, or contact the e-board for more information
- *Look out for auditions for The Vagina Monologues in 2017!

FEMINIST & ACTIVIST OF THE MONTH: TENZIN “CAKE” NAMDOL



Our feminist and activist of the month is Tenzin “Cake” Namdol. Cake graduated from SCSU with a major in Anthropology and minor in Women’s Studies in May 2016. She has been a fierce activist for many years in the climate justice movement. Her newest, and most daring movement thus far, is her Bike for Tibet campaign. For the next 12 months, Cake has committed to bicycling across the United States spreading awareness on the importance of the Tibetan plateau and climate change. Currently, Tibet is experiencing a sustained plundering of its natural resources, including water. The Yarlung Tsangpo river, which runs through Tibet, is being dammed up by China, which disrupts the water supply in the region. Groups like Students for a Free Tibet India, among other organizations, are already

fighting to stop the dam and preserve the river, which turns into the sacred Bharmaputra River in India. Bike for Tibet seeks to add to and continue the conversation on climate change and environment by hosting presentations throughout the year. The presentation aims to “steer away from the imagination of Tibetans only as non-violent, peaceful Buddhists and toward a discussion of Tibet issues from an anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian discourse that doesn’t play on victimhood or ‘human rights’.” The focus of the presentation is inter-dependence and intersectional discussions of issues similar to those in Tibet occurring in who seek “environmental justice in the US and abroad.” For Cake, Bike for Tibet and her own bicycle are, literally, the vehicle she is using to find her “own sense of freedom and peace,” as well as to keep physically fit

to “continue to kick butt for many more years.” On environmental justice and awareness, Cake emphasizes that, “the most important thing people can do is become active water, land, and air stewards of their own city, town, and state.” She states, “When the public has ownership over their environment, we can build solidarity and come up with real solutions that work for each unique community. Tibetans in Tibet have been protecting their land sometimes at the cost of their own lives. In the U.S., where we have some channels still available for true democracy to happen, we should exercise those avenues with the same ferocity as the people from my homeland and from the indigenous communities here.” You can follow Cake’s and Bike for Tibet’s journey across the U.S. at BikeforTibet.org and get in contact with her by emailing BikeforTibet@gmail.com.



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SELECTED SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK EVENTS

Nov. 14: "World Hijab Day Celebration"

@9am-12pm Pick Up Your Hijab ASC Plaza Level, @3-4pm Group Refection. Sponsored by the Muslim Student Association. Take a step in our shoes on Hijab Day! World Hijab Day was created to provide solidarity for the women who suffer from oppression for their outward display of faith. This event encourages women of all faiths to wear the hijab and experience what it's like for our Muslim students. Pick up your Hijab early in the day and join us at the end of the day as we reflect on your experiences.

Nov. 15: "NDN Country and Indigenous Issues Today: Why they Matter to You"

@5-7:30pm ASC 301. Student led and sponsored by Women's Studies. This event seeks to showcase NDN (Indian) and Indigenous people's lives today, with a focus on contemporary issues indigenous people face. Come learn about and celebrate Indigenous people's heritages through a "mini pow-wow" of table stations, a panel discussion, and a native song and dance demonstration.

Nov. 17: "Open Forum on Underrepresented Communities on Campus" @5:30-7pm EN B121.

Sponsored by the Muslim Student Association, Black Student Union, and NAACP. Please join the Muslim Student Association, NAACP, and BSU as we come together on a platform to discuss the discrimination and hostility that underrepresented communities are going through.

Ongoing: "We Need Social Justice Because..." Drop by the Department of Sociology to complete the sentence "We Need Social Justice because..." and leave it so that we can create an organic representation of the importance of social justice to students at Southern.

A full list of events can be found on the campus website: <http://www.southernct.edu/social-justice/>

OUR GRADS NOW: BETSY NILAN



WMS M.A. '16 and president of the Get In Touch Foundation, Betsy Nilan, picks up where her mother left off. Nilan is pictured speaking at Luralton Hall High School's announcement of the new breast health education law in Connecticut that passed in April 2016. Nilan's mother, Mary Ann Wasil, was a champion for breast health and the founder of the non-profit Get In Touch Foundation, based out of Milford, CT. Wasil's dream of passing a breast health education law came true one week after her passing, April 15, 2016. State Senator Gayle Slossberg (D-Milford) passed the law "Public 16-188 An Act Concerning Education Issues" that houses the breast health law suggested by Wasil. The law requires all public schools in the state of Connecticut to incorporate free breast health education into their curriculum. Wasil also created the Daisy Wheel tool which aids in breast health education, awareness and detection.

2016 NWSA CONFERENCE: DECOLONIALITY

The 2016 National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) annual conference happens November 10-13, 2016 in Montreal, Quebec. This year's theme is Decoloniality. "Decoloniality is a worldview that denaturalizes settler colonial logics and structuring violences. Coloniality and settler governance- are transnational in scope and include territorial occupation, conquest, removal, economic exploitation, resource extraction, displacement, and dehumanization." Lauren Todd, WMS M.A. '16, will present on the panel, "Decolonizing the Terrains of Title IX: Anti-White Supremacy, Gender Justice, and Relational Ways of Knowing." Todd states, "This workshop seeks to decolonize Title IX education, academic life, and policy formation in a time when administrations have become adept at using the language of Title IX, diversity, and equal rights to perpetuate and deepen the status quo of violence. Close attention is paid to the linkages between Title IX and racial justice movements historically as a way to intervene in academic segregations and foreclosures of coalition building. This workshop forges space to exchange historic and recent movement experiences, research, and strategies; it creates politicized modes of solidarity and collective struggle that expand Title IX possibilities of feminist justice."