



WOMEN'S STUDIES

MARCH 2015 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

ALUMNI NEWS



Since she was a little girl, **Jennifer Hudson** has had an interest in gender issues and justice. Hudson graduated from SCSU in 2002 earning an advanced graduate certificate in Women's Studies. She has also earned a Master of Fine Arts in Writing from Albertus Magnus College in 2014. She focuses on writing fiction about women and women's relationships with each other in their various forms. She is currently working on a novel about women's experiences in state mental hospitals prior to deinstitutionalization.

She loves her career as a Faculty Development Associate at SCSU. The most rewarding aspect for her is helping faculty become more sensitive to feminist pedagogy, seeing the great teaching and scholarship modeled by our faculty. Equally rewarding to Hudson is supporting and mentoring part-time faculty based on her own experiences teaching in English and in Women's Studies on a part-time basis.

Her words of advice for students are, "Nothing is impossible if you keep working toward your goals and seek out people who are as passionate as you about that goal." She encourages students to take advantage of internships and other real-world experience opportunities. She states this can help students determine if what the student enjoys is something they would like to pursue in the future. Also, study-abroad opportunities should be explored as well as involvement with groups on campus that share feminist values because it is always wonderful to meet like-minded people.

In her spare time, Hudson enjoys writing, painting, singing, and vintage fashion. She shares a favorite quote by Eleanor Roosevelt, "We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face...we must do that which we think we cannot."

Sarah Rizzuto graduated in 2011 with a WMS graduate certificate and a Master of Fine Arts. Rizzuto had attended one of the WMS annual conferences, and this is what attracted her to the program. She currently works in the English Department at SCSU teaching creative writing. The most rewarding aspect of her work is watching her students gain confidence writing poems and stories, which are often very personal.



Her advice for students is to get involved with WMS events, take advantage of meeting students who are not similar to you, find ways to contribute the whether it has to do with academics or the community and to be kind to oneself.

Rizzuto enjoys listening to music, spending time with friends, many of whom are from Women's Studies. Her favorite quote is by Maya Angelou, "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change the way you think about it."

IOTA IOTA IOTA is a National Women's Studies Honor Society and is open to undergraduate students, graduate students, and alumnae/i in Women's Studies.

Candidates must:

- Have a strong interest in Women's Studies
- Have at least third-semester undergraduate standing
- Have at least six hours/credits of Women's Studies coursework
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher

Vagina Monologues: Iota Iota Iota participates in the V-Day movement by putting on performances of The

Vagina Monologues every year. The proceeds of the show go to the V-Day campaign and a local New Haven organization that supports and empowers women and girls.

Auditions: 3/12, 3/13, 3/23, 3/24 - 6pm-10pm
Practice Dates: 4/10, 4/13, 4/14, 6pm-10pm

Fundraisers & Events:

3/5 @5pm: Women's Appreciation Day Potluck-ASC 201
3/9-3/11 @10-1:30pm: Upcycled Craft Sale-EN Rotunda
4/15 @7:30pm: Vagina Monologues - ENG C112
4/16 @7:30pm: Vagina Monologues - ENG A120



IOTA IOTA IOTA

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Betsy Nilan is in her second semester in the WMS MA program. She earned a BA degree in Anthropology from the University of Virginia in 2013. She was also on the Varsity Women's Rowing Team, contributing to two NCAA championship wins in 2010 and 2012. Last year Nilan worked at Bryanston Boarding School in Dorset, England as a UVA/UK Fellow where she coached rowing and taught British History and Geography. The students she coached and taught were amazing, and she felt privileged to be able to work there for a year.

Nilan is a founding board member and Youth Ambassador Committee member of The Get In Touch Foundation, a global breast health non-profit that provides a program which is free to schools. It teaches girls and young women in grades 5-12 the importance of and how to do a breast self-exam.

In her spare time, she paints reproductions of Gustav Klimt's "The Kiss" on shoes. She has a Facebook page called "KISSed by Betsy" so people can message her for more information. She also likes to surf, travel, eat Thai food, and listen to Fleetwood Mac.

Nilan's favorite course thus far is one she is in this semester called "Global Women's Issues-Women, Culture, Globalization." She has loved all of her classes so far, but this one in particular has given her a better global perspective and so many things tie into what she has learned in her anthropology and globalization courses at UVA, but with a focus on women. The professors in Women's Studies have been so supportive and inspiring and her classmates are such strong, independent, feminists, she feels honored to be a part of the program!

She was drawn to Women's Studies because of a professor at UVA while in a Women's Studies course. The professor, Dr. Amanda Davis, changed her outlook on life completely and opened her eyes to so many things that were unjust in the world due to gender inequality. After taking her course, Nilan was encouraged to take what she had learned from that class and go further

with it. She wanted to learn more and apply to graduate school for a degree in Women's Studies—and this is, in short, is why Nilan came to SCSU.

Elizabeth Brady graduated from the University of Scranton in 2014 with a double major in Counseling and Human Services and Women's Studies. She was drawn to SCSU's Women's Studies MA program because of its incredible reputation and decided to attend after obtaining a GSGA position as an Anthropology Graduate Teaching Assistant.



Her favorite course is "History of Feminist Thought" because of the feminist pedagogical classroom setting and the devotion to uncovering the incredible women who walked the feminist path before her. She loves the unique content and the intimate classroom setting, as well as the intellectual conversations she is privileged enough to experience through the WMS program. For fun, Brady enjoys hanging out with her bunny named Sophie, going on adventures with her sisters, Keelin and Maegen, long-boarding, playing sudoku, and watching Parks and Recreation/bowling with her boyfriend.

She has a favorite quote by Lizzie McGurie, "The tide is high, but I'm holding on."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Graduate Research Fellowships are now available at the following website: http://southernct.edu/academics/graduate/research/research-competitions/grf_application2015_2016.pdf.

Applications are due in the Office of Graduate Studies by 4:00 PM on Friday, 5 March 2015.



womenstudies@southernct.edu
www.southernct.edu/
womensstudies
www.facebook.com/SCSUWMS





WOMEN'S STUDIES

MARCH 2015 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

12TH SEASON OF 64 DAYS OF NONVIOLENCE 2015

The 64 Days officially begins each year on January 30th, the day Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, and ends on April 4th, the day we commemorate Dr. King. In our twelfth annual observation of the 64 Days at SCSU, we continue to celebrate the peace and justice heritage in many of our cultures and heritages, including our observation of Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Asian/Pacific Heritage Month. A tentative schedule is below.

March

- 4: "Women's Wit and Wisdom: Beauty Across Cultures" with artist and educator Hanan Hameen (2:30-4 PM, Adanti Student Center 301)
- 5: Performance Poetry Duo "About That Elephant" (7-9 PM, Adanti Student Center Ballroom A)
- 6 & 7: Kingian Nonviolence Workshop with Victoria Christgau (1-7 PM & 9-3 PM, Engleman Hall B 121 A&B)
- 12: "Gender Justice and Cyber Technology" an evening with feminist legal scholars on intersections of gender and technology (5-7 PM, Engleman Hall A 113)
- 21: The 20th Annual African American Women's Summit, a Sisters' Collective in New Haven (8-3 PM, Wexler-Grant School, New Haven)
- 25: The 6th annual "The Z Experience," a spoken word event in memory of Zannette Lewis, in conjunction with Women's Appreciation Day & Sisters' Gathering (7-10 PM, Adanti Student Center Ballroom B)

April

- 2: "Everyone Matters" Day
- 9: Courageous Conversation on White Privilege (TBA, Engleman Hall B 121 A&B)
- 14: NDN (American Indian) Women's Cultural Production & Sustaining Turtle Island
- 16: "Very Young Girls" Film Screening and Discussion (6-8 PM, Adanti Student Center Theatre)
- 17: Conference "Literature across Disciplines-Gabriel García Márquez: Translation and Criticism," with keynotes Jean Franco and Edith Grossman
- 15 and 16: A reading of Eve Ensler's *Vagina Monologues*, with Iota, Iota, Iota, the SCSU Chapter of the National Women's Studies National Honor Society (7-9 PM, Engleman Hall C 112, and 7-9 PM, Engleman Hall A 120)
- 22: "Take Back the Night," an annual event to stop violence against women and shatter the silence (7-9 PM, Adanti Student Center Ballroom)
- 23: Centennial Commemoration of Armenian Genocide
- 24: Coalition of Women's Studies in CT & RI (9-3 PM at Saint Joseph University)
- 30: An OWL (Opportunity for Women's Leadership) Empowerment Symposium with Ebony Revived, the SCSU Women's Studies 11th leadership conference with Metropolitan Business Academy, Wilbur Cross High School, and West Haven High School young women (8-3 PM, Engleman Hall B 121 A&B)

ACTIVISM NOW

Shaina Donaldson

In my generation, the definition of what beauty is has been narrowed down and defined in ways that leave most women feeling as though they weren't "pretty" enough or that something is wrong with them. As an African American woman, I've heard women who are of a dark shade of brown told they look "dirty" or "too dark". I've witnessed women who are of a light shade of brown told they think they are too good because their skin is almost white skin, or others have assumed they are using lightening creams. Most of the African American women in reality shows have undergone surgery at least once in their careers. As a result, African American women and girls look at the women on the screen, feeling "less than" because they do not have surgically implanted bosoms or booties. I'm often told, "You're pretty for a "black girl," or the famous, "You must be mixed because you're light skinned." The more experiences I encountered where African American women were being stigmatized and scrutinized due to the color

of their skin, the more I wanted to see change! I was sick and tired of watching women slander each other or be in competition with one another based on the shades of their skin. I was sick and tired of witnessing people pass judgment on someone based on their appearance. One morning,

and I woke up immediately, "Ebony came to mind. I made it create a



called "Ebony Revived" that will evoke oneness amongst all women and women's empowerment! The beauty of the African American women will no longer be altered into ONE particular image, but will be recognized for its WIDE range of diversity.

What is Ebony Revived? Ebony Revived is a movement created to break the stigma among African American females of different skin pigmentations and create a foundation of awareness, unity, and women empowerment. Individuals in this movement will use media, art, and poetry/memoirs to educate. This movement will make an impact on children, teenagers, and adults within communities and schools so that we can rid our society of the white-skin privilege. This movement is about giving children, teenagers, and adults more insight on the history of their races and ethnicities. Ebony Revived will help many females appreciate their beauty that society has narrowly defined.

The goal of Ebony Revived is to help women of different ages appreciate their natural beauty. We want women to embrace themselves and to understand that beauty comes in different forms, shapes, and shades.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM PAST EVENTS

"A Glocal Movement Against Gender Violence" with Chilean feminist Pía Barros

Pía Barros, a Chilean feminist, writer, and human rights activist, visited the campus Wednesday, February 18th to speak on violence against women and conduct a workshop with students at Southern. She juxtaposed images of women and children who had been violently beaten with the voices of the students in the audience who wrote flash fictions by filling in Barros' prompt, provoking an engaging discussion on the state of gender violence around the world.

"The New Black": Film Screening and Discussion

The New Black was an emotional and thought-provoking experience for those that attended. The documentary specifically examined the same-sex marriage debate and

the vote of the African-American communities in Maryland. Afterwards the SAGE Center graduate intern, Lauren Todd, led the discussion that allowed for the attendees to think about the intersections of race, sexuality, faith, and gender.

"Selma": Film Screening and Discussion

The two screenings of the highly-acclaimed film were very stimulating for the over 100 attendees that came out. The film follows Dr. Martin Luther King's campaign to secure voting rights via an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in 1965. The film serves to prove that protests, demonstrations, and marches are among the most powerful forms of resistance, and indeed, a path to create change in an unjust world.

"Reproductive Justice: The Politics of Health Care for Native American Women," with Dr. Barbara Gurr

On February 25th, Dr. Barbara Gurr spoke on campus in an intimate setting with students, faculty, and the public to discuss her book, "Reproductive Justice: The Politics of Health Care for Native American Women." The book examines the reproductive healthcare experiences of women on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Gurr spoke candidly about her experiences researching on the reservation, including the challenges and triumphs that occurred during the researching and writing process, the difficulties in interviewing women on the reservation, and the complexities that come with sharing their stories with the public.