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Women's Studies News, Spring 2014

University of Alabama in Huntsville

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You may like to know that...

- The first ever *Illustrated History of Women's Studies at UAH* is now available (page 3).
- AAUW-Huntsville and UAH will host the inaugural Alabama Women Student Leaders Conference for women students at north Alabama colleges and universities (page 4).
- AAUW-Huntsville, in cooperation with UAH, won a grant to host Tech Trek, a science and math summer camp for girls (page 4).

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WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

Spring, 2014

Volume 24, Number 2

McCay Offers "Human Trafficking 101" Lecture for Prevention Month

Patricia A. McCay, Chair of the Huntsville-Madison County Human Trafficking Task Force, will give a lecture entitled "Human Trafficking 101" on **Wednesday, January 29, at 7:30 p.m.** in UAH's Shelby Center (room 107). January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Women's Studies invites the campus and community to learn more about this growing problem and what can be done to help.

An estimated 27 million people are enslaved worldwide today, over 80% of them women, and over half of them under the age of 18. Human trafficking, very often for the purpose of sex bondage, is the second highest criminal activity in the world. A conservative

estimate puts 200,000 people in bondage in the United States, and the problem affects our own community. In 2012, five people were arrested in an FBI sting on a Madison hotel, where a 15 year old girl was being held captive for forced prostitution, and in 2013, two adults (later arrested) trafficked a Huntsville teenager to Louisiana for forced prostitution.

Pat McCay is a member and past chair of the Madison County Coordinated Community Response Taskforce Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She re-



ceived the FBI Director's "Community Leadership Award" in 2011 and graduated from the FBI Citizens Academy in

2012. She holds a business degree from UAH and is President of The Consulting Group, Inc. In 2013, she was a recipient of the UAH "Alumni of Achievement Award."

This event is free and open to the public. For information, call (256) 824-6210. Visit the task force website at stnow.org.



Huntsville Feminist Chorus Spring Concert

The Huntsville Feminist Chorus (HFC) will offer its annual spring concert at UAH on **Saturday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m.**, in Chan Auditorium of the Business Administration Building. The concert's theme, "Spirit of the Dance," brings together song, rhythm, and movement in a joyful celebration of life and world community.

This will be the 19th HFC spring concert at UAH, honoring wom-

en's history. HFC was formed in 1993 and sang its first UAH concert in March 1996. The chorus' mission is to "open hearts and minds through song."

As always, the concert will be free and open to the public. Women's Studies will host a reception following. For more information, call (256) 824-6190.



WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS



Dr. Molly Johnson,
Women's Studies
Director



From top: Jennifer Blatter,
Chanley Pickard, SHARP staff,
at *The Invisible War*;
attendees at the pre-show
dinner; Dr. Linda Gordon
presenting on Lange images;
Dr. Esther Ngumbi (left) with
Joy Agee, UAH graduate
student and AAUW Events
Co-Coordinator.

Message from the Women's Studies Director

Happy New Year from the Women's Studies Program at UAH!

In this newsletter, you can read all about our spring events, including a public lecture on human trafficking, the annual concert of the Huntsville Feminist Chorus, and two sessions of the Coffeehouse Writers Series. You can also learn about some exciting collabora-

tions between UAH Women's Studies and the Huntsville branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), including a leadership conference for women students at North Alabama colleges and universities, to be hosted at UAH in April and a "Tech Trek" summer camp emphasizing science, math, engineering, and technology for middle school girls.

You can also read in this newsletter about the *Illustrated History of Women's Studies at UAH*, prepared by Dr. Rose Norman in honor of Dr. Nancy Finley.

Thanks to all of you who attended our fall events, including a showing of the powerful documentary film on sexual assault in the military, *The Invisible War*, introduced and moderated by representatives from the Army Community Service's Sexual Harrassment/Assault Response and

Prevention (SHARP) Program, and two lectures by renowned women's historian Dr. Linda Gordon of New York University, one on the history of abortion and birth control controversies, and one on photographer Dorothea Lange.

Women's Studies also collaborated with Global Studies and the UAH Office of Diversity to present a talk by Dr. Esther Ngumbi entitled "Bringing Sustainable Development to One Community in the Coastal Region of Kenya." Ngumbi is a native of Kenya, an AAUW fellowship recipient, and is now a postdoctoral researcher at Auburn University.

I personally had the pleasure of attending the annual conference of the National Women's Studies Association in Cincinnati, Ohio, where I presented a paper and also attended a full day of workshops on Women's Studies Program Administration and Development. It was wonderful to meet women's studies directors from around the country and to learn about programs, issues, initiatives, and challenges at other colleges and universities. I am eager to work with the Women's Studies Program Advisory Committee to consider some possible new initiatives for our own program.

Special thanks to those of you who made contributions to Women's Studies and to the Rose Norman Women's Studies Award for Scholarship in Action this past year. Please remember to check out our website at uah.edu/womensstudies and to "Like" "Women's Studies at UAHuntsville" on Facebook to keep up to date with us before the next newsletter goes out in the fall!

All the best,

Molly Wilkinson Johnson
Associate Professor of History
Director of Women's Studies



HOW CAN YOU HONOR POSITIVE COMMUNITY CHANGE?

Would you like to honor Rose Norman and help ensure that Women's Studies can continue to honor individuals who help empower women and bring positive social change to our community?

If so, please make a contribution to the Scholarship in Action Award fund!

Simply fill out the giving form on the back page of the newsletter and check the box indicating that you wish your contribution to go to the Rose Norman Women's Studies Award for Scholarship in Action.

Thank you!

Coffeehouse Writers Series Returns March 21

Women's Studies and the Salmon Library are continuing the popular Coffeehouse Writers Series with programs featuring local writers reading their work. All programs last about an hour and are held at the Salmon Library art gallery near the ChargerBrew coffee shop.

Friday, March 21, 6:00 p.m.

The Coweeta Poets return with staged readings of their quirky, sometimes dramatic, often collab-

orative poems. Poets are Debbie West, Erin Reid, Evelyn Hurley, Margaret Vann, Monita Soni, Rose Norman, Rosemary McMahan, Susan Guthrie, and Susan Luther.

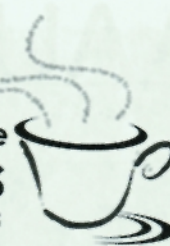
Thursday, April 17, 6:30 p.m.

Best Writing Friends Forever (BWFFs) return with poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. Readers from this Huntsville writing group include Betty Clemens, Brooke Bullman, Erin Reid, Deidre

Moore, Heather Kilgore, Marylyn Coffey, Susan Gorrell, and Susan Phelan.

Admission is free and open to the public. Library parking has moved to the lot next to the Nursing Building on Ben Graves Dr. near the Holmes Dr. intersection. For information, contact Marylyn Coffey at (256) 824-6114 or email coffeymt@uah.edu.

Coffeehouse
Writers
Series



An Illustrated History of Women's Studies at UAH

In honor of her retirement from UAH after 30 years of teaching Sociology and Women's Studies, the Women's Studies Program presented Dr. Nancy Finley with *An Illustrated History of Women's Studies at UAH*.

The book chronicles the rise of Women's Studies from an interest group that Nancy started in 1990, through the three years it took to become an academic program

offering a minor (1992-95), with photos of the people, organizations, and events that mark the passage of the program's growth to the present.

A copy of this hardback book has been placed in the Women's Studies Resource Center in Morton Hall room 254.

The book is available in digital form by emailing a request to womensstudies@uah.edu.



Above: Dr. Nancy Finley receives her copy of *An Illustrated History of Women's Studies at UAH*. Left: The book's cover.

A Look Inside WS 200: Introduction to Women's Studies

First taught in 1996, WS 200 is the core course in the UAH Women's Studies minor and serves as an option for students fulfilling their General Education Requirements.

The course's textbook is *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, edited by Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee. Students learn about historical and contemporary issues of relevance to women; explore the complexities of, and relationship between, biological sex and socially and culturally constructed gender;

acquire familiarity with key methods, epistemologies, and theoretical perspectives that scholars have used to reassert women into the intellectual discourse; and explore gender as an analytical tool for understanding power, inequality, privilege, and experience.

Students hear guest lectures by Women's Studies faculty in fields such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, and nursing, with one class session this year featuring a panel of local women religious leaders. Students complete an oral

history interview project, in which they interview a woman at least 60 years of age and write an analysis tying her reflections to course themes. Students also write a research paper on themes as varied as black feminist thought, the Equal Rights Amendment, the media and eating disorders, the medicalization of childbirth, sexual assault in the military, feminist theology, and impediments for women directors in Hollywood.

For more information contact molly.johnson@uah.edu.

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WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS



Women's Studies and AAUW-Huntsville Collaborations

UAH Women's Studies and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Huntsville branch are partnering on two major events that benefit students.

► **Ala-WSL Conference.** Planning began in the fall for a leadership conference for North Alabama college and university women, based on the highly successful National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), to which AAUW-Huntsville sends students every year. Planners have named it the Alabama Women Student Leaders (Ala-WSL) Conference. The organizing committee is multi-generational, composed of UAH students and alumni, including Women's Studies alumna Sarah Ragan, several students from other area colleges and universities, and AAUW-Huntsville members. The UAH Office of Diversity has provided financial support.

The Ala-WSL Conference will be held at UAH on **Friday, April 4**. The conference coincides with the AAUW State Convention in

Huntsville. College women from around the state traveling as AAUW Student Advisory Council members will also participate in Ala-WSL sessions.

The conference features workshops ranging from identifying leadership and communication styles to preparing resumes and learning networking skills. Kate Farrar from national AAUW will discuss AAUW programs specifically for students. Exercises and resources on self-care and stress management will be offered. Students will meet with renowned women's pay equity activist Lilly Ledbetter. A pizza dinner will be hosted in the new Charger Union, followed by a showing of the documentary, *Miss Representation*, co-sponsored by the UAH Association for Campus Entertainment.

All sessions will be free and open to North Alabama college women. Updates on the schedule, required reservations for meals, and other details will be posted to the Women's Studies Facebook page and website (www.uah.edu/)

womensstudies), where students may also find the application (due February 1) for financial support to attend NCCWSL, held **June 5-7**, at the University of Maryland, College Park.

► **Tech Trek at UAH.** Tech Trek is a weeklong residential summer camp to be held at UAH on **July 20-25**, designed for Alabama middle school girls and focusing on math, science, engineering, and technology. AAUW-Huntsville was one of only three branches nationwide to receive a grant from AAUW to bring Tech Trek to their area. The Tech Trek program was developed by AAUW national and is now being taken nationwide. Girls will be immersed in a world that empowers and encourages them to think about themselves as future scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and computer specialists.

Dr. Molly Johnson, Women's Studies director, is on the planning committee and serves as marketing director. For information, see <http://techtrek-al.aauw.net>.



From top: Liz Hurley, featured speaker at the "Breaking Through Barriers" Luncheon, March 7. Lilly Ledbetter, keynote speaker at the AAUW State Convention, April 4-6.

AAUW-Huntsville Spring Program Schedule

The AAUW Huntsville Branch has planned a full spring program! All monthly meetings, except for the March luncheon, take place at Covenant Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 301 Drake Ave. SE. Students are highly encouraged to attend and may receive meal sponsorship or attend without partaking in the dinner option. Reservations are made through Lois Guendel at (256) 880-8643 or lois.guendel@knology.net.

► **Tuesday, February 4, 5:30-8 p.m.** "Impact of the Arts on the Local Economy." Allison Dillon-Jauck from The Arts Council.

► **Friday, March 7, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.** "Breaking Through Barriers" Luncheon with speaker Liz Hurley. Fundraiser to send students to NCCWSL, Valley Hill Country Club, 8300 Valley Hill Dr. SE.

► **Tuesday, May 6, 5:30-8 p.m.** "Women's Health Month: What You

Should Know about Cardiovascular Disease."

AAUW-Huntsville will participate in the AAUW State Convention at the Huntsville Marriott on **April 4-6** with keynote speaker Lilly Ledbetter, whose campaign on behalf of pay equity inspired the 2009 Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

For more program details see the Women's Studies Facebook page or <http://aauw-al.aauw.net>.

Women's Studies Featured Faculty: Dr. Christina Steidl

Dr. Christina Steidl is an Assistant Professor of Sociology in the UAH College of Liberal Arts. Christina grew up outside of Akron, Ohio. She received both a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Arts in Social Science / Human Development from the University of Chicago, where her research focused on the experiences of LGBTQ college students and the availability of institutional support systems. In 2002, Christina moved to Kent, Ohio, to serve as the Residential Director of the First Year Experience Program at Kent State University.

The three years that she spent in Kent significantly shaped her research interests. First, she became fascinated by local stories of the May 4, 1970, shootings where National Guardsmen opened fire into a crowd of student protesters, killing four and injuring nine others. In particular, she took interest in the multiple meanings attached to the shootings and how those meanings became embodied in separate memorial spaces on campus. In graduate school, Christina would return to these observations in her study of collective memory (how societies understand and even shape their own history). In October, she published the article, "Remembering May 4, 1970: Integrating the Commemorative Field at Kent State," in the *American Sociological Review* that described transformations in collective memory at Kent State from 1970 to present.

Christina's time at Kent shaped her research agenda in a second way as well. One of the primary

goals of the First Year Experience Program at Kent was to provide resources and support to first generation college students. Despite excitement and motivation on the part of the students and authentic good intentions on the part of university faculty and staff, Christina routinely witnessed the challenges of these students in successfully negotiating the structures of the U.S. higher education system. The growing realization of the extent to which social structures (i.e., institutions like schools, contexts like "the South," or classification systems like race or gender) shape our experiences converted Christina from a psychologist to a sociologist. Returning to graduate school, this time for a Ph.D., Christina decided to study inequalities and educational systems at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

Christina is currently involved in three major research projects which continue to focus on themes of education and inequality. First, expanding on her quantitative dissertation research, Christina is writing several articles exploring women majoring in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math). In particular, she is interested in how family economic factors influence students' choices of major differently for men and women.

A second project explores how expectations embedded in the role of professor vary by gender and thus male and female faculty members often attend to and are evaluated differently for promotions. Finally, building on research

by Dr. Nancy Finley, and in collaboration with UAH Women's Studies alumna, Morgan Justice, Christina has been working on a new project on lesbian gender maneuvering.

In a parent-teacher conference, Christina's kindergarten teacher told her parents that Christina would teach the class, if allowed—and that she could probably do it. Roughly thirty years later, Christina is still at her best in front of the classroom. During her time at Emory, Christina won a number of teaching awards and fellowships and coordinated a workshop for faculty and instructors on classroom dynamics related to race and inequality. Since joining the UAH faculty in August 2012, she has taught numerous courses: Intro to Sociology, Sociological Theory, Sociology of Education, and Social Stratification. Next fall, she will teach Social Movements. Through her teaching, Christina hopes to remind her students that learning is a creative and curious endeavor, not a box to be checked off on the way to somewhere else. She seeks to empower her students to think critically about their world and to raise their own voices as participants in their communities.

Christina divides her time between Huntsville and Atlanta, where her partner and their three daughters (ages 14, 17, and 21) reside. When she is not in either city, she can often be found in the mountains—backpacking or rock climbing. Time in the wilderness frequently provides a fresh perspective on society.



Dr. Christina Steidl joined the Sociology faculty at UAH in 2012 and is the newest faculty member of the Women's Studies Program Advisory Committee.



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Become a Friend of Women's Studies!

Friends of Women's Studies (FWS) is an organization of people who support the UAH Women's Studies Program. The goals of FWS include:

- Supporting community involvement in Women's Studies events
- Sponsoring cultural activities and events that honor and empower women
- Supporting women scholars, artists, and performers
- Fostering discussion of issues affecting women's lives

Annual Contribution (October 1 – September 30)

- | | | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10-24 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25-49 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50-99 Matron | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100-249 Sponsor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250-\$499 Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Lifetime Contributor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Benefactor | |

☐ I would like to contribute to the "Rose Norman Women's Studies Award for Scholarship in Action." \$

☐ I would like to contribute to NCCWSL travel. \$

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Gifts are entirely tax-deductible. Make your check payable to UAH Women's Studies.

Mail to: Women's Studies, 344 Morton Hall, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899