

Gender and Women's Studies Newsletter

Issue 2

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Saint Mary's College
Notre Dame, Indiana
The Nation's Premier Catholic Women's College

Words from Our Program Coordinator

Welcome to the second edition of the Gender and Women's Studies newsletter! Congratulations to the fourteen minors and one student-designed major who were recognized at last week's hooding ceremony. Thank you for your contributions to the program, and may your post-SMC future be bright.

For those of you who are not graduating, the fall semester is already taking shape. GWS will be co-sponsoring the docu-

mentary *Band of Sisters*, about Catholic nuns and social activism, on Wednesday 18 September. In exciting news, the film will be followed by a conversation with live nuns! Also, Professors Sapra and Wagman remain interested in taking students to the National Women's Studies Association annual conference in Cincinnati from 7-10 November; please let them know if you would like to go.

And congratulations to

Professor Sapra and Abby Burgan for receiving a SSTAR grant this summer!

Speaking of summer, the time is upon us. Enjoy your holiday!

All the best,



Stacy Davis, associate professor, religious studies, and GWS Coordi-



EXIT INTERVIEWS FROM GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES MINORS

A few words from our seniors:

"I loved all of the GWS courses that I had the chance to take. Particularly, Contested Masculinities, Intro, and Becoming Women influenced the way that I analyze media. Also, I had the opportunity to attend the Women's Worlds Conference in Ottawa, Canada with Genevieve Spittler, Sonalini

Sapra, and Alayne Riege—which was a life changing experience for me. I was able to meet influential leaders from around the world, who exposed me to feminist issues that I did not know were occurring on a worldwide level. "

— Abby Henning

"As the program grows I would hope becoming a Women and Gender Studies major would become an option. Understanding where women have come from and

what our future looks like in society is important to learn, especially at an all-women's college like Saint Mary's."

—Meghan McAlpine

"I will be spending next year volunteering at a women's shelter in Anchorage, Alaska. This was my first choice in volunteer jobs because I wanted to work directly with women and be able to put my GWS knowledge to use while getting a first-hand experience of some of the issues I had talked about in class. "

— Caroline Proulx.

Campus Visit from Marko Karadzic

Marko Karadzic, former State Secretary for Human and Minority Rights in the Republic of Serbia, spoke at Saint Mary's College on April 2 to discuss his human rights work in Serbia in the fight for equality and to end discrimination against LGBTQ people. He discussed the many approaches he has used in his work and life to change public perceptions of gay and lesbian people, from participating in a reality TV show to using his political position as a platform to openly discussing prejudice. Karadzic also showed clips from two of the first ever Serbian gay



pride parades – ten years apart – and the subsequent violence and police intervention that occurred.

Karadzic served as a legal advisor on human rights law to the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, was a program coordinator for the Belgrade Center for Human Rights, served as an intern at the International Criminal Court in The

Hague, Netherlands, and was an intern with the International Justice Program at the JEHT Foundation in New York.

“She’s the First”: fundraising to support girls’ education

From She’s the First’s successful Tie-Dye Cupcake Bake Sale this past fall, the organization raised \$300 which has gone to sponsor a year of education for Parbati, a 12-year old student at the Kopila Valley School in Nepal.

She’s The First received information about Parbati earlier this semester, and hopefully will be in contact with her throughout this year. Parbati loves singing and the color pink, and dreams of becoming a nurse when she grows up.

She’s The First is absolutely thrilled that it not only reached its goal, but is also able to connect with Parbati. Seeing her picture for the first time and reading about her passions and her life, I felt an immediate connec-

tion with her and our chapter is even more inspired to host successful fundraising events so that we can connect with more girls in developing countries and support their dreams and aspirations by supporting their education.

The SMC community can help support our fundraising efforts to support girls' education by supporting our upcoming fundraisers. This spring, we plan on hosting a Yoga Sculpt class with froyo to help raise money. We will also be selling T-shirts in the Student Center Atrium to raise awareness of our club on campus.

In the fall, we will be selling Tie Dye Cupcakes again, and would love to see all our cupcakes sold once again.

Also, She's the First accepts personal donations, and people can visit shesthefirst.org to find other ways to support She's the First outside of our campus chapter.

-- Mileva Brunson; Class of 2014

Check out “She’s the First” on the web at www.shesthefirst.org

FILM REVIEW OF “IT’S A GIRL” DOCUMENTARY

Saint Mary’s College student organizations, Feminists United and She’s the First, sponsored a screening of documentary “It’s a Girl,” earlier this semester. “It’s a Girl” addressed the global issues of gendercide and accepted violence toward women.

Featuring the national cultures of China and India, the film focused on each country explaining the damaging affects of sex selective abortions and general violence against women.

First addressing the sex-selective issues in India, the documentary highlights the many parents, particularly mothers, who have had sex selective abortions or have killed their infants once realizing they are female. The documentary then presents the sexist ideologies that have been engrained within the traditional customs and culture. One practice that was significantly highlighted was that of the dowry, in which a woman’s parents must provide goods to the fiancé and his

family. The film argued that this led to the objectification of women and the devaluation of girls as they would lead to a costly future.

China was then addressed as the documentary highlighted the dramatic scale displaying more men

One of the many factors addressed when making sense of these genderized realities was the government’s strict regulation on reproduction within the country. These laws have specific regulations for urban or rural families allowing rural families to try again if they did not have a son as their first child.

As males hold more power and maintain the family name and connections, males are preferred to females. Of course there were many other factors as well, but reproductive regulation was the most crucial.

When comparing the two cultures, it became apparent that they both shared not only patriarchal societies, but also a lack of government action towards violent acts against women. Following the film, in the discussion with students and faculty, many issues were brought up concerning the emphasis on patriarchy and the lack of agency that was a result of certain commentator’s view on the matter.

- Maeva Alexander, Class of 2013



than women in the country. The documentary focused on a variety of gender related issues such as male child preference, and female trafficking at all ages.

Check out the film’s website at
www.itsgirlmovie.com



We're on the Web!

<http://www3.saintmarys.edu/womens-studies>

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Students and Professors Present on Racist and Sexist Themed Parties



Gender and Women's Studies Professors Susan Alexander and Jamie Wagman collaborated with students Laura Corrigan and Sara Gray at the Diverse Students' Leadership Conference in March to discuss racist and sexist themed parties on college campuses. Panelists discussed consumer culture, American cultural expectations of men and women, and the cost of generalizing about racial and ethnic groups. "It was unique and enriching to combine student experience and academic research on this particular topic," said Laura.