# women's Studies

# 1/211/5

# From the Director: Not an interim year!

When Jane Pinchin was asked to serve Colgate as "Interim President" for 2001-2, she made the now famous statement that it would not be an "interim year." (We know that international, national, and local events made sure that it was not.) If I had any idea a year ago that my year as Director of Women's Studies was to be an "interim" duty, the WMST Advisory Board and Faculty as well as our dynamic Program Assistant Diane Williams quickly corrected that impression. The Board has pressed this year toward clarifying our criteria for crosslisting, improving our visibility in on-line registration, and for having a Faculty Workshop at which we considered "The Future of Women's Studies." The Faculty has brought to the Board an unprecedented number of requests for new crosslistings; our list of courses has grown longer and stronger, and almost all of our courses have waitlists. In addition, the college's ambitions for its interdisciplinary programs has led to the forthcoming announcement that several members of the WMST Faculty will be named to senior joint appointments, i.e., in women's studies as well as their departments. All of this has felt like it was an *extraordinary time* to administer the program, rather than an "interim year." *Thank you all.* 

Our Program Assistant, Diane Williams, also has ruled out any sense of an "interim duty." Diane's energetic leadership has brought overflow crowds of 70-80 people to our regular "brown-bag" presentations and discussions. The flow of activity addressing issues of great importance has been continuous, since the Center also has provided a place for well-attended gatherings sponsored by other groups and programs. Diane has "centered" all of this. Her passionate commitment and humor have transformed the interim year before my actual retirement into a joyful additional education. *Thank you, Diane*.

Wanda Wavren Berry

Professor of Philosophy and Religion, emerita

## It's been fun!

I always figure there is something good about not getting the Spring Newsletter out until the Summer. This year, all of my efforts to get it out sooner kept getting pushed aside with more events, Brown Bags, student projects, and so much wonderful activity at the Center, that I finally gave up. So, here we are: graduation is on Sunday, my time at Colgate is rapidly coming to an end, and here is the Spring Newsletter!

I want to thank the students, faculty, and staff I had the opportunity to meet and work with during the last two years. I have been challenged, encouraged, and stretched in so many ways, learning all along. I have had an honor few others have: working with both Wanda Warren Berry and Marilyn Thie. From these women I have learned so much, and I've become quite a fountain of information on the history of women at Colgate! I thank them both for mentoring and guiding me through my first years out of college and allowing me to take risks, follow my passions, and try out ideas.

Here we are, two years later, with an eight page newsletter overflowing with energy and articles. I hope you enjoy it. The future of Women's Studies at Colgate is a bright one, and I encourage you to remain involved or get involved! It is a rare and special community on this campus, one in which I found a home.

\*\*Assistant\*\*

March for Women's Lives

# Our fieldtrip into history!

46 students, staff, and community members, and some special guests traveled together to D.C. for the March for Women's Lives. Check out the photo collage on the back page...



# Sam Soukup, WMST Major Extraordinaire! Sara Dyer, '07 & Diane Williams



For the past four years Sam Soukup has brought energy, passion, and enthusiasm to Women's Studies, her courses, and the Colgate community. She has been a positive presence in the Women's Studies program, a proud ambassador in all areas of the campus. We were pleased to award Sam the Academic Achievement Award for Women's Studies this year for her thoughtful, excellent work in Women's Studies courses.

Sam started her first year intending to be a Political Science major. After taking *Introduction to Women's Studies*, though, she found her home. "I loved the way that personal experience could be integrated into class conversation, but taken seriously." We've enjoyed Sam around the Center and in classes ever since.

In her final year, Sam embarked on a thesis project of updating *The Feminine Mystique* for a new generation of college women. Her final project, entitled, *A Contemporary Journey into The Feminine Mystique*, works with the classic text and interviews of some of her friends at Colgate, examining the new pressures and personal/political realities for these women. "I found that we are overwhelmed by images and depictions of the American 'single woman.' She is powerful, successful, and she doesn't need a man. But the paradox lies with what she does need: help in every aspect of her life. To that end, information is available everywhere: on the Internet, under soda caps, and every woman's magazine offers guidance about how to achieve orgasm, cope with relationship stress, and look like someone else. How could American women feel unhappy or alone? All they have to do is take something, wax something, change

something, and their problems are gone: they've recreated themselves. But consider the irony in the lives of powerful and independent women who lack the freedom to be themselves and seek personal satisfaction." Sam sees this situation as similar to the "problem with no name" which Friedan identifies in that both generations of women suffered feelings of unhappiness and lack of self-satisfaction, which they attributed to their own inabilities to live up to sexist and restrictive societal standards. Friedan allowed women to see their individual feelings not as only personal issues, but rather as a collective political reality. From Sam's research, she outlines that "today, there is too much help being offered, and women are left with a sense of interior helplessness when the help offered cannot help. They are suffering from the problem that has no name, but an updated version. This new problem has a million different names, a million different advertised remedies, and is present in all women. But that problem is too commercialized and only when women begin to assess themselves by themselves will the problem be solved. Until then, women are simply skimming the surface, and perpetuating their empty center." Sam received Honors for her work on this topic and presented her research at the Women's Studies Banquet in April.

In the midst of finishing her thesis, Sam found time to mobilize a group to attend the March for Women's Lives, in Washington DC, on April 25<sup>th</sup> (see photos on the back page). Largely due to Sam's enthusiasm and commitment to feminist issues, we filled a bus full of women and men dedicated to taking our place



Sam, waiting for the March to start

## A Women's Studies Celebration

At the Colgate Inn, on April 15, 2004, Women's Studies hosted our annual banquet. The evening was a wonderful celebration of community and Women's Studies with faculty, staff, and students all intermixed. Our program included Sam Soukup's presentation on her thesis research (see above), as well as short presentations from students in the WMST Senior Seminar, Metaphors of Femininity, taught by Margaret Darby (Interdisciplinary Writing). To honor our graduating minors and one December '04 major, we invited each student to speak about the particular "metaphor of femininity" they studied all semester: its origin, use, and power. Students and topics included: Mercy Donohue on the "sex kitten;" Katie Konrad on the "breast;" Sarah Compter on the "Virgin Mary;" and Jennifer Meacham on "Mother Nature." All of the short presentations provoked questions and interest in examining the ways in which things become "feminine metaphors."

After dinner, between presentations, Sarah Wider (English) gave a special cello performance. We gave gifts to the student staff at the Center, the Program Assistant, and the Director. The night was a great tribute to the dynamic intellectual energy of

# Great News!

We are pleased to announce our new Director and Program Assistant for 2004...

Hélène Julien, Director Tamara Serrano '03, Program Assistant

Hélène comes to us from the Romance Languages and
Literatures Department has been very involved in
Women's Studies. Tamara, a 2003 graduate and Women's
Studies major, worked in the Center and for the past year
she has been the Program Assistant for Multicultural
Affairs. We look forward to their leadership and new
vision for the future of Women's Studies!

# Women, Health, Medicine, and so much more... Michelle Gonzales, '04

When inevitably asked, "What stands out from your years at Colgate?" no doubt Professor Meika Loe's SOAN/WMST 369: Women, Health and Medicine course will be at the top of my list. This is one of those unique and influential courses that risks to stray from the normal lecture and paper format to offer students academic knowledge combined with real life health care experiences.

Each student in the course is required to volunteer at least twenty hours of their time at one of five locations, which they were assigned to based upon their interests. The organizations participating are: Crouse Community Center (a home for the elderly), Planned Parenthood, Community Memorial Hospital, AIDS Community Resources, and Ophelia's Place (a center for people struggling with disordered eating).

Professor Loe values the connections students make between fieldwork and course work, allowing information that can seem purely academic, to be real and pertinent to everyday life. She hopes students will start critically "thinking about how the personal is political, or how private troubles are linked to public issues," as well as gain important contacts. Loe's only regret when teaching the class? "Not being in the 'field' working" alongside her students.

This semester, I have spent numerous hours at the Planned Parenthood in Utica and my experiences there are unlike anything else I have done here at Colgate. What other course allows a student to be trained as a sex educator, shadow medical staff, identify fetal remains, witness an abortion, and learn about Planned Parenthood's mission for reproductive rights and equality? In what other course would you find students eagerly talk-

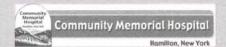


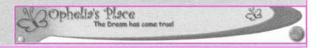
Students from Women, Health, Medicine at the March for Women's Lives, with Professor Meika Loe, kneeling in front

ing and sharing their experiences not only during class, but also before and after class, as well as our own personal time?

Each of us may have had different internship locations, but we have all had to deal with similar emotional aspects of our service, ranging from excitement to sadness, enthusiasm to depression. There is also the inevitable reflection that comes with involving yourself in highly personal and often profound aspects of other's lives. One thing, however, is certain: our experiences and knowledge have opened up an important dialogue about health care in America, which allows us to speak intelligently and openly about a subject that is sadly neglected both here at Colgate and nationally.







# Women's Studies Courses Offered, Fall 2004

- WMST 202 Women's Lives: Introduction to Women's Studies, Sarah Wider WMST 302 Women's Lives in Biography and Autobiography,
- WMST 302 Women's Lives in Biography and Autobiography Sarah Wider
- CORE 180 Women in China, Jing Wang
- CORE 315 Gender and Film, Jill Harsin/Jo Anne Pagano
- EDUC 412 Women and Education, Jo Anne Pagano
- EDUC 416 Seminar in Moral Education, Kay Johnston
- ENGL 204 Native American Writers, Sarah Wider
- ENGL 208 Introduction to Literary Study: Sex and the City, Amy Feinstein
- ENGL 333 African Diaspora/Women's Narrative, Kezia Page
- ENGL 363 Contemporary Fiction: Tropes of Maternity in World Literature, Lynn Makau
- ENGL 442 Virginia Woolf and E.M. Forster, Jane Pinchin (London Study Group)

- FSEM Women, Work, and Family, Mary Moran
- FSEM French Women Writing, Hélène Julien
- PHIL 303 Medieval Philosophy, Jim Wetzel
- PHIL 360 Philosophy and Feminisms, Marilyn Thie
- POSC 359 Russia and Its World, Jessica Allina-Pisano
- RELG 234 Women and Religious Traditions, Eliza Kent
- RELG 283 Living Judaism, Lesleigh Cushing
- RELG 328 Experiencing Islam, Omid Safi.
- RELG 342 The Sacred in Black Women's Literature, Clarice Martin
- SOAN 306 Gender, Sexuality, and Modernity in South East Asia, Michael Peletz
- SOAN 369 Women, Health, and Medicine, Meika Loe.
- SPAN 474 Contemporary Spanish Women Dramatists, Anita Johnson

# Good byes to Special Student Staff

Compiled by Jennie Skelton, '05

We asked the seniors on the Staff at the Center for Women's Studies a few questions:

1. What was your favorite class? 2. What do you love/want to change about Colgate? 3. Life advice for Colgate students? 4. Favorite cheese?

#### Heather Dockstader

1. Women, Health, and Medicine: my first women's studies course. I took the class because of the professor and a friend, but it turned out to be a great experience. I never imagined the dynamic of an all seniors, all women class. It was incredible.

2. Things to remember: the snow falling in the lamplight, spring coming and everyone's outside, having a voice, the Center with its raving feminists,

learning, and amazing people....Things to change: short couch in the Center, "Men Working" sign, cell phone, Coop - hot veggie-da-coops, lack of Diversity in all forms, no dance venue without sexual harassment, and people who just don't get it.

- 3. Don't be afraid of the Center for Women's Studies. Make a statement of empowerment and question everything.
- 4. ...the one that comes with wine.

Heather is a Psychology major who was awarded the F. Kenneth Berrien Memorial Award in Social Psychology, and earned high honors for her thesis, on feminist self-identification. Additionally, Heather received the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Award for her contributions to the Center for Women's Studies and other student groups on campus.



# Joyce Pisarello

- 1. Philosophy and Feminisms, most definitely
- 2. Love... Sundae Sunday at Frank Change... continuous snow until April
- 3. Take advantage of your time here, but don't forget

Renita is a Religion major who earned the Philosophy

Postgraduate Study and will begin a masters program

at Harvard Divinity School in the Fall. Renita has been

and Religion Department's Hartshorne Award for

around the Center for years, but only this year was

officially on staff. She made a great addition to the

Joyce is a Philosophy major, who received the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Award for her dedication to the Center for Women's Studies, over 300 people in the campus community.

#### Victor Matos

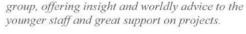
1. My favorite class at Colgate was the Geology Summer off campus Field Techniques and Methods. It was the class that sealed the deal for me and Geology 4 Life. I ♥ Rocks (but really soft sediments with fossils). The course was amazing because I got to learn and work with most of the geology department and fellow students.



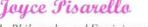
2. Loved... the people I met, my major, my housing, the real spring, early fall, WMST, John Hubbard taking pictures of me, Dinner at Merrill House... One thing I would like to change...make it a better environment for the LGBTQ community on campus. Not every Colgate girl came looking for Mr. Right and not every Colgate guy came looking for Ms. Right.

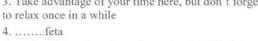
- 3. In your daily endeavors do not forget to pack your self-respect, selflove, Advil, band-aids, cell phone, whistle, and a whole lot of attitude.
- 4. Queso Manchego for Tapas in Spain.

Victor is a geology major and has been a charismatic presence at the Center for the past four years. He makes this space welcoming and comfortable and is single-handedly responsible for bringing a number of people into the Center and recruiting fantastic staff.



Renita Moore





especially her Email Outreaches -weekly email news summaries delivered to

# Brown Bag Lunch Series, Spring 2004

- 1/27 White Out: Conversations on White Privilege in Women's Organizations and Lives Jaime Nolan, Director of ALANA Cultural Center and Margaret Wehrer, Peace Studies
- 1/30 A Road Map to Success: The Determination of a Champion Shelly Looney, two time Olympic medal winner in ice hockey, Co-sponsored with Athletics
- 2/3 What Makes A Temple Tantric? Padma Kaimal, Art/Art History
- 2/10 Ni Putes Ni Soumises (Not Whores, Not Servants): The Long March of French Women Hélène Julien, Romance Languages
- 2/17 Real Men and Real Women: A Critical Look at Gender and Power Tina Marciano, LGBTQ Initiatives
- 2/19 The Naked Truth: Legitimizing Radical Feminist Performance Art Sarah Compter, '04
- 2/24 Code Pink: How Women are Waging Peace Medea Benjamin, Founder, Global Exchange/Code Pink
- 2/27 On All the Sunday's Yet to Come: A Skater's Journey, Disordered Eating, and Surviving Kathryn Bertine, '97, sponsored by Colgate Advocates of Responsible Eating Styles and Health Services

(Continued on page 5)





# 5

# Minnie Bruce Pratt: Sharing Stories and Strategies sarah Sillin, '05



In celebration of Women's History Month, the Center for Women's Studies brought writer and activist Minnie Bruce Pratt to Colgate. In her afternoon Brown Bag, The World Splits Open: One Woman Speaks the Truth About Her Life, and her evening lecture, At the Intersection of Oppression and Resistance, she spoke against sexism, racism, and homophobia. One student described her as "a phenomenal woman of powerful words" which she used to offer both her own very personal stories and a call to critique American political behavior.

Born in 1946, raised in a small Alabama town, Minnie Bruce was frank about the time it took her over the years to become conscious of the system of oppressions present in American life and the devastating

impact it has on her life and the lives of those around her. The story of her life, in many ways mirrors the growth of the nation. She received her B.A. from the University of Tuscaloosa in Alabama, and met her husband with whom she mothered two sons. When Minnie Bruce married, she and her husband lived in an army base town which both evoked fear for her as a woman in the midst of men who spoke of R & R as "Rape and Relaxation" and pushed her to find networks of other women similarly disturbed by the misogyny. She also realized her sexual identity as a lesbian. During her Brown Bag, Minnie Bruce spoke honestly about the pain that resulted from her divorce and the frighteningly deep homophobia which caused the court system to completely remove her children from her care. She shared poetry about her sons and was hopeful about the changes which would prevent similar repercussions today.

Even the groups of women with whom she worked for change were not always fully supportive. She spoke of the problems women had in debating when to focus on their particular needs and when to address the ways in which they might be contributing to the oppression of others. She admitted that there were groups of active, liberal women, in which she did not even feel comfortable admitting to her sexual orientation. However, her emphasis again was change – our changing awareness and continuing struggles to work through these questions.

Her evening lecture was much more politically focused. She criticized the hypocrisy of the American government in supporting the Taliban and then criticizing their oppression of women only when politically convenient. She acknowledged our

society's continuing failure to support activists. She drew our attention, though, to shifts in the political climate that are evidence of activists' influence, one being a shift in the language used by the administration from a refusal to permit any type of same-sex union, to the refusal to accept *full* legal marriage for same-sex couples. She demanded that we continue to question our government and other social structures, she demanded that we push activism further forward.

After her lecture, she signed copies of her books of poetry and essays, asking us if we would be at the March for Women's Lives. Seeing us all as fellow liberation activists, she signed our books, "Yours in the struggle."



Photo credits: Sarah Sillin

#### (Continued from page 4)

- 3/2 The World Splits Open/One Woman Speaks the Truth About Her Life Minnie Bruce Pratt
- 3/9 Pregnant Silences: Stories from the front lines of labor and new motherhood Molly Baker, Outdoor Education; Dawn LaFrance, Staff Psychologist; Naomi Rood, Classics; Kathryn Sofranko, Midwife
- 3/23 Looking at War and Rape Nancy Ries, Anthropology, Director of Peace Studies
- 3/30 A Discussion of Reproductive Rights led by students in Women, Health, and Medicine
- 4/2 A Conversation on Same Sex Marriage and the Bible Lesleigh Cushing, Philosophy & Religion/Jewish Studies, Sponsored by the College Democrats
- 4/6 Before the Whore: The Secret Wisdom of Mary Magdalene Georgia Frank, Philosophy & Religion
- 4/13 'Mon Agar': Working Girls and the Social Landscape in the Art of Camille Corot Lori Johnson, Art/Art History
- 4/20 Third Wave Feminism: The Holistic Approach Julie Shah, former Director, Third Wave Foundation
- 4/27 Guys and Dolls: The Politics of GI Joe Diane Williams, Women's Studies Program Assistant

## n in Music Videos

Malissa Carter, '06

**Discussing Women in Music Videos** 

Man, I love music videos! There's nothing that I enjoy more than turning to BET or MTV late at night (after I've finished my work for class, of course) and seeing all the girls shaking their "salt shakers" and "droppin' it like it's hot". It's fun, especially when a girl does something so amazing that I just have to jump out of bed and try it. Seriously, didn't you see the girls in Usher's new video, "Yeah!"? Just imagine all the attention I would get at the club if I could "bend over to the front and touch my toes" like that. And what about that nude diamond-studded outfit Britney Spears wears in "Toxic"? If I could stuff myself into one of those I'd have all the dudes wanting to sell their souls to the devil just to be around me.

What can be said about the thoughts expressed above? Can we simply just write it off as a typical response to music videos or should we examine it further extract the subliminal messages these types of opinions send about our society? This was the topic of the discussion panel, sponsored by Sisters of the Round Table (SORT) and the Body Image Network (BIN), entitled "An Open Discussion on the Portrayal of Women in Music Videos." The discussion, headed by Cassie Quirindongo of SORT and Andrea Miller of BIN, was intended as a dialogue where people were encouraged to voice their opinions regarding the way women are portrayed in music videos, with a parallel discussion on the differences in appearances and actions of women in male and female artists' videos.

I, personally, was surprised at the amount of diversity among the women that attended the discussion; it attracted women from all aspects of Colgate society: students (many ethnicities and nationalities), faculty, staff and even parents. On the contrary, I was disappointed with lack of male representation since they were often blamed for female



Cassie Quirindongo (left) of SORT and Andrea Miller (right) of BIN raised issues and hosted the conversation.

objectification. But whose fault is it? Women often fail to realize that certain actions or non-actions help to perpetuate certain stereotypes.

The purpose of the discussion was not to sit around and have a male-bashing session or even to come together as women and unite against society and the standards it sets for its women. (We'll leave that one to the feminist marches.) This discussion was simply a means to stimulate thought and instigate a conversation which highlights the controversies that surface when you forget about the music, put the television on mute and focus on the images on your screen. Can these images legitimately be mistaken for soft porn? What messages are they sending about society's ideals regarding women? Are we, as women, passively encouraging these ideals by not protesting? Are men really to blame for forcing these ideals upon us? It's just something to think about: take it and run with it.

# Fiery Females: Shutting Down the Stereotypes of Asian Women

Terry Duong, '04

This year Asian Awareness Coalition made waves in its Annual Banquet on February 21, 2004. We were determined that this year's banquet was going to steer away from the theme of the exotic and foreign. We wanted to send a message that touched upon the issues of being an Asian-American female, including politics, gender, sexuality, and the arts. We were able to accomplish these goals by bringing in musical performer Magdalen Hsu-li. Not only is she an Asian-American female, but also a feminist, a musician, and a member of the LGBTQI community. Magdalen showed how Asian-American women are coming into their own within the United States. She pushed the envelope



through her songs such as, "Chink" and "F— Bush." You could see the definite shifting of people in their chairs as she screamed the chorus "CHINK! CHINK!" like a mad punk rocker, and then all of a sudden become still and crack a joke about being 'yellow.' People did not see the quiet, polite, submissive Asian female, but an Asian-American women with fury, agenda, elegance, passion, and talent. The message she was sending voiced what Asian-American women wish they could say everyday, and through her performance she gave us the affirmation that we can.

# An Amazing Night in Hamilton! Natalia Linares, '06, Director, The Vagina Monologues



How do we measure the success of an event? Is it the amount of money raised or number of people in the house? Is it making an impact

on the audience that is most important? Is it that the participants enjoy themselves while performing or supporting the event? On February 26<sup>th</sup>, *The Vagina Monologues* reached

all corners of the spectrum with a show that wowed a sold-out audience, raised a lot of money for charity, and was an amazing

experience for the performers!
As the lights dimmed down and our very own "clit-tale hour" commenced, it became clear that there would be no seats left in *The Palace Theater*.
Members of the Colgate and Hamilton community packed in to witness the play,

written by Eve Ensler. The show blends heart wrenching and hilarious tales of being a woman. We told those stories to 450 people, and every inch of the venue was filled with open eyes and ears ready to listen, feel, cry, and laugh.

Our show was a part of the worldwide VDAY movement, which allows colleges and communities to perform the show, royalty—free, to raise money for a local organization dedicated to ending violence against women. Our main beneficiary was *Victims of Violence*, part of *Liberty Resources* in Madison County, an organization that provides an array of free services for people affected by sexual assault, domestic violence, and other violent crime. We were honored to have members of the *VOV* staff, as well as some of their clients, in the audience. We raised \$2,320 for their organization. Perhaps more importantly, though, we had the chance to recognize and



We were also supported by a number of student groups who set up tables during the clit-tale hour, with safer sex information, voter registration, body image awareness. SORT provided and served free munchies and juice to the crowd. The Vagina Warriors, or performers, had an experience that they will probably never

forget. The feeling of going on stage is unlike any other, but

to have gone through the journey with 40 other women is incredible. It was a chance for women of Colgate to come out of their own bubbles and connect with other women to raise awareness and work to end violence against women in our communities and the world.

The success of an event isn't measured in numbers. It is in the eyes of the people who thank you for recognizing something they've dedicated their lives to, it is in the trembling hands of the first-time performer, it is in the raised arm hair of the young man who has never been exposed to certain atrocities, and it is in the hearts of those who came out and supported *The Vagina Monologues* on Colgate's campus, and all around the world.

UNTIL THE VIOLENCE STOPS

Art by Heather Angstrom, '05

For more information on Liberty Resources/Victims of Violence: http://www.liberty-resources.org, and on the VDAY organization: www.vday.org.

**Directors & Staff Advisors—and Performers:** 







Our shirts, designed by Sam Soukup, were an updated version of a shirt worn at a march in the 1970s. The original had a dove with a woman symbol and equal sign worked into the design. They said "Women on the Move."

Since our group consisted of people of many genders, we changed the wording to say "People on the Move."

The dove design remained the same.

Thanks to Sam and Sara Pastel for their enthusiasm and energy in organizing our group!









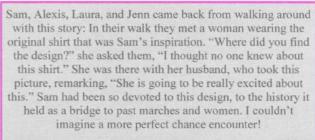


















Photos by Aubrey Graham, Meika Loe, Diane Williams, and a few nice strangers