

GENDER STUDIES NEWSLETTER

Fall 2007 and Spring 2008

This double issue highlights the Gender Studies Research Conference, the Faculty Research Brown Bags, the Women's and Gender Studies Consortium Undergraduate Research Colloquium, Prof. Andersen's presentation, "Visualizing Sociology in Everyday Life" and Prof. Hodes's presentation, "The Sea Captain's Wife."

The Sexualization of Childhood

By Arielle Bavarsky (Political Science major)

Monmouth University hosted The Gender Studies Research Conference in the Fall of 2008 and featured keynote speaker Professor Diane E. Levin. Levin is an expert on helping professionals as well as parents counteract and understand the harmful side effects of violence in everyday society. Being as concerned as she is with the youth of America, Levin has co-founded the *Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment* (TRUCE), as well as the *Coalition for Commercial-Free Childhood* both giving necessary and valuable information to better protect children from social ignorance. Levin has also written six books pertaining to similar ideas of shielding children from society, and has been featured on many televised news programs, and nationally published papers.

President Gaffney introduced the world renowned speaker, and she began her presentation showing pictures of "boy toys" and "girl toys" that dominate the sales charts. There was a lesson and reasoning for each toy she depicted on the screen. Bratz dolls were my personal favorite; these young buyers are attracted to their high fashion skimpy clothing, facial features, and background stories of friendship. Boys on the other hand, are attracted to toys such as war video games, and Transformers for their violent aspects as well as the ability to transform and have weapons. It was clear in Diane Levin's speech that with a market such as the one

we live in today, girls will grow up trying to look sexy and impersonate their ideal body images, tainted by Barbie and Bratz dolls. Conversely, boys enjoy fighting and violence, and don't realize the effects that they may have on another person.

Levin was a very commanding speaker and explained that the toys which a child plays with are not the solitary reason for concern. Take the words of Diane Levin to heart and stay away from purchasing the sexy dolls or the violent, weapon enriched toys for boys. Try for something exciting and family oriented, like board games or even a gaming system such as Xbox, or Nintendo Wii; both have fun exciting games, minus all of the guns and bloodshed. Take a stand, say "NO" to what has become socially acceptable, and help change the future for the youth of America, and the youth around the world; they will thank you for it someday.



President Gaffney, Diane Levin, Doris Hiatt, Franca Mancini, and Janice Stapley (L-R).

Gender Research Center: Faculty Forum “Brown Bags”



Dr. Deanna Shoemaker presenting her research.

The second presentation "Mamafesto: The Agonies and Ecstasies of Performing Mother in the Academy." A Performance Autoethnography by Deanna Shoemaker, Asst. Professor in the Communications Department, drew a large crowd from across the university. Her performance raised questions and concerns, from the local to the global, and left everyone thinking about varied and deep issues. The final gathering featured Lisa Vetere, Asst. Professor of English, and her presentation, "All the Rage at Salem: Witchcraft Performances in 17th-century New England Neighborhoods and Courtrooms." Inspiring a range of questions, from the power of the state to the importance of doing gender, the research and analysis enriched our understanding of these significant cultural events. All were well attended and provided research networking opportunities.

Fall Brown Bags already lined up: Save the Dates

Marie Mele, "Women's Decisions on Restraining Orders: Why They Withdraw Orders Against Abusive Intimate Partners," Tuesday, September 23, 10:00-11:15



Eleanor Novek, "The Prison of Masculinity: A Feminist Rediscovered Gender Oppression Behind Bars," Tuesday, October 28, 10:00-11:15



Michael Phillips-Anderson, "Sojourner Truth's 'Little Pint Full' of Rhetorical Humor," Tuesday, November 18, 10:00-11:15



Fourth Annual Women's and Gender Studies Consortium Undergraduate Research Colloquium

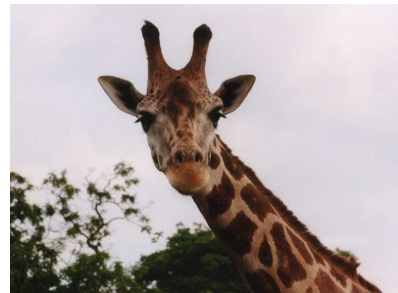
The Gender Studies Committee chose the work of three Monmouth University students to be considered for awards at the Fourth Annual Women's and Gender Studies Consortium Undergraduate Research Colloquium that was held at Drew University in April. The Consortium committee was so impressed by the quality of Sheena Migliaccio's work that they created a new category to honor it, and she earned an Honorable Mention in the category of Best Work by a Senior. Congratulations to all three of the winners for their fine work.

Lisa Adams, "Suppression and Liberation of the Creative Spirit in *The Awakening* and 'The Yellow Wallpaper'"

Justine Basquill, "Blinded by the Night: Confused Men and Women and Elusive Women in *The Wife of Bath* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*"

Sheena Migliaccio, "The History of the Birth Control Pill: A Continued Fight for Women's Liberation"

The Giraffe Award Presented To Doris Hiatt – for Sticking Her Neck Out!



The Gender Studies Committee chose Doris Hiatt to receive this year's Giraffe Award for sticking her neck out and conceiving of a day-long conference devoted to analyzing and considering the sexualization of children. Inspired by the American Psychological Association's task force report on the sexualization of girls, she led the Gender Studies Committee to imagine and implement a response, devoting herself to finding speakers and resources, and generally coordinating the logistics of the well-attended, well-received fall conference, "Our Daughters, Our Sons, Ourselves: Creating A Healthy Image." She is featured below with last year's recipient, Heather Kelly, and her friend/colleague/chair Janice Stapley.



Heather Kelly, Janice Stapley, and Doris Hiatt, Giraffe Award recipient

Two Renowned Scholars Visit Monmouth

Dr. Margaret Andersen



Johanna Foster, Margaret Andersen, & Nancy Mezey



Dr. Margaret Anderson, a professor of sociology at the University of Delaware spoke to a standing room only audience in the Wilson Hall auditorium about two of her recent research interests concerning the Sociology of Every Day Life. Featuring visual images from both her book *On Land and On Sea* as well as from the Paul R. Jones Collection of African American Art that is housed at the University of Delaware, her talk touched on a broad diversity of topics, including perceptions of race, class, and gender.

Dr. Martha Hodes



Dr. Martha Hodes was the speaker for the History and Anthropology Honor Societies' dinner this year, and she shared both the story of Eunice Connolly, the woman on whom her book is based, and the challenges and pleasures of writing a book based on hundreds of letters written in the nineteenth century, as well as what they revealed about America, love, race, and war. A fascinating look at a complex woman who, as Dr. Hodes describes her, was both ordinary and extraordinary. The evening was certainly extraordinary.

