TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity & Community Engagement
Women’s Studies Programs™
http://www.depts.ttu.edu/wstudies

GENDER & GENDER IDENTITY COLLOQUIUM
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY — FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28TH, 2011
9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. And 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. TTU Student Union Building

Texas Tech University, Student Union Building Upper Level, Mesa Room

Program Schedule

8:30 a.m. - Registration
8:45 a.m. - Opening Remarks
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. - Session I
10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. - Session II
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - Session III

* Break for lunch on your own (see Student Union ground level)

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Session IV
2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. - Session V
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Session VI
Exploring Undergraduate Students’ Definitions, (Mis)Understandings, and (Dis)Identification with Feminism

- **Panelist:** *Dr. Amy N. Heuman*, Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies & Affiliate Faculty Member, Women’s Studies; *Stephen L. Mitchell*, Graduate Student, Department of Communication Studies; *ShanTil Yell*, Undergraduate Student, Department of Human Development & Family Studies; *Tory Ervin*, Undergraduate Student, Honors College; *Dr. Elizabeth Sharp*, Associate Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies & Affiliate Faculty Member, Women’s Studies, Texas Tech University

The present panel explores knowledge of feminism and identification with feminist sensibilities among undergraduate students, situated within the context of West/Texas culture. We collected data from 458 students enrolled in Gender Development (housed in Human Development & Family Studies) and Gender Communication (housed in Communications Studies) courses. Both courses, while cross-listed with Women’s Studies, fulfill specific degree requirements within our respective disciplines. Over the span of several semesters, students provided responses about their understandings of feminism and their positionalities in relation to a feminist identity. The panel will consider nuances between these distinct student populations (i.e., Gender Communication course is an upper division course with approximately 60% female and 40% male students; Gender Development course is a lower division course with approximately 90% female and 10% male students). We will begin the panel with a paper discussing an emergent continuum of definitions as well as positionalities in relation to feminism. Another paper will explore misperceptions of feminism and feminist theory, attending to issues such as essentialism, emotionally-laden responses, and erroneous descriptions. A third paper, drawing on contextual and ideological considerations, will discuss distinctions between feminist attitudes and feminist identity. We close by providing insights into post semester articulations of feminism and students’ “situatedness” within the movement. In recognition of the importance of avowing and articulating a feminist stance as an instigator of social change, we also emphasize the importance of student education and awareness of feminism as one step in that direction.

Topics in Feminist Theories and Rhetorics

- **Panelist:** *Laura Cunningham*, Graduate Student, Technical Communication and Rhetoric; *Russell Kirkscey*, Graduate Student, Technical Communication and Rhetoric; *Shirley Lail*, Graduate Student, Technical Communication and Rhetoric; *Nancy Small*, Graduate Student, Technical Communication and Rhetoric

- **Panel Chair:** *Dr. Amanda K. Booher*, Assistant Professor, Technical Communication and Rhetoric, Department of English, Texas Tech University

The papers presented explore theoretical and rhetorical issues of identity, power, ethics, and culture from variety of approaches. Note: All presenters on this panel are distance students and would present their work via Skype (or other relevant presentation software). The chair will be physically present at the conference to coordinate/manage these presentations.

*Gender Queer in the Woods: Performative Politics and Theoretical Praxis* by *Laura Cunningham* will argue that in order for ecofeminism to be recognized and politicized, it needs to consider the constraints...
of identity and work to politicize these constraints. *The Ethics of Care: A Review of the Literature* by Russell Kirkscey will explore Carol Gilligan’s work, which developed the ethics of care—a theory that challenges the traditional rational-world paradigm in decision-making. This paper reviews the theoretical and practical implications of the ethics of care in the past 30 years, describing themes that arise from and challenge Gilligan’s initial work and viewing the emergence of broader questions of justice, value, gender, and ontology. *Economic Equality and Positions of Political Agency* by Shirley Lail will provide a comparative analysis of the United States and Sweden will hopefully reveal deviations and correlations as well as possible steps leading to increased economic gender equality. *Contextual Issues in Studying Qatari Women* by Nancy Small examines the rapid urban transformation and self-modernization—and from a Westerner’s perspective—the Gulf Arab state of Qatar is a study in paradox. This project works towards contextually framing future research of Qatari feminist issues and rhetorical agency in three central, foundational areas: cross-cultural inquiry, feminism and Islam, and particular female political as well as professional statuses in Qatar.

**ACADEMIC SESSION III**

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<td><strong>MESA ROOM</strong></td>
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- *Misogynistic rap music & the emergence of the “Independent” woman: A critical analysis of cultural changes in themes, identity & desires*
  
  Robin Haislett, Doctoral Student, College of Mass Communications, Texas Tech University

Rap music has long been associated with the portrayal of misogynistic values. However, there has been a recent noticeable shift in the portrayal of women in some of the most successful mainstream hip-hop music. This analysis examines a popular rap song, *Independent* by Webbie featuring Lil' Phat and Lil' Boosie, and the portrayal of *independent women*. This analysis uses a socio-cultural lens to critically analyze the themes, portrayals of female identity, and the desirability of women with *independent* qualities that are portrayed in both the song’s lyrics and images of the accompanying video and how they work to challenge the misogynistic values that are too commonly associated with hip-hop culture. This analysis offers a perspective on hip-hop culture that showcases the potential it possesses to be a catalyst for social change and that the men that dominate this culture in mainstream media do have untapped power to dismantle the patriarchy that inscribes itself through popular rap music. It is the hopes of the authors that the popularity of music and images of Independent women in hip-hop culture can be a catalyst for changes in cultural perceptions and attitudes about gender.

Co-author: Sherice Gearhart, M.A., Doctoral Student, College of Mass Communications

- *The Cultural Conundrum: Addressing social identity and gender roles within a male oriented culture*
  
  Heather H. Martinez, Ph.D., Associate Director, Texas Tech University Office of Community Engagement

It has been suggested that expectations and views on gender roles within an individual’s own culture are passed from generation to generation. The roles that a mother and father each play within the family dynamic are often well defined to children and are reinforced by both instruction and by example. As children grow and began to understand the part that each of their parent plays within their family and their culture and how it is associated to their respective gender, they began to associate specific actions and behaviors to the male and female role. As the children become adults they are likely to exhibit similar behaviors and expectations in regard to gender roles which eventually will shape their own social identity. As gender roles are often delineated by culture, and social identity is often shaped by exposure to various experiences or environments, it is feasible to question how the social identity of a young woman reared in a male oriented culture is shaped. Furthermore, since, according to Tajfel and Turner (1979), part of an individual’s social identity is directly related to their own self-worth and self-esteem,
examining how gender roles influenced by culture affect the self-worth and self-esteem of young women is paramount in understanding how to create academic and social programming focused on their specific needs. The purpose of this research is to examine the development of social identity among young women in a male oriented culture and how prescribed gender roles, familial and peer expectations and the individuals own self-worth influence their academic and personal choices. For the purposes of clarity, this paper will focus on young women who were reared in the Latino culture and who are currently pursuing higher education at a four year-baccalaureate granting institution.

• *Lipstick, Perfume and a Smile: Cultural and Social Constructs and the Nurses of the Vietnam War*
  
  *Katrina Jackson*, Archivist, The Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University

Nurses enlisted in any of the four major branches of the United States military typically served a one year tour of duty in Southeast Asia during the years of the Vietnam War. Aside from coping with and caring for patients with horrific war related wounds and taking on much more responsibility than was typically allotted to them, nurses were also the objects of much attention from both military doctors and the soldiers they attended to. Nurses were welcome American “round eyed” sights to these men, who assumed that these women were naturally there to entertain them and gladly accept their sexual advances or propositions. During the 60’s and 70’s, women were still considered and treated as inferior beings in the armed services and often arrived in Vietnam wearing skirts, stockings and high heels. Some nurses were even required to enroll in makeup and hairstyling courses during their education. It was not uncommon for a nurse to be told by her supervisor to put on some lipstick, perfume and a smile before returning to her duties. It is this cultural and social construct of the woman as a sexual object, or pretty, delicate thing that encouraged this sort of sentiment toward nurses serving during the Vietnam War. My research examines the personal experiences of several nurses from all military branches and how these experiences exemplify the American nurse in Vietnam as an object of desire and an expected source of entertainment for the wounded soldiers and military doctors that surrounded them.

• *The Relationship between Sexism and Conformity to Feminine Norms For Women*
  
  *Chinatu Gladrich*, Graduate Student, Department of Human Development and Family Studies

When attitudes and traits are aligned with group’s social roles, they are assessed as positive. On the other hand they are assessed as negative if they are not aligned. Social roles are a standard for evaluating gender. They are regarded as norms for the society, and members of society understand them to be guides for social behavior, thereby constraining social behavior. Arrays of feminine norms are found in the culture of various groups. The Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI) is a scale that assesses women’s conformity to identify 8 arrays of feminine norms which include: nice in relationships, thinness, modesty, domestic, care for children, romantic relationship, sexual fidelity, and invest in appearance. These subscales have been used in other studies in relation to eating disorders, understanding gender norms, and clinically to understand psychometric properties of conformity to feminine norms among others. Benevolent sexism and hostile sexism are components of the dichotomous sexism, where hostile sexism hold strictly to roles constraining social behavior of women and favoring patriarchy and benevolent sexism, though subtle is positive and is an effect of women conforming to feminine roles or norms. In benevolent sexism, women who conform to feminine norms are assisted and appreciated for recognizing gender hierarchy. Sexism in both male and females is measured with the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI). This study uses both the CFNI and the ASI to assess the relationship between the women sexism and conformity to feminine norms.

--------12:30 p.m. Break for lunch on your own (see Student Union ground level)--------
**Female Identity in Spanish and Latin American Literature (15th through 19th centuries)**

- **Panelist:** *Dr. Sara V. Guengerich*, Assistant Professor, Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures, *Dr. Carmen Pereira-Muro*, Associate Professor, Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures and *Dr. Connie L. Scarborough*, Professor, Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures

This panel will explore issues of female identity, representation of ideal womanhood, and female self-expression in selected works from Spanish and Latin American literatures. **Scarborough** examines the late fifteenth century Spanish masterpiece, *Celestina*, a work that presents woman from different social standings (from prostitutes to nobles) negotiating their positions in society on the brink of the early modern period. These women manipulate the roles society has prescribed for them, either to renegotiate these roles to their own advantage or to openly defy them in attempts to assert alternative life choices. **Guengerich** studies the work of the sixteenth-century Peruvian writer, Garcilaso de la Vega, in which he prescribes ideals for “good” female behavior. But, within the colonial society, this author also recognizes women’s need to assert themselves both to rise in social standing and actively participating in transculturating practices. **Pereira-Muro** discusses the poetry of Rosalía de Castro from the second half of the nineteenth century in Spain. Writing in Galician and Castilian, this poet manifests post-romantic poetics in that she views poetry as a continuous search, a process, rather than a product. These three papers provide distinct examples of gender construction as well as attempts to redefine feminine identity in the corpus of Spanish/Latin America literature.

**Academic Session V**

- **Virgins versus Widows: Hildegard von Bingen’s Symphonic Prescriptions of Womanhood**
  **Elissa Stroman**, PhD in Fine Arts, Department of Music, Texas Tech University

Hildegard von Bingen’s symphonic hymns addressing widows and virgins are a mysterious addition to her canon. Unlike the rest of her musical output, “O Pater Omnim” (*Symphonia viduarum*) and “O Dulcissime Amator” (*Symphonia virginum*) were not written expressly for functional liturgy nor were they part of a morality play. Barbara Newman gives us the only possible description of these works, suggesting they were “independent devotional pieces” (Saint Hildegard of Bingen and Newman, Barbara. *Symphonia: a critical edition of the Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998, pg. 16). This presentation addresses the comparative dearth of scholarship into these works and proposes a more nuanced description, showing these pieces operated in the everyday world of Hildegard’s nunnery. I argue the symphonies were didactic works: hymns Hildegard utilized to prescribe proper conduct ideals to her nuns. Though a surface analysis suggests these two works have little structural and thematic similarities, this presentation will outline unifying themes and nuances that illuminate Hildegard’s theology of widows and virgins. By uniting their voices in songs written expressly for their individual life situations, the dichotomous female body of the nunnery understood better what it meant to be a widow or virgin nun.

- **A Feminist Criticism of the Dichotomy: Subjugating Spirituality Through the Rational Voice and the Spiritual Other**
  **Tiffany Dykstra**, Masters Student and Graduate Part Time Instructor, Department of Communication Studies, Texas Tech University

In theory, many social movements strive for progress on issues related to justice, equality, and social or
political reform. However, in practice, they can also perpetuate inequalities in subtle, yet significant ways. This study takes a critical/social constructionist approach to analyzing the discursive spaces of one online social movement known as The Zeitgeist Movement. By employing grounded theory, emergent themes on spirituality are discussed as they relate to issues of power and inequality. Organizational documents, interviews, and online public discussion posts on The Zeitgeist Movement’s official website were open coded, and then analyzed using feminist theory. In the final analysis, I discuss the rhetorical construction of a false binary or dichotomy that positions rationality (masculinity) in opposition to spirituality (femininity). Furthermore, I isolate two specific discursive practices that perpetuate the ideology of patriarchy: The Rational Voice and the Spiritual Other. A discussion of these rhetorical constructs contributes to a larger feminist criticism of the Discourse of Masculinity. Through the exploration of masculine discourse, this study exposes the way that patriarchy operates in one social movement to silence and marginalize feminine (spiritual) identities. Finally, I discuss the implications of the dichotomy and conclude with considerations for future research.

• *Intimacy Advice from Single Women in Recovery from Eating Disorders: Disrupting Patriarchal Norms*
  
  **Hannah Baird.** Graduate Student, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, Texas Tech University

Drawing on qualitative interviews from eleven single, White, heterosexual women (aged 24-45; mean age = 29.2 years), this paper examines advice to romantic partners of recovering women. Although there is a considerable research focusing on eating disorder treatment as well as on links between eating disorders and the quality of family and peer relationships, romantic advice directly from women in recovery has been largely overlooked in the existing literature. Constant comparative analysis revealed the importance of resisting patriarchal ideologies and norms in favor of relationship strategies that produce mutual empowerment for both partners. Specific strategies, including advice about what expressions and behaviors romantic partners should enact and should avoid will be delineated. Advice from recovered (ing) women can be understood as embedded in the current and historical understandings of heterosexuality, eating disorders, and recovery.

Co-author Elizabeth Sharp, Associate Professor, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, and Affiliate Faculty Member, Women’s Studies, Texas Tech University

• *Who am I: The Real Woman Mimicking Perfection*
  
  **Lauren Tyler-Smith.** Undergraduate Student, School of Art, College of Visual & Performing Arts, Texas Tech University

Portrayal of the woman had developed long before magazines. Yet when this media form was introduced in a time of change, innocent minds were wrapped into the ways of society. The psychology of girls, all ages, are warped as they begin to see the gaps in their reality and the ideal woman. Although magazines are popular and seemingly harmless, girls are beginning to emotionally latch onto the idealistic view; developing the harmful bridge of an eating disorder, to take them to the other side.

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**ACADEMIC SESSION VI**

**3:30 PM – 4:30 PM**

**MESA ROOM**

• *Cherokee Women: The Disintegration of Tradition*
  
  **Kalen Hoel.** Graduate Student, Texas Tech University Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work

This purpose of this presentation is to introduce the audience to cultural gender construction, specifically involving women’s familial roles within the federally recognized Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. This includes historical accounts of the matrilineal clan system and how women were perceived in traditional
Cherokee society and will briefly discuss modern Cherokee women’s expectations. The modern section will be based on reflexive observations, as I am a member of the Cherokee Nation, as well as a woman. The most important message of the presentation is how the vitality of women’s cultural roles in Cherokee society gradually disintegrated because of the influence and pressure placed on us by white settlers and the federal government. Other themes presented will include women’s sexuality, assimilation, family, and labor.

- *The Passion for Autonomy in Carmen Laforet’s Nada and La isla y los demonios: A Social-Psychological Look at the Difficulties Facing Female Writers in Post Civil War Spain*

  **Brenda Gail Adcock**, PhD Candidate in Spanish, Texas Tech University

With this paper I will analyze two of Carmen Laforet’s novels, *Nada* and *La isla y los demonios*, based on a social-psychoanalytical approach. I will examine the way in which the texts present commentaries on the struggle facing women writers during the post Civil War era of Spain. I will utilize the theories of psychologist Otto Rank, author and clinical psychologist Juanita Hingst Williams, and author and clinical and forensic psychologist Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh. A significant element tied to the dilemma associated with the female creative individual of Laforet is related to her struggle for obtaining an existence free of the restrictions the collective community attempts to place upon her. I will center on the gender issue which focuses on the suppression of the female creative individual and her work when male dominance is considered the acceptable norm. Concerning *Nada*, I propose that one of the important factors related to the protagonist’s struggle with reaching her full potential is found in her battle against the mindset of a community which limits the freedoms of women who have a passion to see their aspirations attained. With *La isla y los demonios*, I will focus on the significance of the young female writer of this novel seeking to obtain an autonomous existence as she finds herself entwined in an ongoing struggle for power with a male counterpart.

- *Breaking Down Gender Institutions: Bringing Female Writers into the Conversation of Modernism*

  **Maggie Callahan**, Graduate Student, English Literature, Texas Tech University

Modernism is categorized as one of the most prolific artistic periods. Modernity suddenly made mobility possible, but many lives were forever impacted by the realities of World War. When Modernism is studied, it is commonly discussed in terms of its founding fathers—Ezra Pound, James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, Pablo Picasso, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway. But what about women? Female authors and artists continue to be neglected in Modernist conversations even today. However, the headway that women made during Modernity defied racial, social, and gender boundaries in ways that forever impacted the feminine identity. Virginia Woolf, Mina Loy, and Nella Larsen all used their work to discuss progressive issues in a high-Modern way, and while their writings were well-received during Modernity, their works are rarely discussed in unison, or as anything other than “women’s writing.” In literature, women’s writing is too easily dismissed as less important than men’s work. This paper discusses the necessity for women’s inclusion within the imagination of Modernity, and highlights similarities between its key players based on gender. By opening up the dialogue surrounding Modern women writers, we can create a deeper understanding of our contemporary situations as female artists. This discussion also allows us to realize that gender does not have an impact upon merit, contrary to our cultural inculcations.